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KOSOVO

COUNTRY PAPER

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1. Introduction

Kosovo is the youngest country in Europe since it declared its independence from Serbia in February 2008. It is located in the Southeast of Europe, landlocked between Albania, Serbia, Macedonia and Montenegro. The country has experienced drastic changes in the past 30 years: it was successively a socialist autonomous province of Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, a territory in Serbia, a territory administered by the UN, and finally, an independent republic.

This paper was written in the frame of the project “Western Balkan CSOs for Global Development”, financed by the Austrian Development Cooperation. The project is aimed to raise capacities of Western Balkans’ civil society organization to engage in political dialogue, advocacy and awareness raising of global development issues.

A strong and vibrant civil society is crucial for addressing global justice, solidarity and international development and should be involved in the national process for creation of development policies, meaningful involvement of the civil society in the national development policies will be especially important. Involvement of the civil society in development processes is even more important for the EU countries and those which aspire to become EU members since they are obliged to set up its international development cooperation and humanitarian aid strategies and adopt EU acquis. Kosovo, being a potential candidate country and a strong aspirant for becoming an EU member will also have to do so.

This paper gives background on the country’s socio-economic situation and recent history, the EU integration process, the state of play with the Official Development Assistance and the state of development of the civil society. The aim is to provide information for assessing the potentials for civil society’s meaningful involvement in development policies in Kosovo and in meeting the country’s commitments related to the EU accession in the area of development and humanitarian aid.

The analysis of the state of play in Kosovo with the civil society and the environment in which it operates is based on the findings from the monitoring conducted by the Kosovar Civil Society Foundation for 2016 within the unique tool developed by BCSDN and its members and partners – [The Monitoring Matrix on enabling environment for civil society development](#).

2. Country Profile

2.1. Recent History

Kosovo gained independence after a long period of ethnic tensions between Kosovo’s Albanian and Serb population that culminated with the Kosovo war of 1998-1999. The war was brought to an end with a military intervention of NATO forcing the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia to withdraw its troops from Kosovo and to transfer the governance of the province to the United Nations. In line with the UN resolution 1244, international civil and military presence was authorized and the UN Interim Administration Mission in

Kosovo (UNMIK) was established. In addition, the NATO-led Kosovo Force (KFOR) was established to provide security to UNMIK making Kosovo de facto a UN province. According to recent estimates, the war resulted in half of the two million Kosovo's residents becoming refugees (est. 600,000 by April 1999) or internally displaced people (est. around 400,000)¹. After the end of the war, Serbia continued formal sovereignty over Kosovo, recognized by the international community; however a clear majority of the province's population sought independence. International negotiations for determining Kosovo's final status began in 2006 and resulted in a settlement proposal for 'supervised independence'. Soon after, in February 2008, Kosovo's Parliament declared independence receiving mixed reactions from the international community. Sporadic bursts of violence led by some Kosovo Serbs opