RAPORT

Assessment of the free bus initiative in Kamenica Municipality

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FRIEDRICH EBERT STIFTUNG

IMPRESUM

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Table of Contents

Figures

Tables

Executive Summary

The Free Bus Initiative in the Municipality of Kamenica was launched to address the transportation needs of its citizens, particularly vulnerable groups such as the elderly, youth, and women. The diverse geography of the municipality and limited transportation options have left many villages isolated, hindering access to essential services such as education, healthcare, and employment opportunities. The primary goal of the initiative is to improve mobility and access to vital resources while contributing to broader environmental sustainability and social equity objectives.

Survey findings show that the bus service plays a critical role in supporting daily activities. A significant portion, 65.3% of respondents, identified performing daily tasks, including shopping and obtaining official documents, as the main reason for using the service. However, it is worth noting that 42.9% of respondents reported having used the bus only once since it began operating. This suggests that while the service is available, there is considerable potential to increase the number of users, especially as awareness of its benefits grows and improvements are made to bus routes and schedules.

In terms of accessibility, the initiative has been well received, with 93.5% of respondents describing the service as easy to access and 96.5% believing it is inclusive for all citizens, regardless of physical ability or socio-economic status. There are, however, shortcomings, particularly in relation to access for people with disabilities. Only 4.8% of respondents reported seeing designated spaces for wheelchair users on these bus lines. This could imply that the spaces are insufficient or that passengers did not notice them, highlighting the need for better design or visibility to ensure access for all.

Regarding environmental impacts, the initiative has prompted positive behavioral changes. Among respondents who own or have access to personal vehicles, 29% reported a significant reduction in vehicle use since the bus service started, while 17.4% noticed a moderate decrease. However, 42% indicated no reduction in personal vehicle use, suggesting a need for greater awareness of the benefits of public transportation.

To enhance the effectiveness and sustainability of the free bus initiative in Kamenica, we propose the following key recommendations:

- **Improving Bus Routes and Schedules:** Continued collaboration with stakeholders in the Municipality of Kamenica and its citizens to gather feedback on bus routes and schedules. This cooperation will help tailor services to better meet the needs of residents while simultaneously increasing the number of users.
- **Implementing an Awareness Campaign:** Launching a comprehensive campaign to promote the environmental benefits of public transportation and the advantages of using the bus service instead of personal vehicles. This initiative should focus on raising awareness among residents on how increased use of buses can lead to reduced air pollution and less traffic congestion.
- **Extending Service Hours:** Extending bus operating hours, especially during peak hours and weekends, can assist residents with long working hours and improve access to leisure activities.
- **Introduction of Loyalty Programs:** Introduction of loyalty programs that reward frequent travelers with discounts on bus fares if this service will be paid in the future. This approach will strengthen the bond between citizens and the bus service, encouraging more people to use public transportation.
- **Enhancing Accessibility:** Priority should be given to creating designated spaces for wheelchair users and other features that increase accessibility for individuals with disabilities. This commitment to inclusivity will not only improve the experience for users with disabilities but also reinforce citizens' perception of the bus service as a sustainable transportation option for everyone.
- **Utilizing Available Subsidies:** It is also important to explore the potential for applying for subsidies outlined in Administrative Instruction No. 26/2017, which provides financial support (€0.20) for economically unsustainable intercity transport lines. By leveraging these subsidies, the Municipality of Kamenica can maintain a robust public transportation network that meets the diverse needs of its residents while ensuring financial sustainability.

Focusing on these recommendations will allow the bus initiative in Kamenica to continue fostering citizen connectivity, increase inclusivity, and contribute to broader goals of sustainability, economic development, and improving public transportation for all residents.

Introduction

The main objective of this research study was to assess the impact and effectiveness of a 20-day free bus initiative implemented in the municipality of Kamenica. The initiative aimed to promote sustainable transportation by increasing access to public transport for all residents, promoting social inclusion, especially for vulnerable groups, and encouraging the use of public transport to protect the environment. To comprehensively evaluate the success of the initiative in achieving these objectives, the study collected primary data through passenger surveys and in-depth interviews with key stakeholders. This evaluation aimed not only to measure user satisfaction and service efficiency but also to examine the broader effects of the initiative on the community, traffic patterns, and the environment.

IDRA applied a mixed-method research approach, combining quantitative and qualitative data collection techniques to provide a comprehensive analysis of the initiative. The data collection process included two main components. Firstly, the report includes conducting surveys with 170 passengers who used this bus route. These surveys were designed to collect detailed information on various aspects of the service, including frequency of use, reasons for using the bus, demographic profiles, and overall satisfaction levels. Particular emphasis was placed on understanding how accessible and inclusive the service was for persons with disabilities, as well as evaluating user perceptions of the environmental benefits of the service and its role in reducing the use of private vehicles.

In addition to the quantitative survey data, three in-depth interviews were conducted to gather more detailed qualitative information on the operational, political, and community-level impacts of the initiative. The interviews were conducted with three key stakeholders: the bus driver, the road transport services department from the Ministry of Environment, Spatial Planning and Infrastructure, and the Directorate for Economic Development and Diaspora. These interviews provided valuable insights into the daily operational challenges faced by bus drivers, the local government's perspective on the initiative's contribution to broader transport policies, and the alignment of the initiative with national infrastructure strategies.

This methodology offers a comprehensive understanding of how the free bus initiative performed in achieving its stated goals and identifying areas for further improvement. Through data collection and reporting efforts, IDRA aimed to provide FES and local authorities with actionable insights that would inform future policy decisions regarding public transport, environmental sustainability, and urban mobility in Kamenica and beyond.

Contextual Overview: Transport in Kosovo

The transport law in Kosovo is a critical component of the country's legal framework, addressing various modes of transport and ensuring the safety, efficiency, and regulation of transport services. The legal aspect is shaped by several key laws and regulations governing road transport, air transport, and the transport of dangerous goods. This literature review examines the primary legal instruments that comprise Kosovo's transport law and their compliance with international standards.

The Legal Framework on Transport in Kosovo

Law No. 04/L-179 on Road Transport (hereinafter referred to as the Road Transport Law) outlines a comprehensive regulatory framework for road transport operations. This law describes the responsibilities of transport operators, licensing requirements, safety standards, and passenger rights. The primary objectives of the law are to regulate and develop the sector for both passenger and freight transport, providing a well-structured approach to transport services. It promotes open and non-discriminatory access to the market for road transport operators, fostering fair competition. The law also provides guidelines for the provision of services within the road transport market, setting clear standards for operators. Additionally, it establishes regulations regarding driver working hours and rest periods, aimed at promoting safety and ensuring industry compliance. Overall, the law seeks to enhance the efficiency, safety, and reliability of road transport in Kosovo.

Passenger Transport

Passenger transport, as regulated by law, includes various forms of transport, such as regular services, free services, and taxis, which can be offered for both commercial and personal purposes. For any operator to engage in passenger transport, they must first obtain a license ensuring compliance with a set of legal requirements. These requirements aim to guarantee the safety, reliability, and professionalism of the services provided. Operators must also meet specific technical conditions for their vehicles, including maintaining a fleet that complies with safety and sanitary standards under the law.

Passenger transport is divided into several categories. Regular transport is organized along pre-determined routes with published schedules and fares, subject to close regulatory oversight. This category includes urban and suburban transport within cities, interurban transport connecting different municipalities, and international transport, which involves cross-border services. All operators offering these services are expected to strictly adhere to schedules, ticketing rules, and conditions set by the Ministry of Environment, Spatial Planning and Infrastructure and relevant municipal authorities.

In addition to regular transport, the law provides provisions for free transport, which refers to non-commercial transport services for specific groups of passengers. Such services are typically organized for employees, students, or citizens with special needs. Operators offering these services must obtain special permits, and services must be carried out under contractual agreements specifying routes, schedules, and fare structures, even if the services are offered free of charge to passengers.

Taxi services are regulated differently, offering flexible, on-demand services not bound to fixed routes. Taxi operators must comply with licensing terms and ensure that their fares are clearly displayed in the vehicle and calculated through an operational meter. Moreover, taxi services are restricted to their designated areas, with drivers required to be licensed by the municipality where they operate.

Public transport

Public transport is the main focus of the law, which defines it as transport services universally accessible on equal terms to all users. This category includes a wide range of services such as buses operating on regular lines, urban and suburban routes, and interurban lines connecting various municipalities across Kosovo. The purpose of public transport, as defined by law, is to provide a reliable, efficient, and safe mode of transport for the population.
Regular passenger transport is defined as transport along fixed routes with predetermined schedules and fares.

1 Kosovo, Assembly of the Republic. Law No. 04/L-179 on Road Transport, https://cps.rks-gov.net/ëp-content/uploads/2020/09/LAË_NO._04_L-179_ON_ROAD_TRANSPORT.pdf .

This includes various forms of transport such as urban, suburban, and interurban transport.

For urban and suburban transport, municipalities have the authority to organize, regulate, and subsidize services to meet the needs of their communities. They are responsible for designing the network of urban and suburban routes, determining the number of schedules, and ensuring that transport services meet the public demand, particularly in economically disadvantaged areas. Municipalities may choose to subsidize public transport to make it more affordable for certain groups, such as low-income citizens, students, and the elderly. The law also provides the framework for municipalities to establish partnerships with private transport operators to ensure full service coverage.

Interurban transport, which connects different municipalities, falls under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Environment, Spatial Planning and Infrastructure. This Ministry is responsible for setting schedules and fares for these services, ensuring that interurban public transport is reliable and accessible. The Ministry also regulates services that involve cross-border or international routes, ensuring compliance with national and international transport laws and agreements.

Furthermore, Administrative Instruction No. 26/2017 on Subsidies for Economically Unsustainable Interurban Transport Lines provides for subsidies (of 0.20 euro) for economically unstable interurban lines, when there are budgetary resources.

All public transport operators must adhere to strict technical and safety standards for their vehicles and must comply with the environmental, safety, and quality norms set by the relevant authorities. This includes maintaining regular schedules, operating safe and clean vehicles, and providing services that meet the needs of passengers, including those with special requirements, such as the elderly and people with disabilities.

Responsibilities for providing public transport

The responsibility for providing public transport services is shared between the Ministry of Environment, Spatial Planning and Infrastructure and municipalities, where each institution plays a distinct yet complementary role in ensuring efficient, safe, and affordable transport options for the public.

The Ministry of Environment, Spatial Planning and Infrastructure holds primary responsibility for regulating and coordinating interurban and international transport services. This includes overseeing the operation of bus terminals, interurban lines, and transport routes that cross municipal borders. The Ministry is tasked with issuing licenses to operators offering public transport on these routes, setting standards for vehicles and drivers, and monitoring compliance with safety regulations and service quality standards. The Ministry also plays a critical role in promoting international cooperation in the transport sector, negotiating bilateral and multilateral agreements to facilitate cross-border transport services.

On the other hand, municipalities are tasked with regulating and providing urban and suburban public transport services within their territories. Their duties include creating comprehensive transport plans, establishing and maintaining bus networks, and ensuring that operators adhere to set schedules and service standards. Municipalities are also responsible for certifying vehicles used in urban transport, ensuring they meet the technical and sanitary conditions required for safe passenger transport. Moreover, municipalities have the authority to issue administrative acts regulating how public transport services are provided, including setting rules for bus stops, speed limits, and bus maintenance. They also have the authority to issue licenses for operators engaged in taxi services and local passenger transport.

Municipalities are also responsible for subsidizing certain public transport services to ensure access for marginalized groups. These include urban and suburban lines, particularly those serving economically disadvantaged citizens or providing essential services, such as transport for students or people with disabilities. Through these subsidies, municipalities aim to create a transport system that serves the public good while maintaining financial sustainability. Furthermore, municipalities can regulate local taxi services, free transport, and private passenger transport, harmonizing these services with the broader national framework set by the Ministry.

2 **Republic of Kosovo.** Administrative Instruction No. 26/2017 on Subsidies for Economically Unsustainable Interurban Transport Lines. Official Gazette of the Republic of Kosovo, 30 September 2017, https://gzk.rks-gov.net/ActDocumentDetail.aspx?ActID=16319 . Accessed on September 30, 2024

The 2023-2030 Multimodal Transport Strategy and European Agreements

Kosovo's [3]2023-2030 Multimodal Transport Strategy highlights the need for improved public transport systems, integrating different modes of transport for efficiency, sustainability, and greater accessibility. The strategy focuses on promoting multimodality, where various transport methods (road, rail, bus, and air) are interconnected to provide seamless, cost-effective, and environmentally friendly services for passengers. Below are key data related to public transport from the document:

The strategy underscores the necessity of a well-integrated public transport system to enhance mobility across cities and regions. This includes developing a comprehensive approach to linking bus, rail, and local mobility services to ensure smooth travel for passengers, both within urban areas and across regions. For example, integrating interurban bus services with urban mobility solutions has been highlighted as a priority. This would include improving bus connections, especially in rural areas, providing facilities such as park-and-ride stations for more accessible transport.

The concept of multimodality in passenger transport is crucial for improving public transport. The strategy advocates for the creation of an integrated system where passengers can easily switch between modes of transport, such as from walking or cycling to bus or rail. Multimodality is particularly important for creating efficient and attractive public transport services. For example, the integration of information and ticketing systems is emphasized, allowing passengers to access real-time data and harmonized tickets across different modes of transport.

There is a need to modernize public transport infrastructure, particularly buses and railways, to meet the highest standards of service and safety. Many of the vehicles used in public transport, especially buses, are outdated and require upgrading. Furthermore, fragmented and outdated information systems for ticket purchasing and scheduling further complicate the efficient operation of public transport. The strategy calls for the implementation of real-time information systems and the modernization of vehicle fleets to provide reliable, safe, and environmentally friendly transport.

The strategy also emphasizes the importance of making public transport accessible to all groups, including people with disabilities and those with reduced mobility. This includes modernizing bus stops and stations to accommodate the needs of all passengers, improving the overall user experience.

Public transport is also expected to play a key role in reducing the environmental impact of the transport sector. By shifting from private cars to public transport options such as buses and trains, Kosovo aims to reduce emissions and congestion. The strategy also promotes the digitalization of transport services, introducing electronic ticketing and information systems to make public transport more efficient and user-friendly.

Overall, the strategy highlights the modernization of Kosovo's public transport system as a critical step toward building a more sustainable, accessible, and integrated transport network, aligning with the country's EU membership goals and environmental commitments.

The European Green Deal and EU Directives

Environmental protection is also envisioned by the European Green Deal, which promotes shifting freight from road transport to railways and inland waterways, which can significantly reduce emissions. To facilitate this shift, substantial investments are needed to modernize and expand rail infrastructure. The EU also seeks to improve public transport systems, making them more accessible, reliable, and affordable.
This approach aims to reduce reliance on private cars and lower overall transport emissions .

Moreover, the European Union (EU) has been at the forefront of efforts to promote sustainable development, with public transport playing a key role in achieving this goal. Through a series of directives, the EU has shaped policies that encourage member states and candidate countries to reduce pollution, improve air quality, and promote a greener transport sector. This literature review explores the key EU directives related to public transport and their overall impact on environmental sustainability.

3 Republic of Kosovo Ministry of Environment, Spatial Planning and Infrastructure. Multimodal Transport Strategy 2023-2030. Kosovo Government, 2023, https://mit-ks.net/repository/docs/2024_05_13_195223_MTS_ANG.pdf

4 European Commission. The European Green Deal. European Union, https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/priorities-2019-2024/european-green-deal_en.Accessed on September 27, 2024

5 The European Parliament and the Council of the European Union. Directive 2008/50/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 21 May 2008 on ambient air quality and cleaner air for Europe. EUR-Lex, 11 June 2008, https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/dir/2008/50/oj.Accessed on September 30, 2024

Several important EU directives have been adopted to address the transport environmental implications. One of the most notable is Directive 2008/50/EC on ambient air quality, which sets limit values for various air pollutants, including nitrogen oxides and particulates, and encourages the use of cleaner modes of transport, such as public transport, to reduce emissions. Another critical directive, 2009/126/EC , focuses on the interoperability of railway systems within the European Union. This directive promotes the development of a unified railway network across Europe, increasing the efficiency and attractiveness of rail-based public transport. Directive 2014/94/EU on the deployment of alternative fuel infrastructure aims to facilitate the transition to alternative fuels, such as electricity and hydrogen, for public transport vehicles.

The implementation of these directives has significantly impacted public transport systems across EU member states and candidate countries. Governments have increased their investments in modernizing public transport infrastructure, expanding networks, and promoting the use of electric and hybrid vehicles. This push for alternative fuels has led to the widespread adoption of electric and hybrid buses and trains. By reducing reliance on private cars and promoting cleaner transport modes, these directives have also contributed to improving air quality, particularly in urban areas. Moreover, the focus on enhancing interoperability has made it easier for passengers to travel across borders using public transport systems.

In line with the EU's Green Deal, the Western Balkans Smart and Sustainable Mobility Strategy serves as a key framework for addressing the urgent challenges of climate change and environmental degradation in the region. This strategy aims to promote zero-emission vehicles and develop the necessary infrastructure, such as electric charging stations and alternative fuel sources. This is essential for reducing reliance on fossil fuels and minimizing air pollution. Another important objective is the integration of sustainable transport modes to provide multimodal and climate-neutral solutions, improving railway connections and ensuring seamless travel across the region. The strategy also highlights the importance of developing green infrastructure and the digital transformation of transport systems, as well as a unified approach to incentives that encourage the adoption of sustainable transport options.

The transport sector in the Western Balkans is a significant contributor to greenhouse gas emissions, including road transport, domestic aviation, and inland waterways. The use of electric and hybrid vehicles remains very low, mainly due to the lack of infrastructure and incentives. The strategy emphasizes that a more systemic approach is needed to address these emissions through national strategies that incorporate green elements. To achieve the transition toward sustainable and smart mobility, the strategy proposes a roadmap involving the transposition of EU legislation, the development of electric vehicle infrastructure, feasibility studies for alternative fuels, and the alignment of emission standards across the region.

Despite the progress made by EU member and candidate states, several challenges remain. One of the main obstacles is ensuring adequate funding for the development and ongoing maintenance of sustainable public transport systems. Effective urban planning is also essential in creating environments that prioritize public transport and discourage the use of private cars. Furthermore, con-

6 The European Parliament and the Council of the European Union. Directive 2009/126/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 21 October 2009 on Stage II petrol vapour recovery during refuelling of motor vehicles at service stations. EUR-Lex, 21 October 2009, https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32009L0126. Accessed on September 30, 2024

7 The European Parliament and the Council of the European Union. Directive 2014/94/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of October 22, 2014 on the deployment of alternative fuels infrastructure. EUR-Lex,

8 Permanent Secretariat of the Transport Community. Strategy for sustainable and smart mobility in the Western Balkans 2021. Retrieved from: https://www.transport-community.org/ëp-content/uploads/2021/06/Strategy-for-Sustainable-and-Smart-Mobility-in-the-western-Balkans.pdf

Methodology

This study used a mixed-methods approach to gather data on the usage and perceptions of the free bus service initiative in Kamenica. To gain a comprehensive understanding of the impact and public opinion, both quantitative and qualitative data collection methods were employed.

Distribution of surveys

A structured survey was designed and conducted with 170 bus users at various bus stations across Kamenica over a seven-day period in September 2024. The survey aimed to gather detailed information about service usage, passenger satisfaction, and demographic data. The survey questions focused on the frequency of bus use, reasons for choosing the bus, perceptions of accessibility, public satisfaction with the service, and opinions on environmental impacts.

Initially, the survey distribution plan aimed for equal coverage across all seven days (including busier weekends). However, due to the very low number of citizens using the service on Sundays, many respondents were repeat participants. As a result, the surveys had to be redistributed over the remaining days to avoid duplicate responses and ensure a representative sample.

The initial plan allocated a specific number of surveys per day, aiming for balanced coverage during peak hours at various bus stations. The updated distribution of surveys following data collection is illustrated in the table below.

Day	Number of surveys collected
11 September	35
12 September	25
13 September	25
14 September	15
15 September	0
16 September	29
17 September	21
18 shtator	20

Table 1. Distribution of surveys according to the days

In-depth Interviews

In addition to the survey data, three interviews were conducted with key stakeholders:

1. **The bus driver:** To gain insights into operational challenges, daily routines, and cooperation with passengers
2. **Local official from the municipality of Kamenica:** An interview was held with a representative from the Directorate for Economic Development and Diaspora to understand the community-level impacts and how the free bus service influenced city traffic and local policies.
3. **3. Representative from the Ministry of Environment, Spatial Planning and Infrastructure:** The interview, conducted with the Road Transport Services Department, offered a broader perspective on how the free bus initiative aligns with national transport goals and policies.

This study used a mixed-methods approach to gather data on the usage and perceptions of the free bus service initiative in Kamenica. To obtain a comprehensive understanding of the impact and public opinion, both quantitative and qualitative data collection methods were employed.

Results and discussions

The study's findings are based on the data collected from the surveys and interviews with key stakeholders. The discussion begins by examining the primary reasons behind the launch of the initiative, drawing from interviews with local officials in the municipality of Kamenica and representatives from the Ministry of Environment, Spatial Planning and Infrastructure.

The survey data is summarized, providing a demographic profile of the respondents. The analysis focuses on citizens' engagement with the free bus service and their satisfaction levels. It also explores their perceptions and behaviors, which are influenced by environmental factors. The discussion continues with the service's impact on urban traffic, the sources of information citizens used to learn about the initiative, and their willingness to pay for the service. Additionally, opinions on potential improvements to the existing bus route are addressed, along with preferences for digitalizing bus services.

The findings are presented both at a general level and segmented by residential type (urban/rural) and age group, where significant differences are observed and reported.

Motivations Behind the Free Bus Initiative and Future Plans

According to the municipal official, the free bus initiative emerged from the needs expressed by various citizen groups, including the elderly, youth, and women. It was a recurring concern raised during community discussions, driven by challenges posed by the geography of the municipality, which comprises a relatively small but widely dispersed population across many villages. The lack of frequent bus services—there was only one daily route—was deemed insufficient, negatively affecting many aspects of daily life, including access to education, healthcare, and employment. Quote:

"This initiative began in response to the needs of the elderly, youth, and women. It was a recurring issue raised during our public meetings. The need for greater connectivity between the city and villages is very high because the villages are often isolated due to a lack of transportation." (Interview with the municipal official).

A key goal of the initiative is to improve the connection between the city and rural areas. Many villages are isolated due to a lack of sustainable transport, limiting access to public services, markets, schools, and employment opportunities. This isolation has significantly impacted young people, who are unable to participate in various training sessions or activities due to transportation issues.

The initiative, according to the municipal official, also aligns with broader goals of reducing traffic congestion and promoting environmental sustainability. By offering free public transport, the local government anticipates a decrease in the use of private vehicles, especially among employees in education, administration, healthcare, and other sectors. This shift could lead to fewer cars on the road and contribute to the municipality's green agenda, fostering environmental and economic benefits.

Furthermore, the municipal official emphasized that the initiative is also seen as a tool for social equality. By providing free transport, it ensures that all citizens, regardless of their financial status, have access to essential services, thus reducing social inequalities. The initiative also has the potential to stimulate the local economy by increasing access to jobs and markets within and outside the municipality. Quote:

"The initiative aligns with the broader goals of reducing traffic congestion and promoting environmental sustainability. By providing free public transport, we anticipate a reduction in private vehicle use, especially among those working in education, administration, and healthcare. This change will result in fewer cars on the road and advance the municipality's green agenda, bringing both environmental and economic benefits." (Interview with the local municipal official).

The interviewee emphasized that the municipality aims to expand bus lines based on citizens' needs. The continuation of the project will depend on its financial sustainability, with ongoing discussions about whether the service will remain free or if a fare will be introduced in the future. The establishment of the publicly owned enterprise "Urban Transport in Kamenica" will manage this initiative, using the study's findings to create a detailed strategy for the future. The municipality sees this initiative as aligned with its broader policies for sustainability, public transport, and economic development.

A representative from the Ministry of Environment, Spatial Planning and Infrastructure praised the initiative but stressed that the decision to establish a permanent bus line ultimately rests with the municipality, depending on budgetary considerations. He expressed curiosity as to why this initiative is limited to Kamenica, suggesting that similar efforts should be implemented across all municipalities to ensure comprehensive public transport connections for all citizens in Kosovo. He also referenced Administrative Instruction No. 26/2017, which allows subsidies for economically unsustainable interurban transport lines when budgetary resources permit, indicating that these funds could support individuals unable to afford bus tickets. However, he reiterated that the final decision on continuing the project lies solely with the municipality. Quote:

"While the initiative is commendable, it is essential that municipalities across Kosovo consider similar projects to ensure that all citizens have access to integrated public transport. Ultimately, the decision to proceed with such initiatives, including the potential use of subsidies for economically unsustainable lines, remains within the municipality."
(Interview with the representative of the Ministry of Environment, Spatial Planning and Infrastructure).

Demographicsof Survey Respondents

Age group categories reveal that respondents under 18 years old make up 5.3% of the total, while the 18-24 age group accounts for 11.8%. The largest group is those aged 35-44, with 21.2%, followed by the 45-54 age group with 18.8%.

In terms of gender, the survey indicates a slight majority of women, comprising 54.7% of respondents, compared to men at 45.3%.

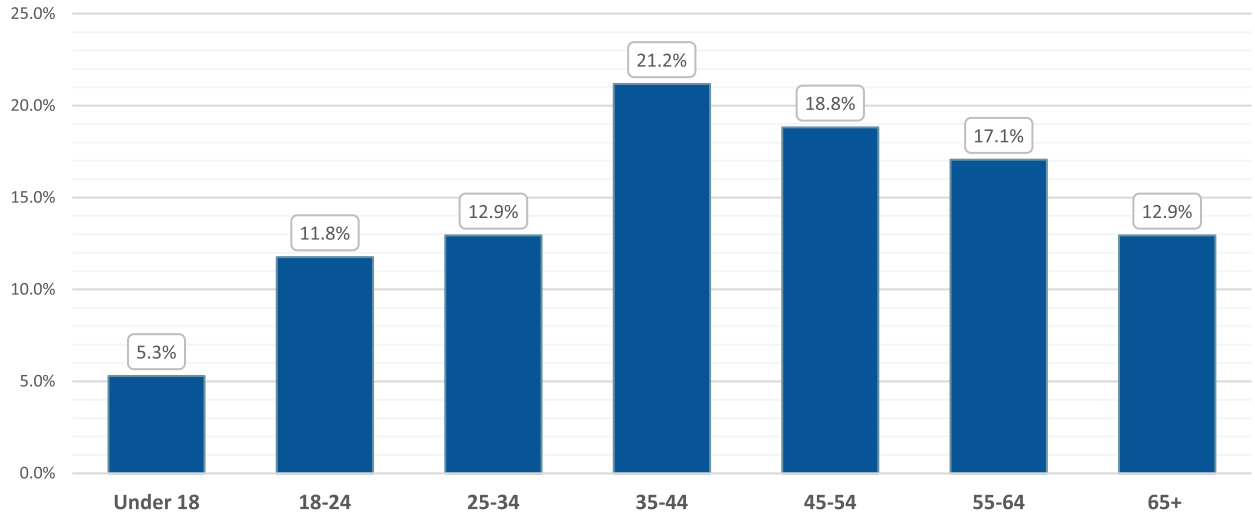

Figure 1. Distribution of respondents' age groups

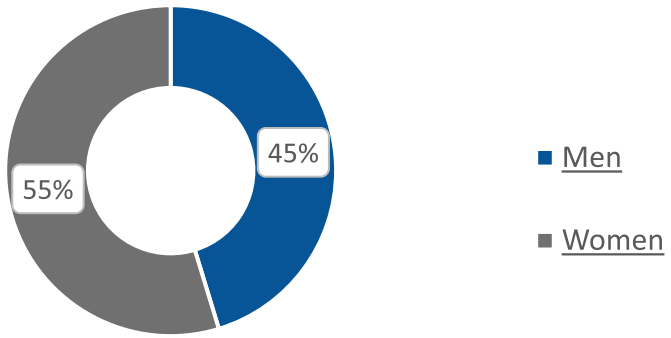

Figure 2. Distribution by gender

Regarding employment status, 26.5% are employed full-time, while only 1.2% are employed part-time. Notably, 30% are homemakers, 9.4% are unemployed and not seeking work, with 2.4% unemployed but actively seeking work. Students account for 12.9%, and retirees also make up 12.9%. Finally, primary and secondary school students represent 4.7% of the sample.

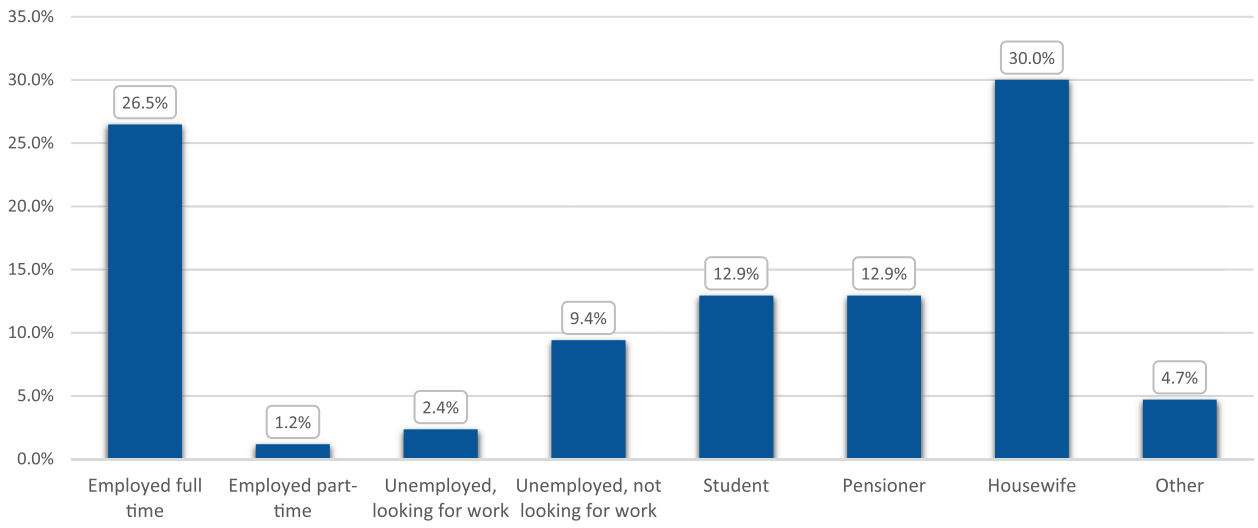

Figure 3. Employment Status of Respondents

The majority of respondents, **84.7%, reside in rural areas**, while only **15.3% live in urban areas**. The most represented villages include Hogosht (17.1% of respondents), Kopernica (15.9%), and Kamenica (15.3%).

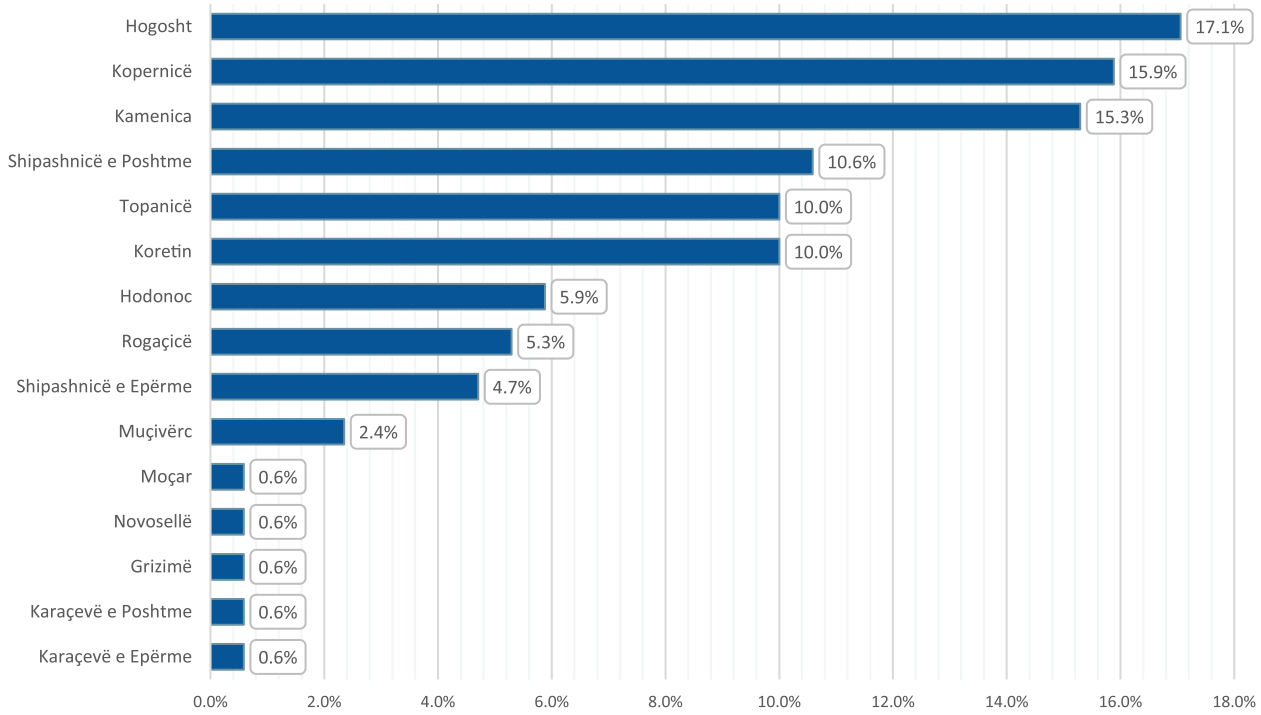

Figure 4. Distribution of Respondents by Place of Residence

Only 17.1% of respondents reported owning a personal vehicle, while 82.9% of bus users stated they do not own one. When asked about vehicle ownership within their families, 32.9% indicated that someone in their family owns a car, while 67.1% reported that no one in their household owns a vehicle.

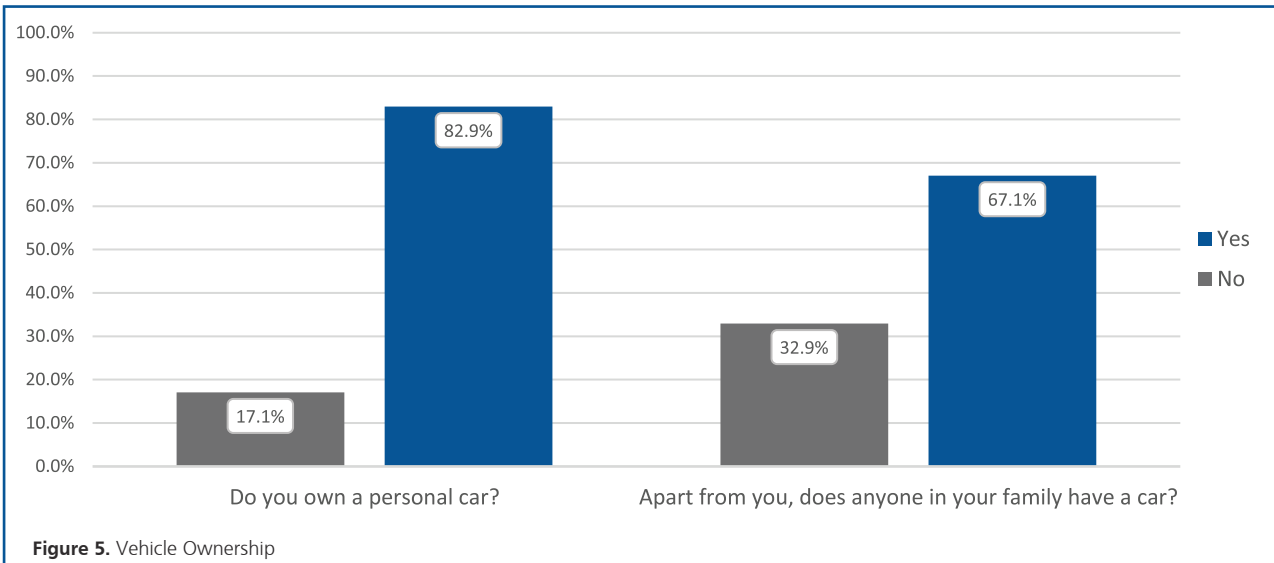

Figure 5. Vehicle Ownership

Regarding ethnicity, the survey mainly included Albanian respondents, with 99.4% identifying as Albanian and 0.6% (one individual) identifying as Ashkali. Although Kamenica municipality includes several ethnic communities, including around 4% of the population identifying as Serbian, the sample was random and did not target any specific group. In terms of marital status, 25.9% of respondents reported being single, while 74.1% are married. Family size data reveals that 25.3% of respondents live in four-person households, and 22.9% in five-person households. A small percentage (2.4%) reported living alone.

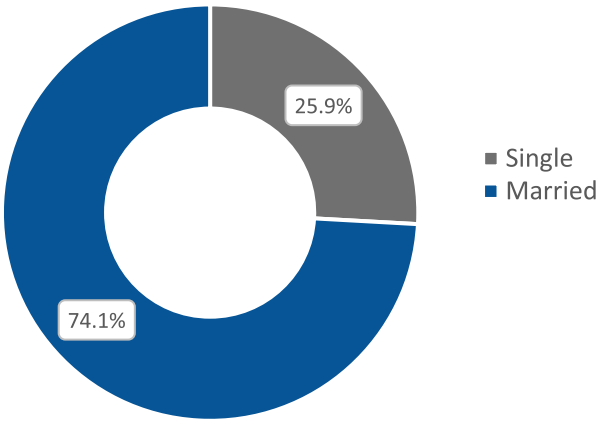

Figure 6. Marital Status of Respondents

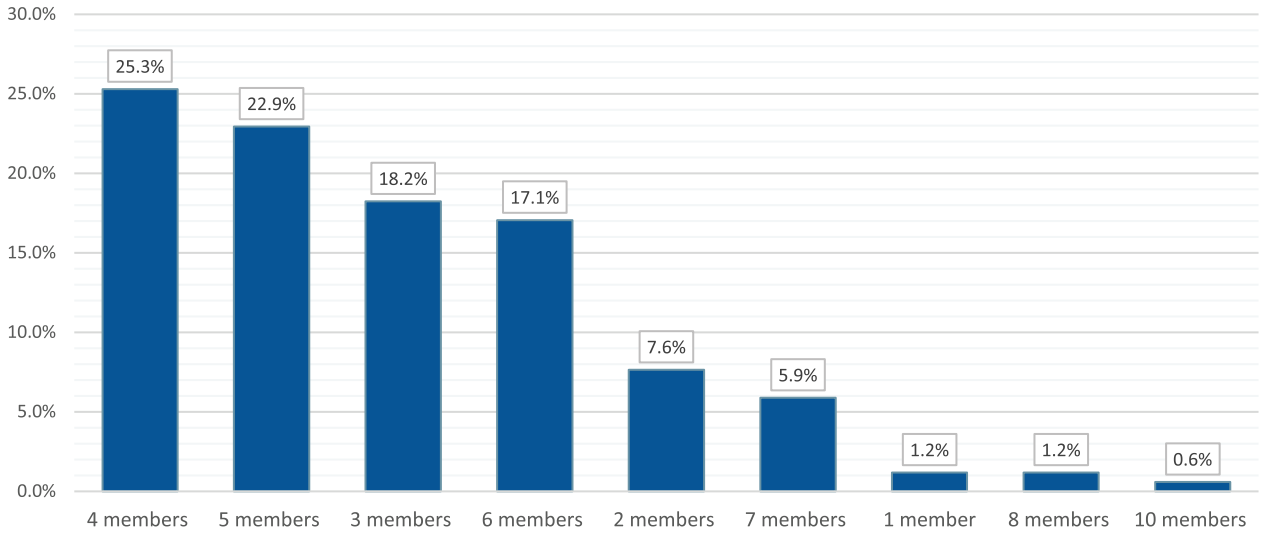

Figure 7. Family members residing in a householdi

Regarding children, 41.2% of respondents have children under 18 years old in their households, while 58.8% do not. Among those with children (N=70), 70% said they are the primary parent or caregiver, while in 30% of cases, the respondent was not the primary caregiver.

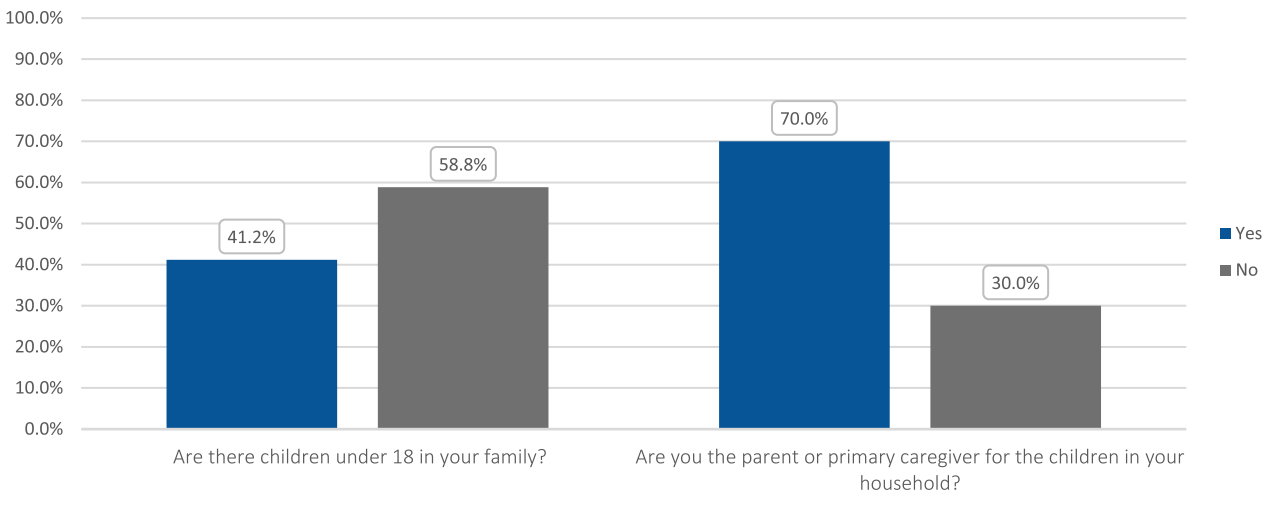

Figure 8. Parent or primary caregiver

Use of service

The survey provides insights into the public bus service usage and passenger demographics. One key finding is that 42.9% of respondents reported using the bus only once since the service began, indicating a significant proportion of occasional users. In contrast, 35.3% reported using it twice, while the frequency of use decreases significantly, with only 11.2% using it three times and a smaller portion reporting higher frequencies.

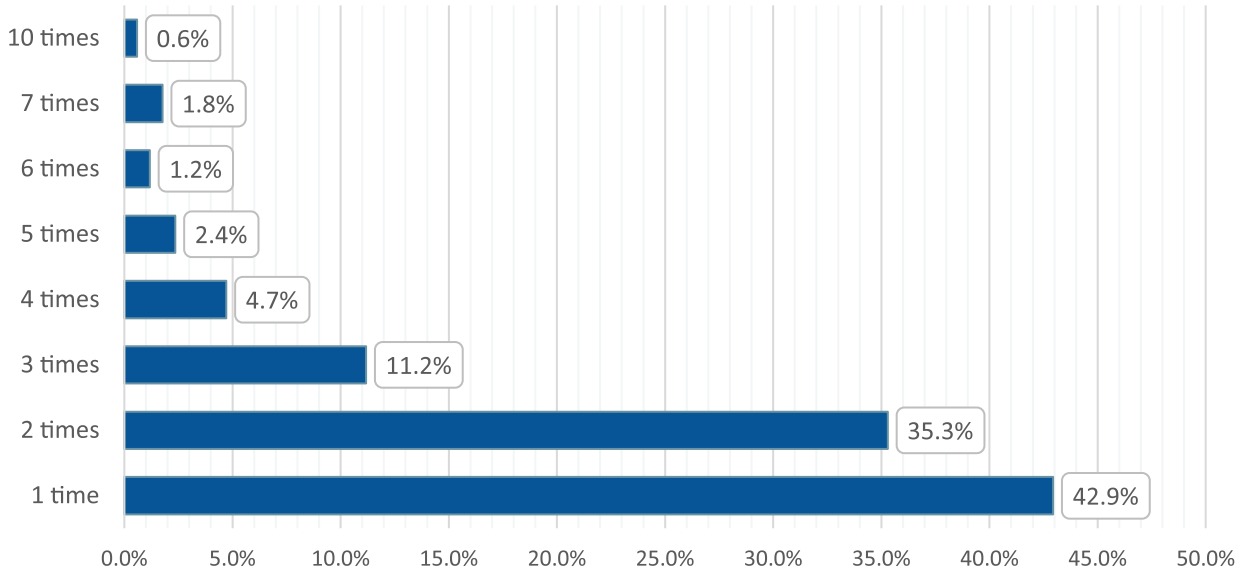

Figure 9. How many times have you used the bus since it started operating in early September?

When examining the primary reasons for using the bus, 65.3% of respondents indicated performing daily tasks—such as shopping and collecting official documents—as their main motivation. This underscores the role of the bus service in facilitating essential activities for a considerable part of the population. Other prominent reasons include social or family visits (12.9%) and recreational or leisure activities (6.5%). Overall, the top three reported reasons for using the bus are performing daily tasks (35.7%), social/family visits (25%), and leisure/recreation (25%).

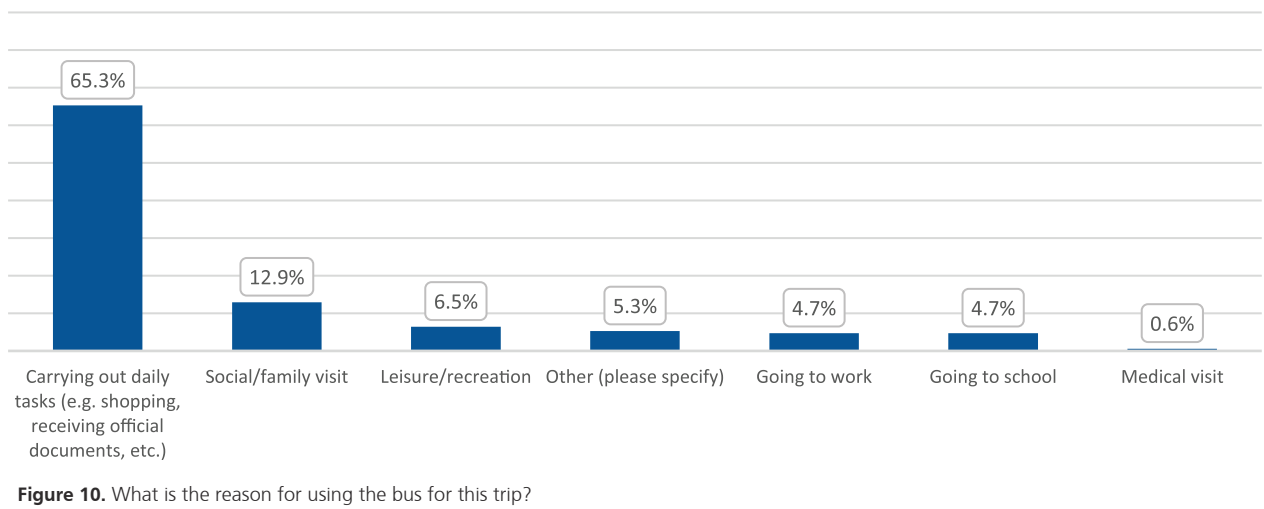

Figure 10. What is the reason for using the bus for this trip?

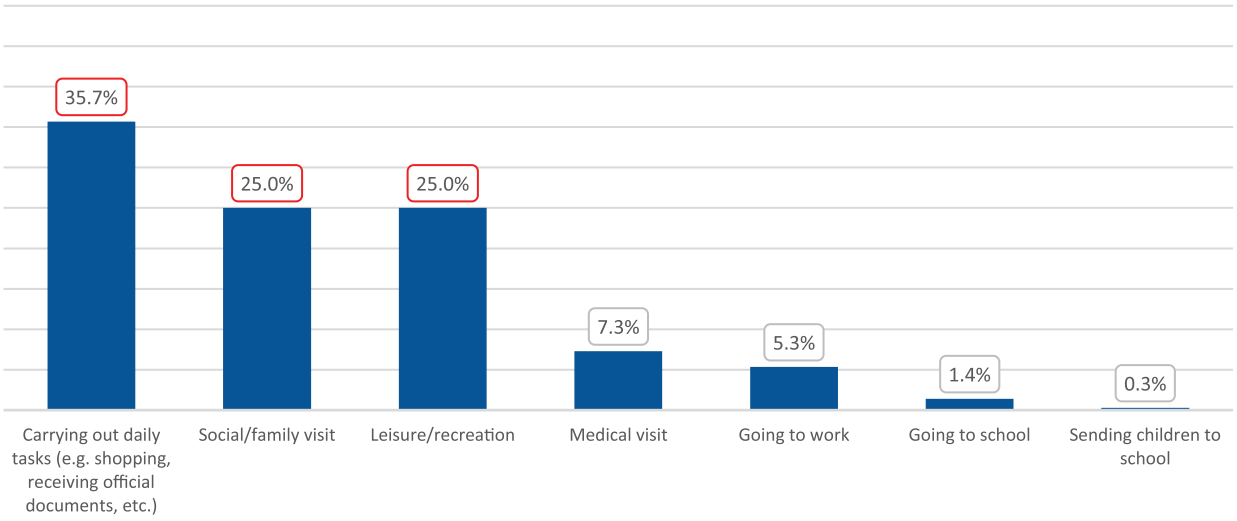

Figure 11. What are the top three reasons for using this bus now or potentially in the future?

In urban areas, the primary reason for using the bus service focused largely on daily tasks, with 61.5% of urban respondents indicating this as their main motivation. Similarly, a slightly higher percentage of rural respondents (66.0%) cited daily tasks as their primary reason for using the bus, reflecting a shared reliance on public transport for essential errands.

However, significant differences are observed in other categories. For example, 11.5% of urban respondents reported using the bus for commuting to work, compared to only 5.6% of rural respondents. This suggests that urban residents are more likely to use public transport for employment-related travel. Conversely, 14.6% of rural users identified social or family visits as their reason for using the bus, compared to just 3.8% of urban residents, indicating that social dynamics may drive different usage patterns in rural areas.

Notably, urban respondents did not report using the bus for taking their children to and from school, suggesting differences in family dynamics or transportation needs between urban and rural households. In terms of other specified reasons, urban respondents mainly identified daily tasks, while rural users cited a wider range of needs, including leisure time and specific personal tasks.

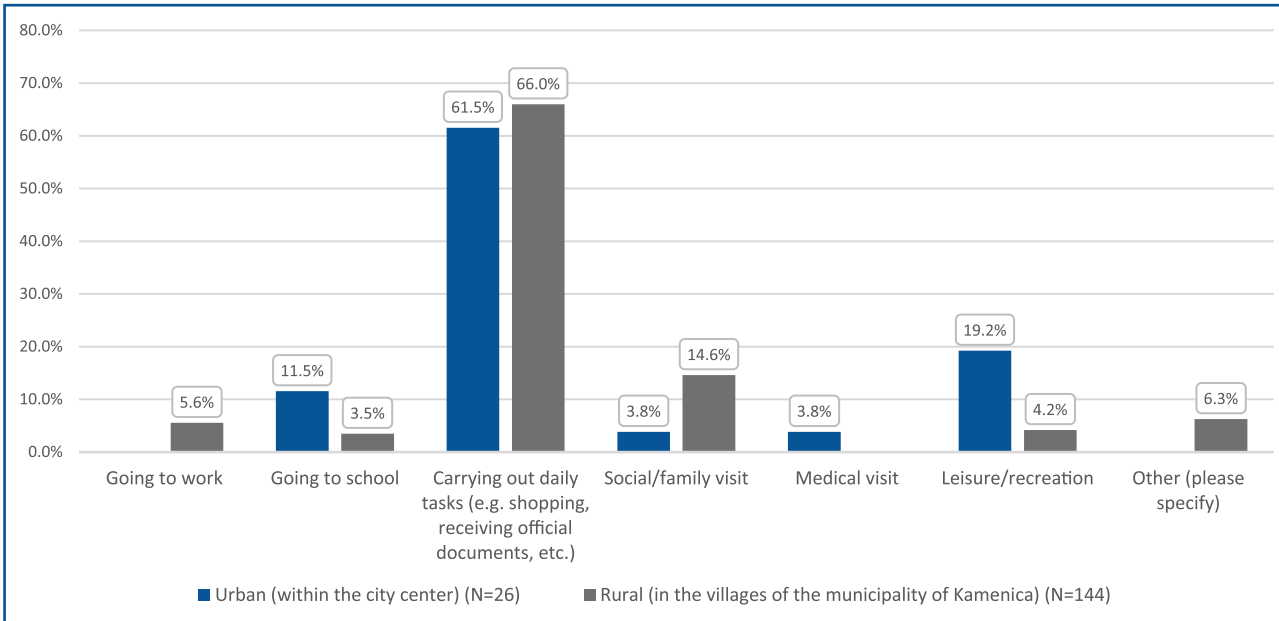

Figure 12. What are the top three reasons for using this bus now or potentially in the future? By type of residence

Furthermore, among respondents who stated that they had children or lived with a child in the household (N=49), they were asked whether the bus service made it easier for them to transport their children. Among valid responses, perceptions of service effectiveness vary. Only one respondent (0.6%) felt the service made a significant difference, while 10 respondents (5.9%) noticed an improvement. However, 26 respondents (53.1%) reported no change. 12 respondents (24.5%) found the service unhelpful, suggesting that some needs remain unmet.

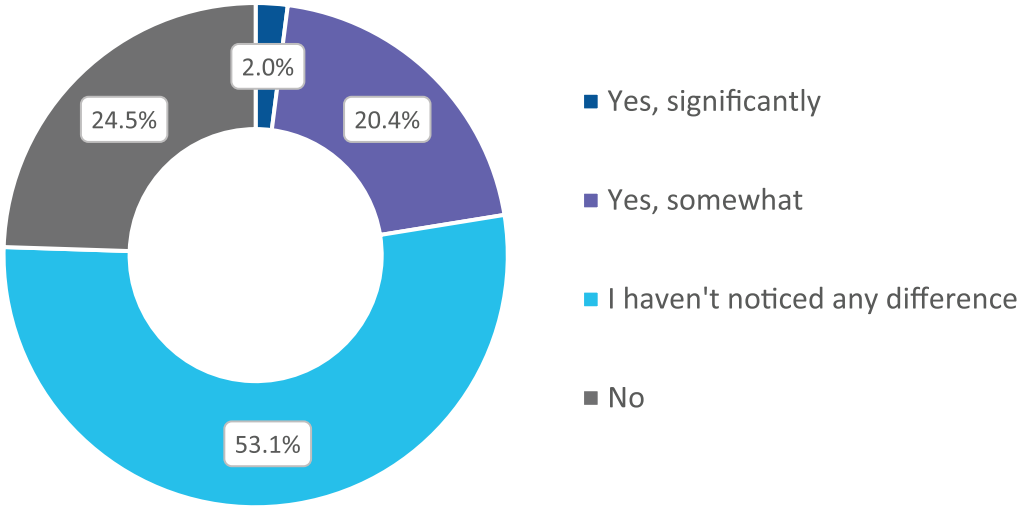

Figure 13. Has the free bus service made it easier to transport your children to school?

The accessibility of the bus service is illustrated by 35.3% of users boarding at the Kamenica station (Viva Fresh Store), while 14.1% boarded at Hogosht, highlighting the popularity of specific bus stops. Furthermore, the data suggests a disparity in how families perceive the impact of the free bus service on their children's transportation (N=49). About 15.3% reported no noticeable changes, while only a minority (5.9%) believed it slightly facilitated their children's travel.

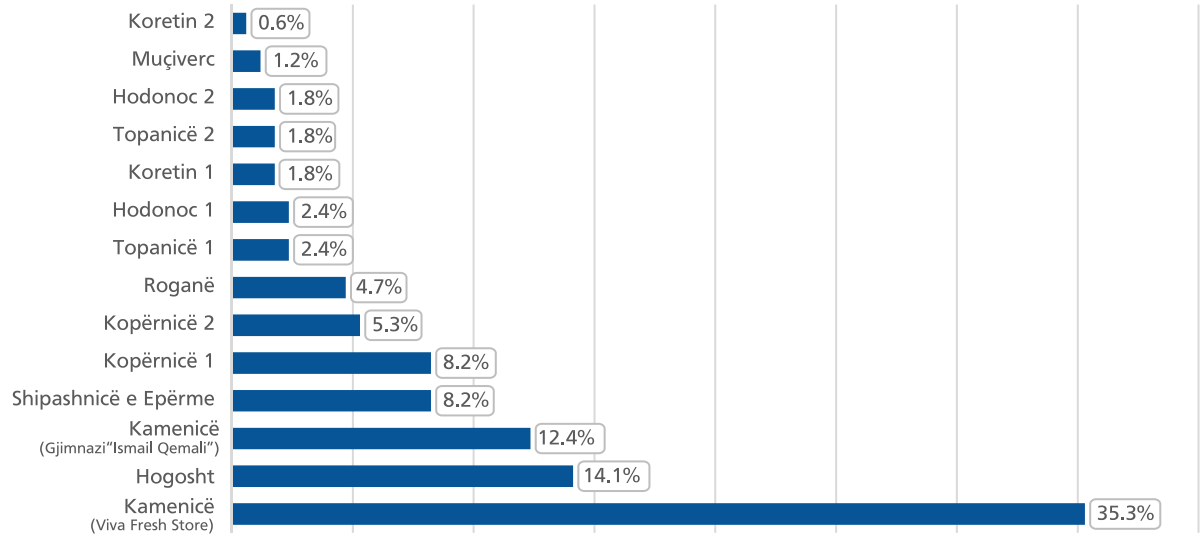

Figure 14. At which bus station did you board to reach your desired destination?

The time taken to reach the bus station varied, with approximately 55% of respondents stating that they waited less than three minutes. This suggests that the available stations were well-positioned and highly accessible for individuals using the bus service. Additionally, the bus is primarily used during midday hours, as 76.8% of users typically travel between 9:00 and 15:00.

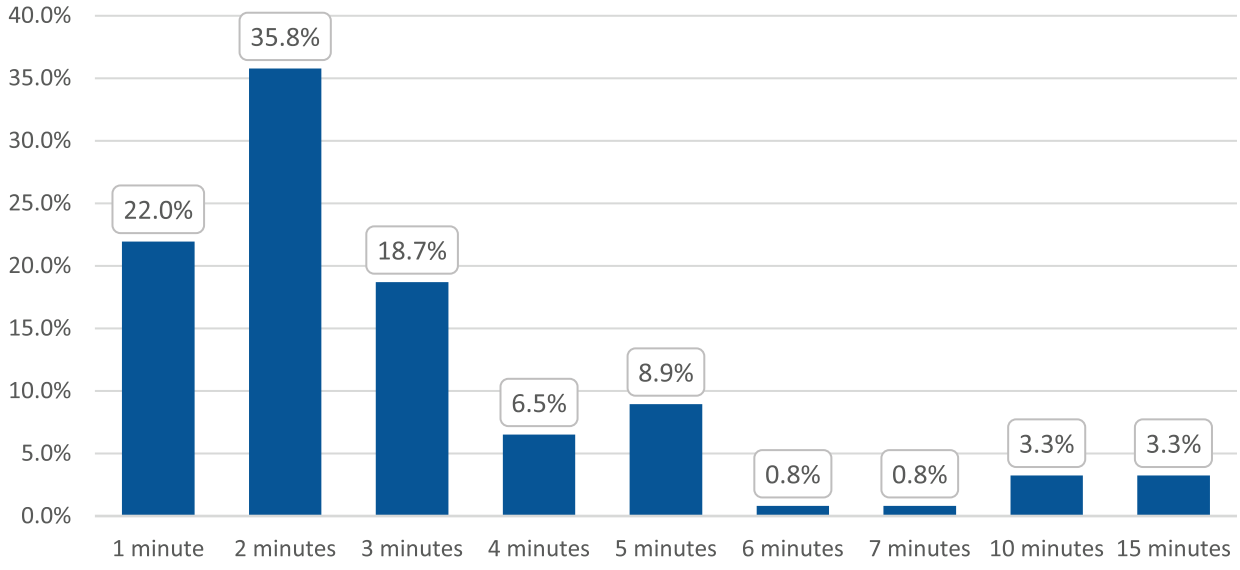

Figure 15. How long did it take you to get to the bus stop from your house?

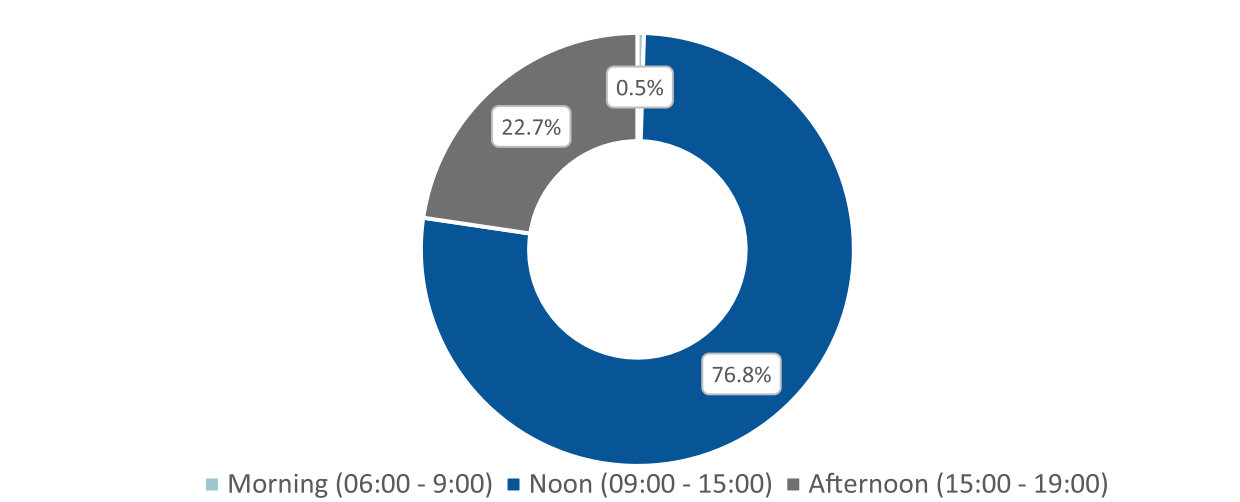

Figure 16. What time of day do you usually travel? (multiple answer)

Before the bus service became available, 56.4% of respondents reported using taxi services to reach their destinations, followed by personal vehicles (26.1%) and family vehicles (12.5%).

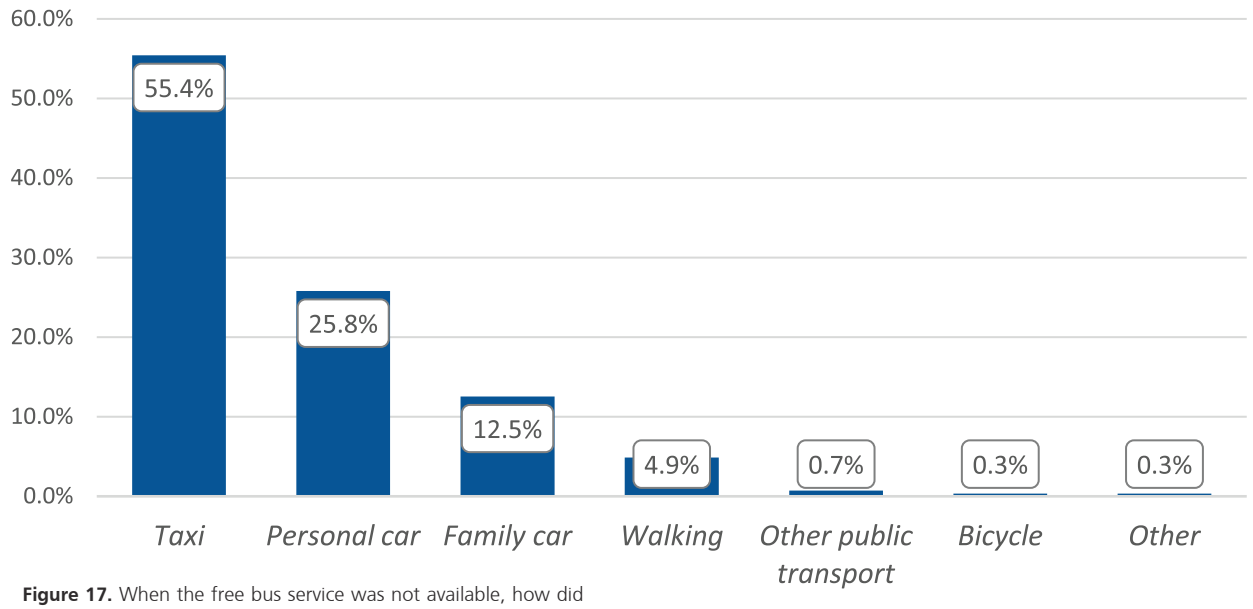

Figure 17. When the free bus service was not available, how did you mostly travel? (multiple answer)

Access and Inclusion

In terms of accessibility and inclusiveness, 42.9% of respondents noticed that the bus had spaces for mothers with strollers. 31.7% also observed available spaces for pregnant women in the bus. However, only 4.8% reported noticing designated spaces for people with wheelchairs.

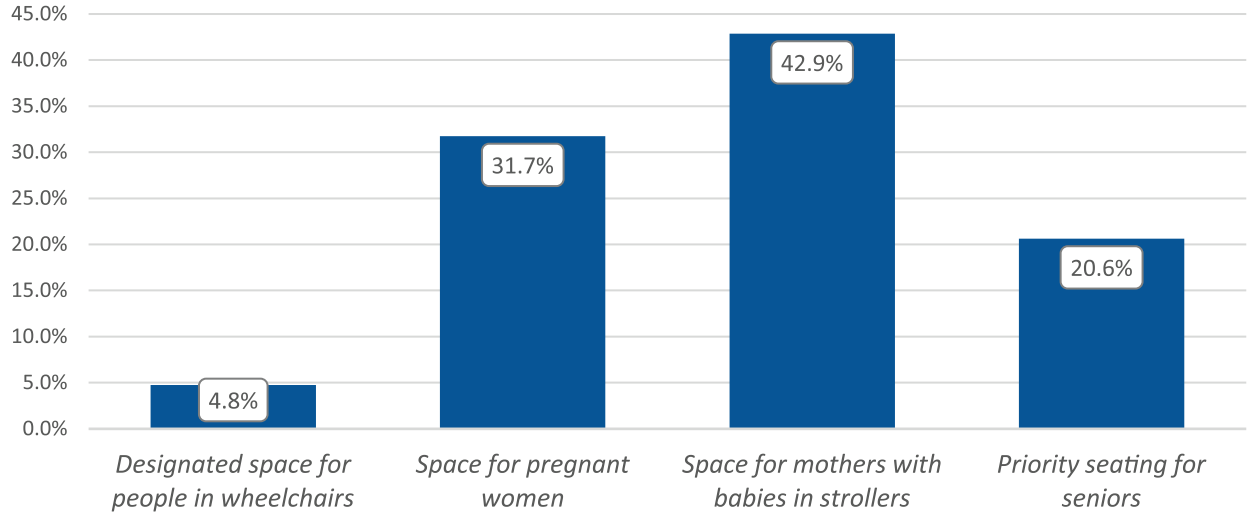

Figure 18. Have you noticed the following accessibility features in the bus? (multiple answer)

In terms of the ease of access to the bus service, a significant majority (93.5%) rated it as "very easy" or "easy." This is an indication of general satisfaction with the current level of accessibility and the effective implementation of user-friendly measures.

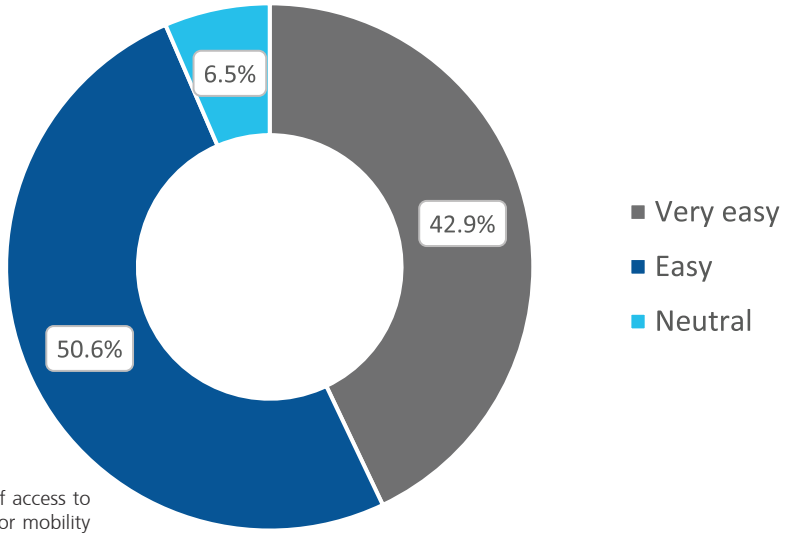

Figure 19. How would you rate the ease of access to the bus service for people with disabilities or mobility challenges?

Regarding inclusiveness, 96.5% of respondents fully agreed or agreed that the bus service is inclusive and accessible to all citizens, regardless of physical ability or socio-economic status. This high level of consensus suggests a strong public perception that the bus services are designed with inclusiveness in mind, contributing positively to overall citizen satisfaction.

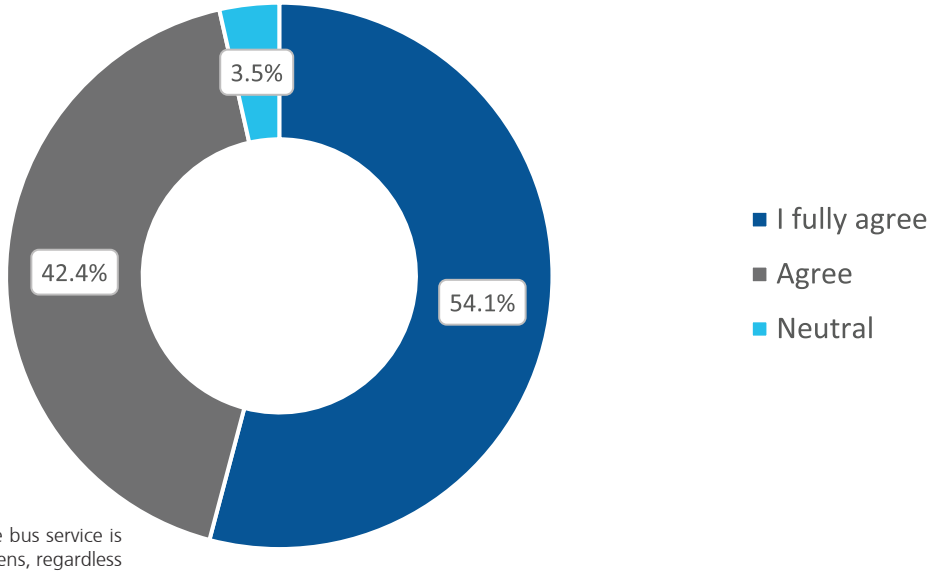

Figure 20. Do you agree that the bus service is inclusive and accessible to all citizens, regardless of physical ability or socio-economic status?

An observation of this finding by age-group highlights significant differences.

Among respondents aged 45-54, 65.6% "fully agree" that the bus service is inclusive, This suggest a strong recognition of the efforts of the bus service to meet their needs, potentially attributed to a higher likelihood of experiencing mobility challenges or caring for dependents.

The 25-34 age group also shows significant support, with 59.1% fully agreeing, indicating that younger middle-aged adults positively value the implemented measures.

In contrast, the 18-24 age group has a slightly lower rate of full agreement at 55%, possibly reflecting their exposure to other public transport services in different cities or countries, leading to higher comparative standards.

Interestingly, among respondents aged 55-64, 51.7% fully agreed, and 44.8% agreed, showing a strong appreciation of the services but also a noticeable portion perceiving room for improvement.

In the 65+ age group, half of the respondents fully agreed, and the other half agreed, This is an indication of good satisfaction among older adults, though specific concerns or nuances in their experience may not be entirely captured by the positive responses.

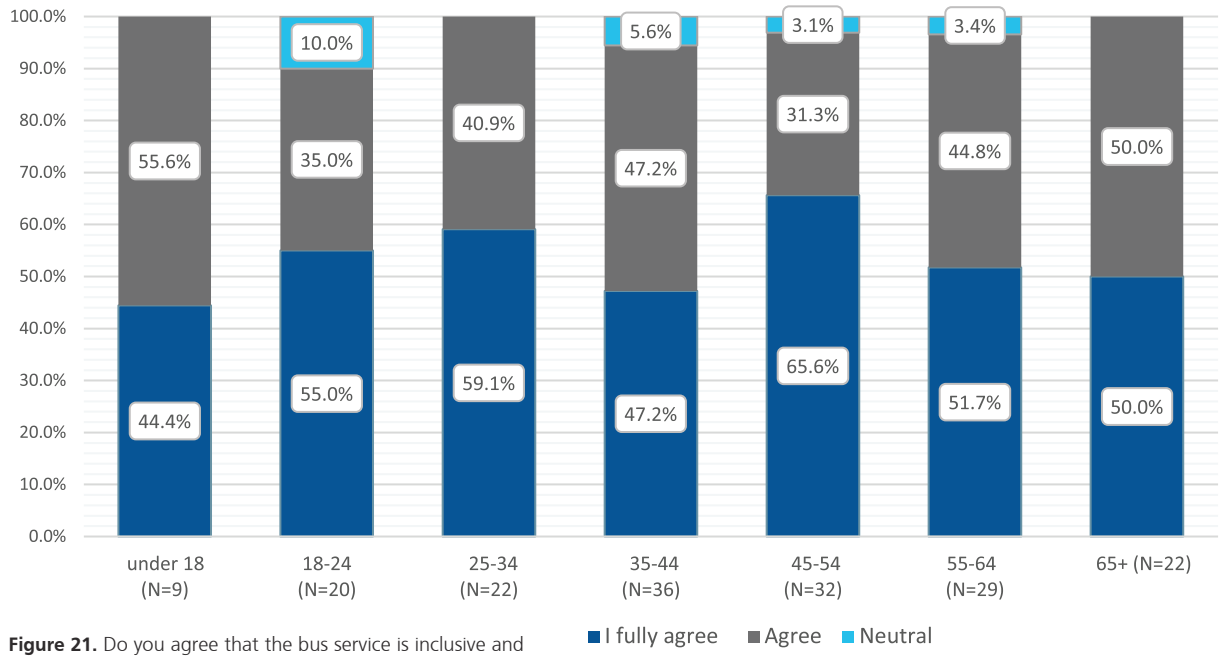

Figure 21. Do you agree that the bus service is inclusive and accessible to all citizens, regardless of physical ability or socio-economic status? By age groups

Overall level of satisfaction

Survey results highlight very positive expectations for the free bus service among respondents. Specifically, 55.3% reported being "very satisfied," while an additional 41.8% expressed general satisfaction, resulting in a cumulative satisfaction rate of 97.1%. This suggests that the vast majority of users have a favorable view of the service.

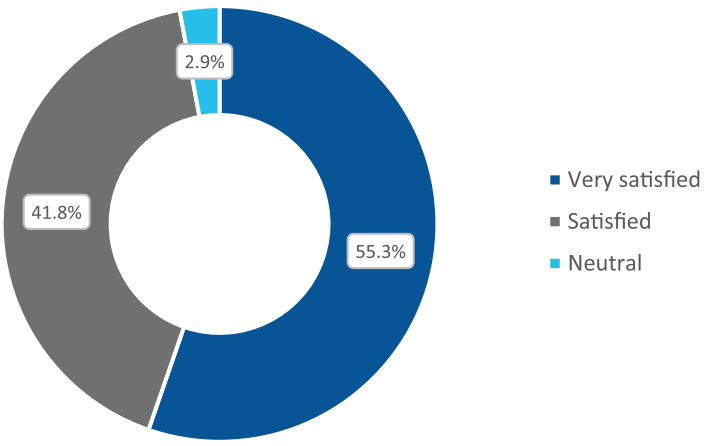

Figure 22. How satisfied are you with the free bus service overall?

Among respondents under 18 years old, 55.6% were "very satisfied," and 44.4% were "satisfied." This positive perception continues in the 18-24 age group, where 45% were "very satisfied" and 55% "satisfied."

However, satisfaction decreases slightly in the 25-34 age group, with only 50% "very satisfied" and a noticeable 13.6% reporting a neutral rating. Among those aged 35-44, satisfaction remains balanced, with 50% "very satisfied" and 50% "satisfied."

The 45-54 age group shows similar trends, with 46.9% "very satisfied" and 50% "satisfied."

As respondents' ages increase, satisfaction rises significantly, with 65.5% of those aged 55-64 reporting being "very satisfied," and the highest satisfaction found among those 65 and older, where 77.3% reported being "very satisfied."

While satisfaction is generally high across all age groups, older respondents show the most favorable attitudes, suggesting that improvements may benefit younger demographics to enhance their experiences.

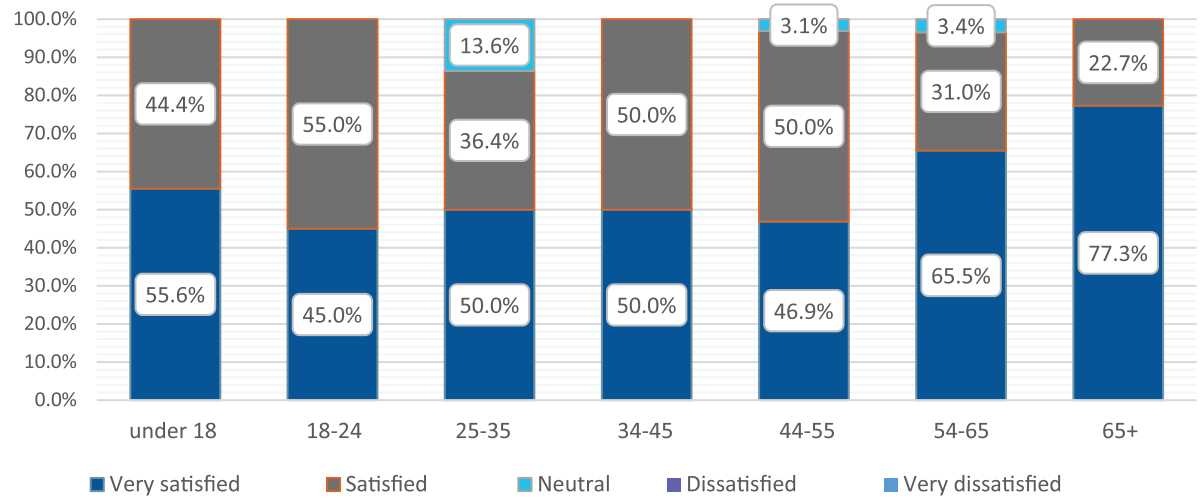

Figure 23. How satisfied are you with the free bus service overall?

Regarding the punctuality of the buses, 78.8% rated it as "excellent," and 19.4% considered it "good." Only a small fraction (1.8%) rated the service as "fair," indicating a strong perception of reliability in terms of bus schedules.

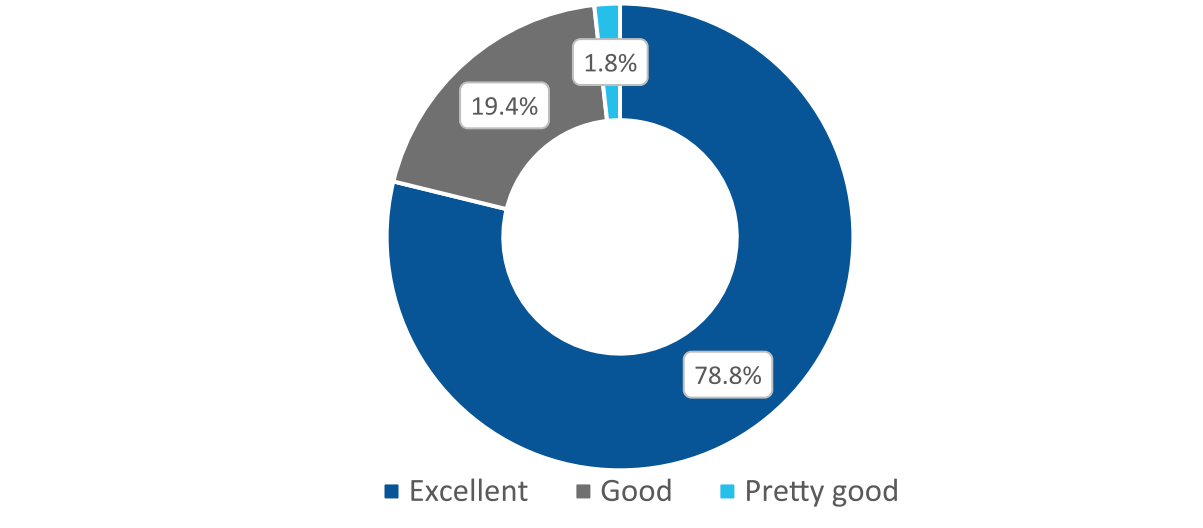

Figure 24. How do you rate the punctuality of buses (arrival/departure times)?

In an interview, the bus driver also expressed satisfaction with the overall travel experience, stating that there had been no scheduling issues, and they consistently adhered to the timetable. Drawing on 42 years of professional experience, the driver emphasized the punctuality of the service. Quote:

"We are always on time. In my 42 years of experience, we've never had more punctual lines than this." (Interview with the bus driver)

In terms of comfort, 83.5% of respondents rated the buses as "very comfortable," while 16.5% rated them as "comfortable." This suggests that the bus service not only operates punctually but also provides an enjoyable travel experience for its users.

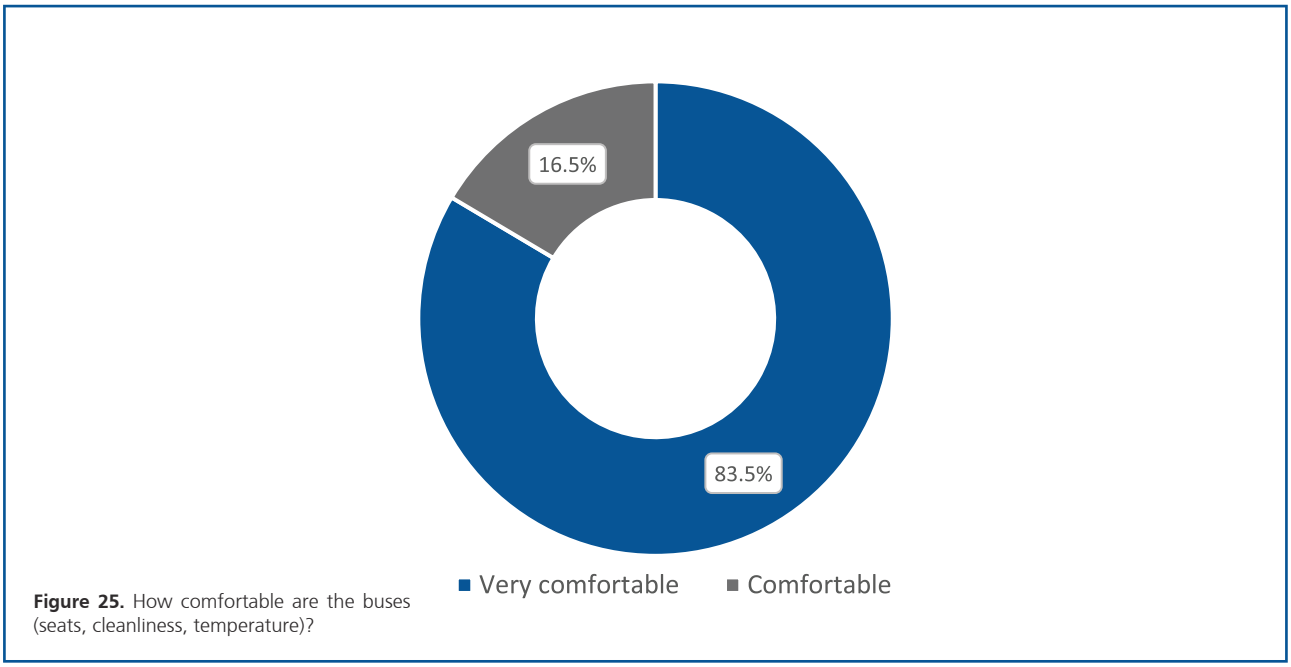

Figure 25. How comfortable are the buses (seats, cleanliness, temperature)?

Regarding the convenience of the bus service in terms of routes and schedules, 78.8% of respondents rated it as "very convenient," with 20.6% considering it "convenient." Only one respondent rated it as "somewhat convenient." This reinforces the idea that the bus service effectively meets its users' needs.

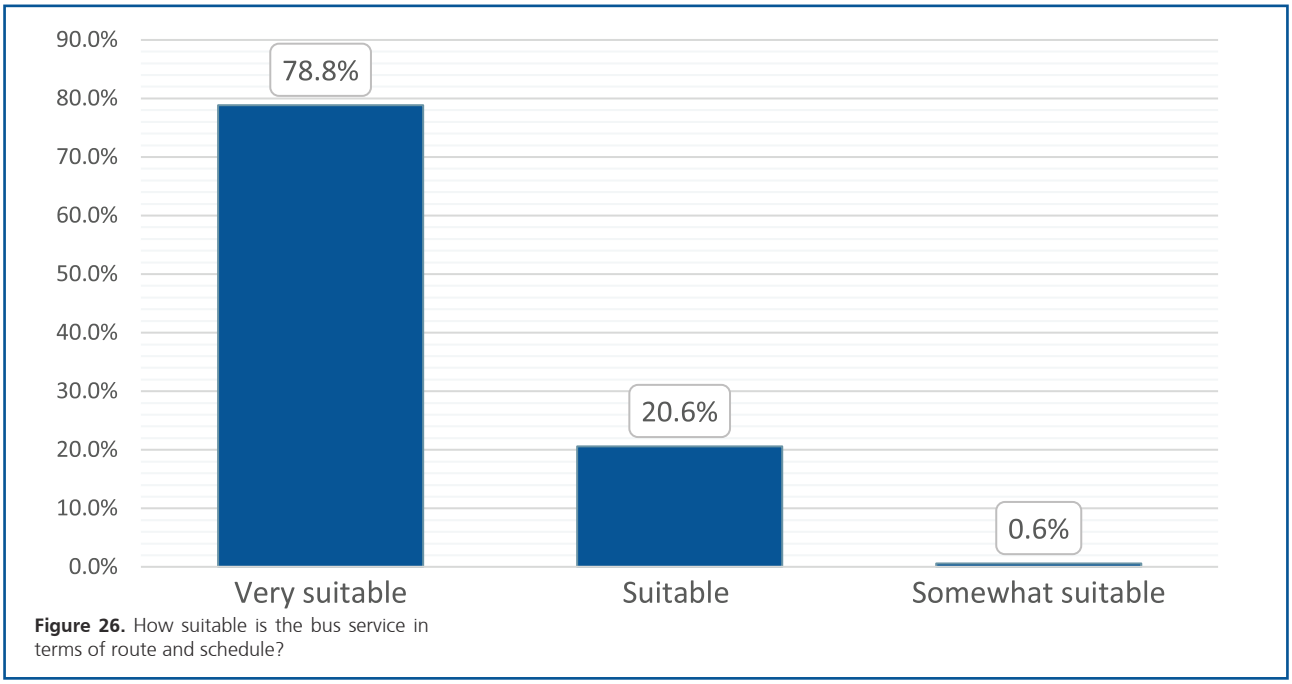

Figure 26. How suitable is the bus service in terms of route and schedule?

When broken down by type of residence, 84.6% of urban respondents rated the service as "very suitable," compared to 77.8% of rural respondents. Additionally, a higher percentage of rural respondents (21.5%) found the service "suitable," compared to 15.4% of urban respondents. These results reflect that both urban and rural users generally perceive the bus service as suitable, with urban users being slightly more favorable. However, the higher percentage of rural users rating the service as "suitable" suggests they may appreciate the available options more, possibly due to the limited transportation choices in rural areas.

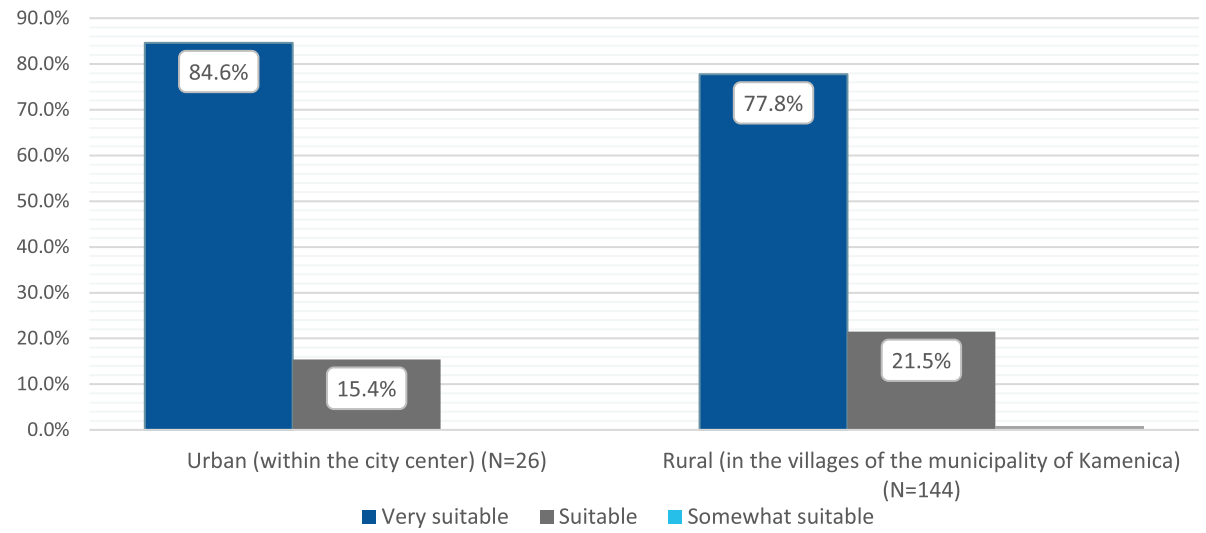

Figure 27. How suitable is the bus service in terms of schedule? By type of residence

The interactions with bus drivers were also rated positively, with 75.3% of respondents describing their experience as "excellent" and 24.1% as "good." This favorable feedback highlights the importance of the drivers' professionalism and the overall quality of customer service.

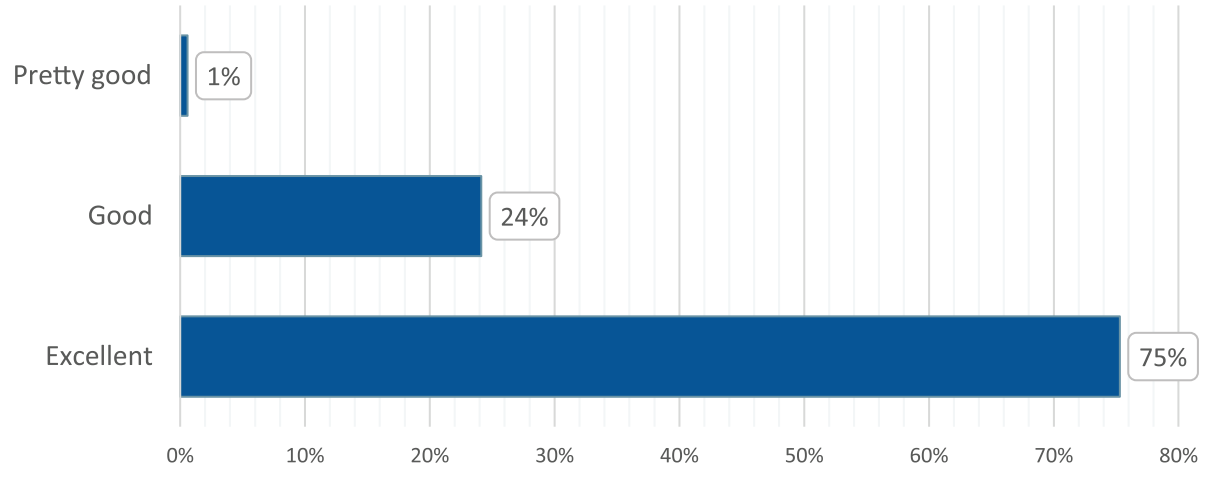

Figure 28. How do you rate your interaction with bus drivers?

This sentiment aligns with findings from qualitative data, particularly the interview with the bus driver. The driver noted that interactions with passengers have been pleasant, with passengers appearing satisfied with the service and appreciating the financial relief it provides. Quote:

"Deri më tani nuk kemi vërejtur ndonjë sfidë të madhe në zbatimin e kësaj iniciative. Pasagjerët e kanë të lehtë të hyjnë në autobus; vlerësojnë edhe iniciativën" (Intervistë me shoferin e autobusit).

Impact on the environment

The environmental impact analysis provides insights into behavioral patterns and attitudes toward public transport following the introduction of the free bus service. When asked if they had reduced personal vehicle usage since the initiative began (N=69, among those who reported owning a personal or family vehicle) 29% of respondents reported a significant decrease, and 17.4% noted a moderate reduction. However, a larger portion (42%) indicated that they had not reduced their car usage, suggesting that for many, the availability of free public transport has not replaced the convenience of personal vehicles. A smaller percentage (11.6%) mentioned they typically do not use their family vehicle for personal needs.

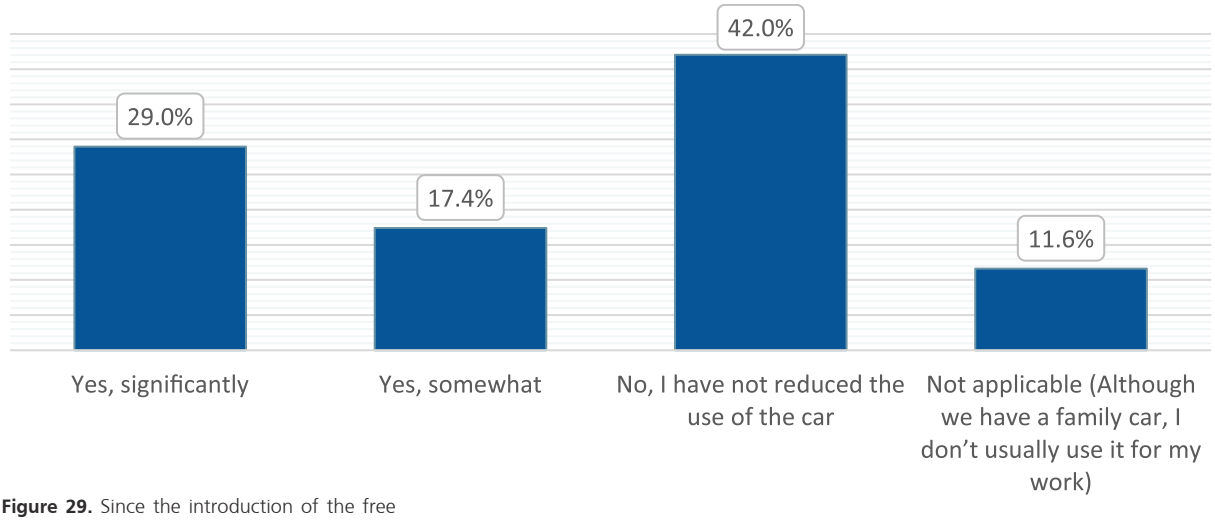

Figure 29. Since the introduction of the free bus service, have you reduced your personal vehicle usage?

A higher percentage of rural respondents (32.2%) reported a significant decrease in car usage since the free bus service began, compared to only 10% of urban respondents. This suggests that rural areas, with fewer transportation alternatives, may find the bus service more appealing.

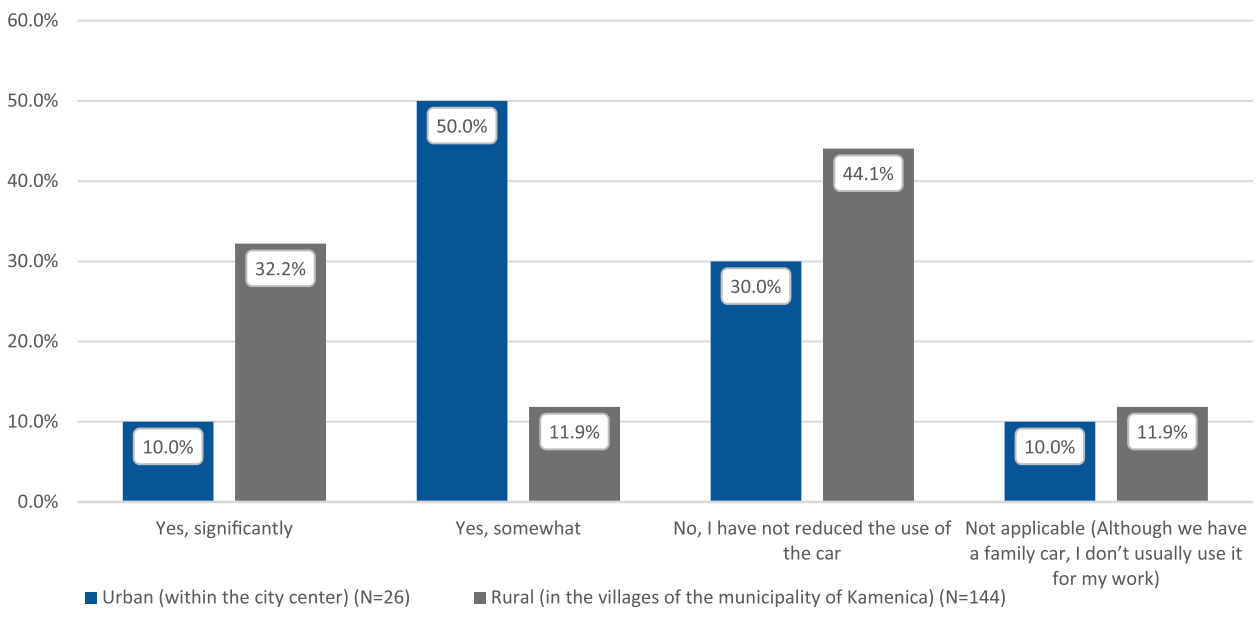

Figure 30. Since the free bus service was introduced, have you reduced your use of personal vehicle? By type of residence

Regarding the perception of air pollution and its relation to the use of bus service versus car use, the majority of respondents expressed favorable views of the bus service benefits. Specifically, 43.5% agreed that using the bus instead of a car helps reduce air pollution, and 37.6% fully agreed. Only 18.8% remained neutral.

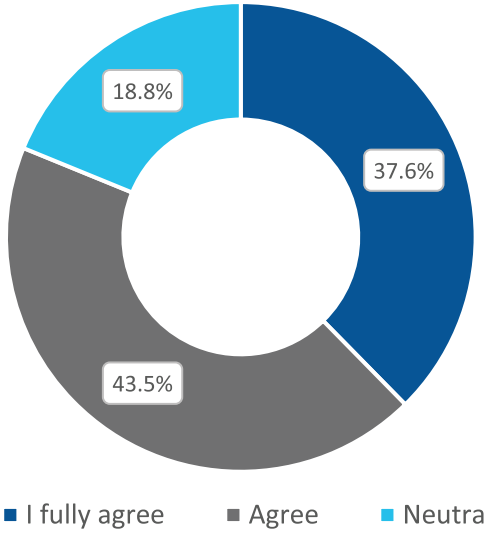

Figure 31. Do you believe that using the bus service instead of a car positively impacts air pollution reduction?

Findings reveal that across all age groups, there is strong agreement that using the bus instead of a personal vehicle contributes to air quality improvement. The highest level of agreement was among respondents under 18 years old (55.6%), while the lowest was among those aged 65+ (27.3%). Strong agreement was most common in the 65+ group (50%), while the 25-34 group showed the highest moderate agreement (45.5%).

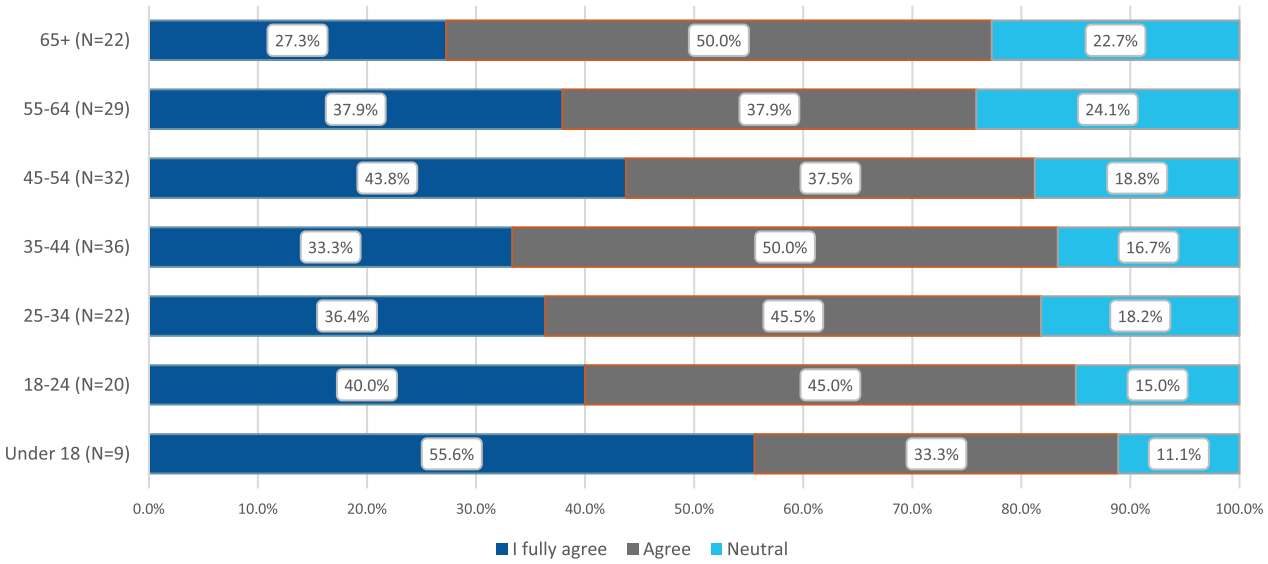

Figure 32. Do you believe that using the bus service instead of a car positively impacts air pollution reduction? By age group

Respondents were also asked whether they would be more likely to use public transport if it contributed to reducing air pollution. Interestingly, opinions were somewhat divided: 30% responded positively, 37.1% expressed doubts, and 32.9% were unsure. This uncertainty highlights the need for increased awareness about the environmental advantages of public transport.

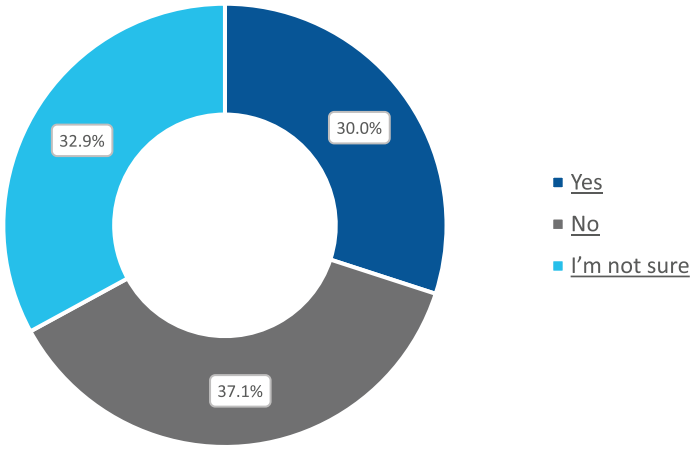

Figure 33. Are you more likely to use public transport if it helps reduce environmental pollution?

Traffic congestion

Survey data also shows that most respondents (71.2%) have not noticed significant changes in traffic conditions, such as congestion, since the bus service's introduction. Only a small percentage (5.3%) reported a noticeable improvement, while 23.5% noticed slight improvements, This suggests that while there may be some positive impact on traffic, it is not widely perceived as such.

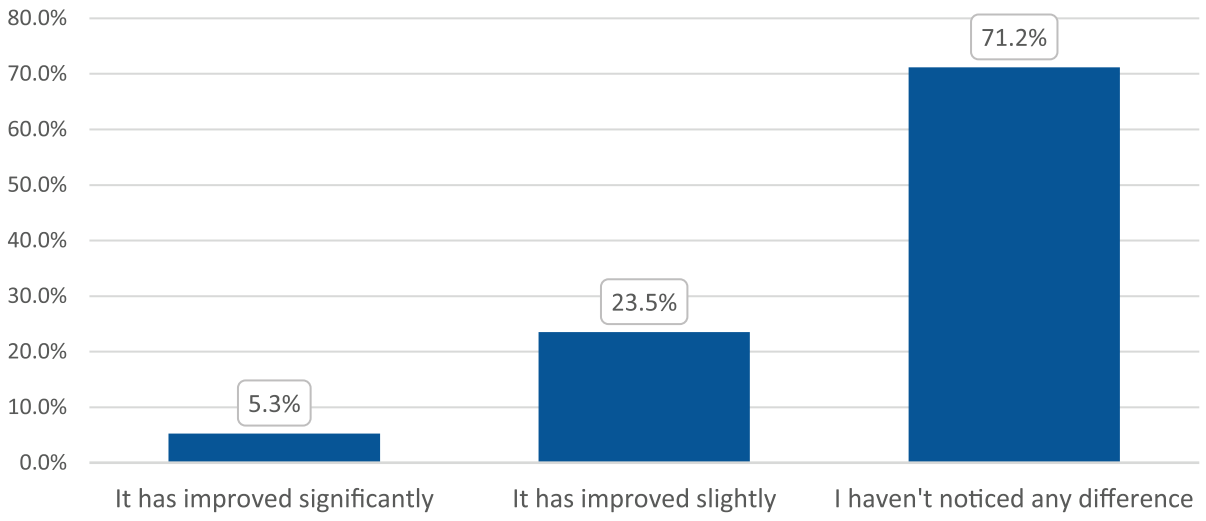

Figure 34. Have you noticed changes in traffic conditions (e.g., congestion) since the introduction of the free bus service?

Similarly, regarding parking availability, 87% of those who own a personal or family vehicle (N=69) have not observed any significant change. Only 13% reported that finding parking had become easier, indicating that improvements in this area are limited. These findings suggest that, regardless of the introduction of bus service, the overall impact on traffic congestion and parking availability has been minimal for most respondents.

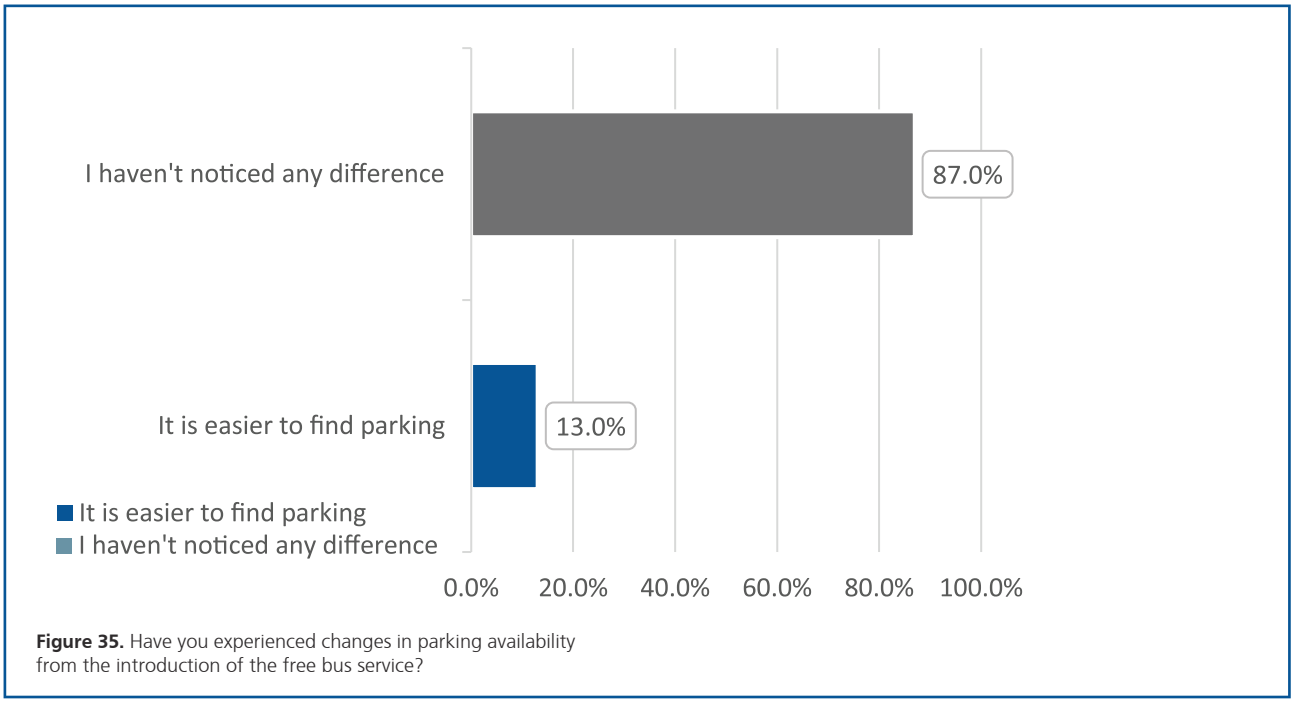

Figure 35. Have you experienced changes in parking availability from the introduction of the free bus service?

During discussions about traffic and parking around bus stations, the driver did not identify any particular bus station as overly crowded, stating that passenger volumes were generally manageable. He noted that mornings tend to be quiet, with higher passenger numbers observed in the afternoon and evening. Quote:

"Mornings are very quiet, and traffic is quite manageable. From midday to night, traffic congestion worsens slightly, and passenger flow increases." (Interview with the bus driver)

Information channels

Most respondents (49.4%) first learned about the free bus initiative through social media, highlighting its significant role in disseminating information about public services. Social networks surpassed traditional communication methods, emphasizing the shift towards digital platforms as the primary source of news. A considerable portion (35.3%) learned about the initiative from friends or family, underscoring the importance of word-of-mouth communication within communities.

In contrast, only 13.5% received the information directly from municipal announcements, and only 1.8% learned about it through television. This suggests that more traditional communication channels, such as TV and municipal notices, played a minimal role in promoting the service.

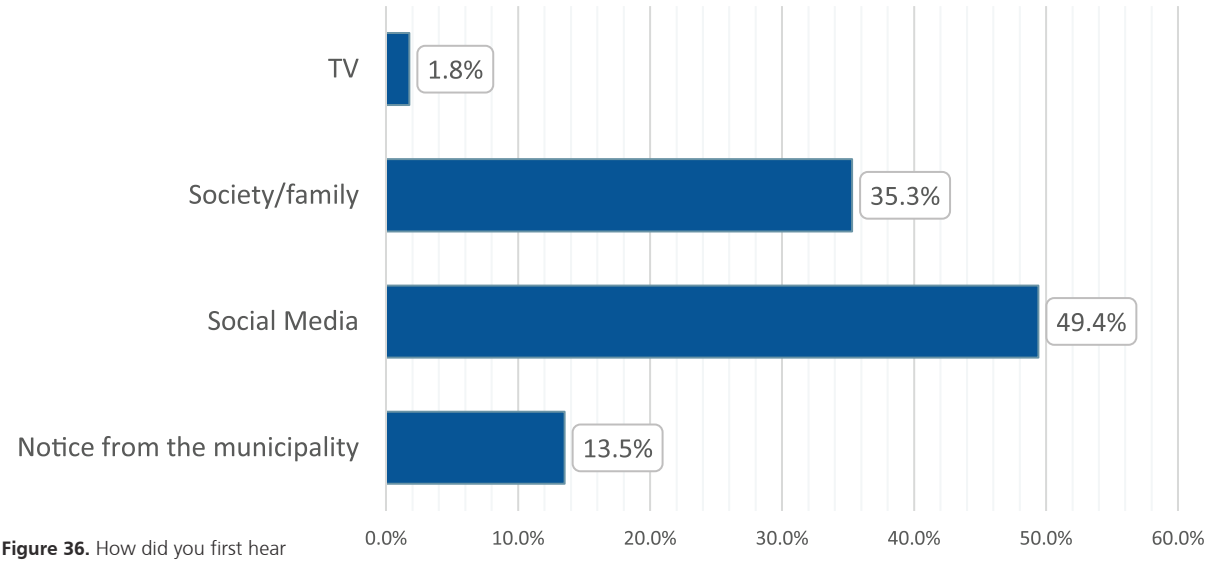

Figure 36. How did you first hear about the free bus initiative?

There are significant differences between urban and rural respondents in how they initially learned about the free bus initiative. In urban areas, 30.8% of respondents received information through municipal announcements, a much higher percentage than in rural areas, where only 10.4% did so. Social media remained the dominant information source in both settings, with 46.2% of urban respondents and 50% of rural respondents learning about the initiative this way. However, information shared through friends or family played a larger role in rural areas (37.5%) compared to urban areas (23.1%). Notably, TV was mentioned only by rural respondents (2.1%) as a source of information.

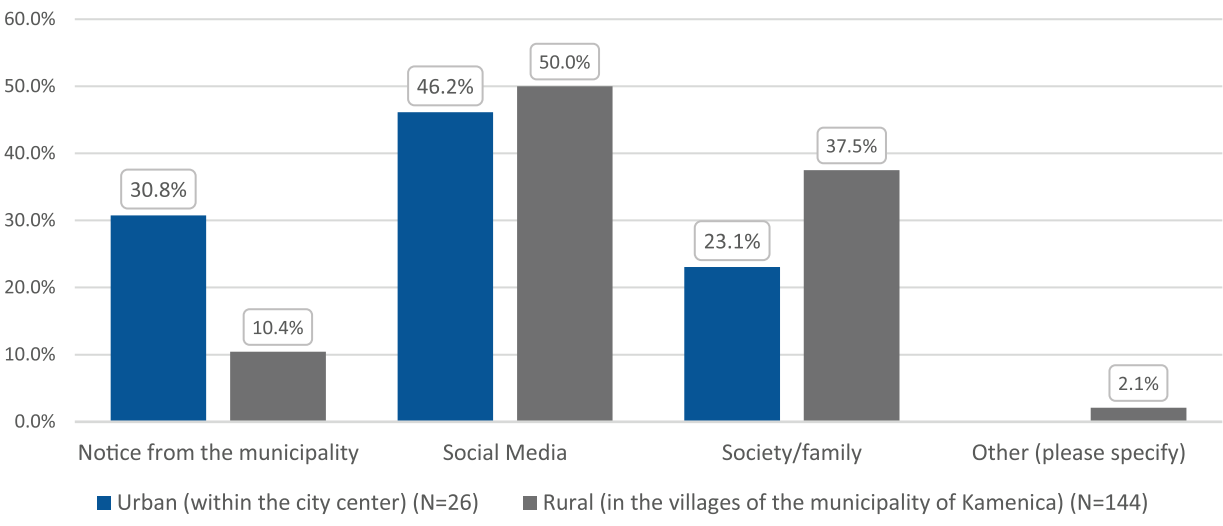

Figure 37. How did you first hear about the free bus initiative? (By type of residence)

Younger respondents (under 18 years old) primarily learned about the initiative through social media (77.8%), with municipal announcements playing a minimal role (11.1%). Similarly, social media remained the dominant source for the 18-24 (80%) and 25-34 (72.7%) age groups, although some respondents in these groups also heard about the initiative from family or friends (15% and 13.6%, respectively).

As age increases, reliance on social media decreases, with respondents aged 35-44 and 45-54 learning more through family or friends (22.2% and 40.6%, respectively) and municipal announcements (19.4% and 9.4%). Older respondents, particularly those aged 65+, mainly learned about the initiative through family and friends (86.4%), with none citing social media as their information source. Interestingly, television was used minimally as a source of information across all age groups.

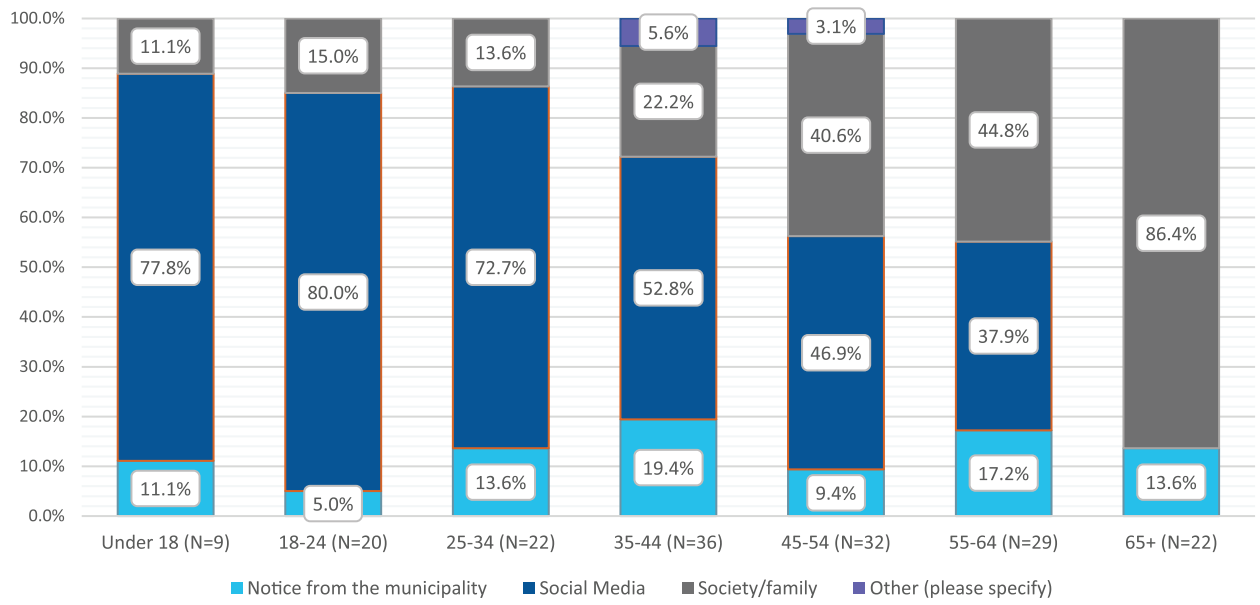

Figure 38. How did you first hear about the free bus initiative? By age group

Willingness to pay

The average amount respondents were willing and able to pay for the bus service if it were to operate regularly was 0.56 EUR. This figure reflects the affordability and perceived value of the service, balancing the financial capacity of respondents with their reliance on public transport.

The willingness to pay for the bus service averages at 0.56 EUR.

Figure 39. If the free bus service were to transition to a paid service, how much would you be willing to pay for it?

An analysis of respondents' primary motivations for using the bus service reveals several key factors: The most cited reason was the lack of alternative transport, with 30.6% of respondents indicating that they do not own a car, making the bus service a necessity. Affordability was another significant motivator, with 28.8% of respondents choosing the service due to its low cost, emphasizing the importance of keeping public transport options affordable for the population. Reliability, with 26.5% of respondents prioritizing timely and consistent service, was another crucial factor, underscoring the need for dependable public transportation.

Meanwhile, convenience, defined as easy access to routes, motivated 12.4% of users. This highlights the significance of proximity to bus routes for residents in influencing public transport usage. However, factors like comfort—particularly seating and climate control—were mentioned by only 1.2% of respondents, indicating that such amenities are less critical to most users. Lastly, safety was the least selected motivator, with only 0.6% of respondents expressing that feeling safe during their journeys was a primary reason for using the bus.

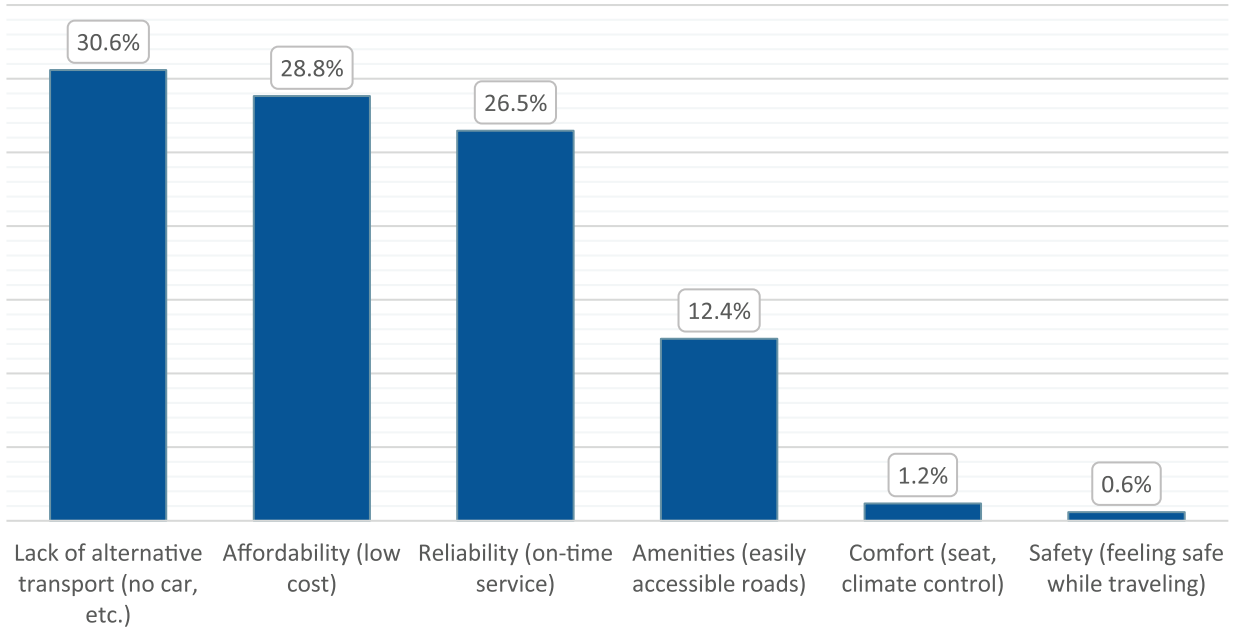

Figure 40. What is your primary motivation for using the bus service?

Preferred bus routes and digitalization of services

The final set of questions related to respondents' preferred bus routes and the extent to which they would prefer digital access to route information.

Regarding route preferences, 27.4% of respondents expressed a desire for the continuation of the Karaqevë-Kamenicë line, while 26.5% requested that the existing route operate in both directions. A considerable portion (16.2%) requested the service's expansion to cover all villages and neighborhoods within Kamenicë, indicating a demand for broader geographical coverage. Other specific routes, such as Karaqevë-Busavat-Kamenicë and Karaqevë-Shipashnicë e Epërme-Kamenicë, were also mentioned by smaller groups, suggesting a clear preference for extending access to more remote areas. Responses such as "don't know" or "prefer not to answer" were excluded from the analysis, resulting in a sample size of 117 respondents.

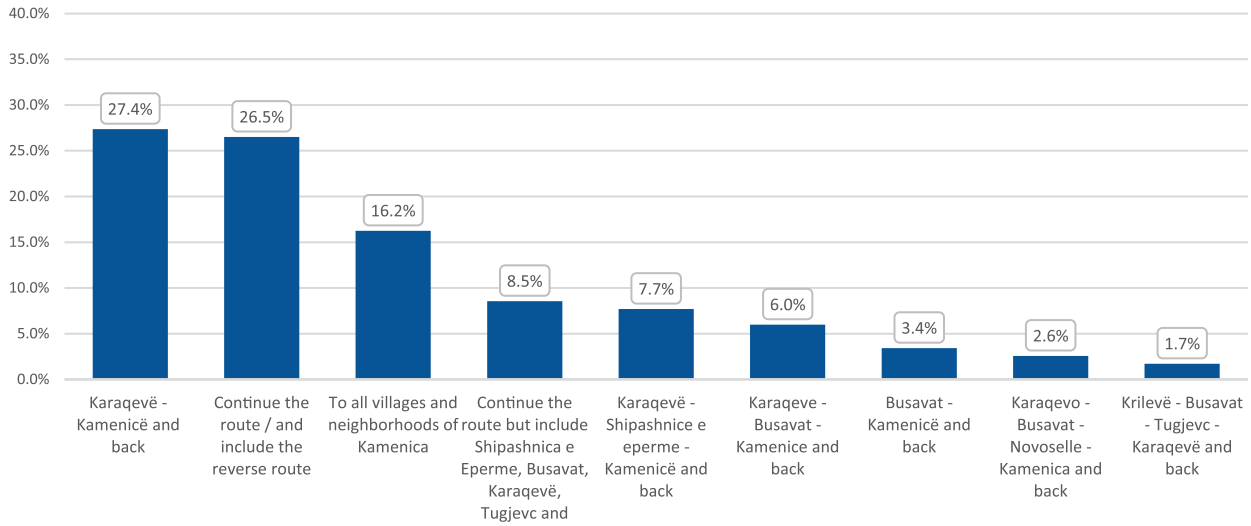

Figure 41. If you could suggest new bus routes or modifications to existing ones, which areas or neighborhoods would you prefer?

On this note, the bus driver also proposed introducing reverse routes to improve connectivity with surrounding villages and extending service hours beyond 5:00 PM to better accommodate passenger needs: Quote:

"The bus service is good, but I suggest having a reverse route to these villages and others, not just the one we currently have. Also, the schedule should be extended beyond just 17:00." (Interview with the bus driver).

When asked about digital services, the overwhelming majority of respondents (87.6%) supported the idea of making bus route information available online, signaling a strong demand for accessible, digitized public transport information. Additionally, nearly all respondents (98.8%) expressed a desire for the installation of digital bus stop displays, reflecting a clear preference for modern, technology-driven solutions to enhance their travel experience. Only a small minority opposed such digitalization, with 12.4% against online information and 1.2% against digital bus stop displays.

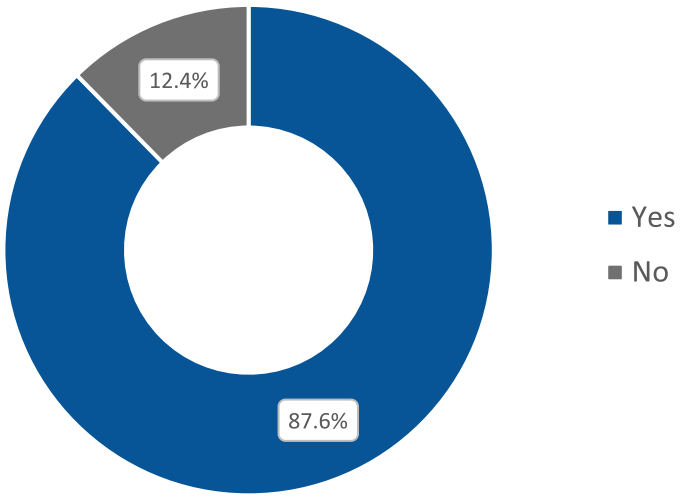

Figure 42. Do you want bus route information to be available online/digitized?

Conclusions and Recommendations

The free bus initiative in Municipality of Kamenica was introduced to address the transportation needs of vulnerable groups, particularly the elderly, youth, and women. Given the municipality's diverse geography and limited transportation options, many villages had become isolated, restricting access to essential services such as education, healthcare, and employment. By improving connectivity, the initiative aims to alleviate these issues, enhance access to vital resources, and contribute to broader goals of environmental sustainability and social equity.
Survey findings indicate that the bus service plays a crucial role in facilitating daily activities, with 65.3% of respondents identifying tasks such as shopping and obtaining official documents as their primary reasons for using the service. This underscores the importance of the bus service in supporting essential tasks. However, it is worth noting that 42.9% of respondents reported having used the bus only once since it began operating. This suggests that while the service is available, there is significant potential to increase the usability, as the community becomes more aware of its benefits and as improvements in bus routes and schedules align better with residents' needs.

In terms of accessibility, the initiative has generally been well received. A significant majority (93.5%) of respondents described the service as easy to access, and 96.5% believed it was inclusive for all citizens, regardless of physical ability or socioeconomic status. However, there are areas for improvement, particularly regarding provisions for individuals with disabilities. While 42.9% noted the availability of spaces for mothers with strollers and 31.7% observed similar accommodations for pregnant women, only 4.8% reported designated spaces for wheelchair users. This suggests that some aspects of service design are not as visible to all passengers, highlighting the need for improvements to ensure equal access and visibility for all community groups.

In terms of environmental impact, the initiative has encouraged some positive behavioral changes. Among respondents who own or have access to a personal vehicle, 29% reported a significant reduction in car use since the bus service began, and 17.4% reported a moderate decrease. However, 42% indicated that they had not reduced their frequency of car use, suggesting that many residents still prefer using personal vehicles despite the availability of free public transport. Moreover, rural respondents were more likely to report significant reductions in car use compared to urban residents, indicating that the bus service is particularly beneficial for those with fewer transportation alternatives.

Public perception of the environmental benefits of using buses over personal vehicles is generally favorable, with 43.5% of respondents agreeing on the positive impact on air pollution. However, when asked if they would be more likely to use public transport specifically to reduce air pollution, only 30% responded positively, revealing a potential gap in awareness regarding the environmental advantages of public transit.

While the free bus initiative in Kamenica has made significant progress in improving citizen connectivity and promoting inclusiveness, long-term success will depend on ensuring financial sustainability, expanding service routes based on citizen feedback, and addressing the visibility of dedicated spaces for individuals with disabilities. With a focus on these areas, the initiative will be able to further support the broader municipal objectives of sustainability, economic development, and improved public transport for all.

To enhance the effectiveness and sustainability of the initiative, several key recommendations can be made: Improve bus routes and schedules based on continuous citizen feedback to ensure alignment with the residents' needs. Engaging with local stakeholders, including citizen groups and organizations, will facilitate a better understanding of demand for specific routes and times, thereby encouraging greater service use.

Implement a comprehensive awareness campaign to promote the environmental benefits of public transport and the advantages of using the bus service over personal vehicles. This campaign can focus on educating residents on how increased bus usage can contribute to reducing air pollution and traffic congestion, fostering a culture of reliance on public transport.

Extend service hours, especially during peak periods and weekends, to offer more convenience for individuals with irregular schedules and improve access to leisure activities. Introduce loyalty programs that reward frequent travelers with discounts on local services, fostering a stronger connection between citizens and the initiative.

It is essential to address the accessibility gaps for individuals with disabilities. The Municipality must prioritize the implementation of designated spaces for wheelchair users and consider additional features that enhance overall service accessibility. This commitment to inclusivity will not only improve the experience for users with disabilities but also reinforce citizens' perception of the bus service as a sustainable transportation option for everyone.

The municipality must explore the potential for subsidies under the Administrative Instruction No. 26/2017 for Subsidies of Economically Unsustainable Interurban Transport

Lines, of 0.20 euros. By applying these subsidies for less financially viable routes, the Municipality of Kamenica can maintain a robust public transportation network that meets the diverse needs of its residents while ensuring financial sustainability. This approach will not only increase the reach of the bus service, but also contribute to the broader objectives of environmental sustainability and social equity within the community.

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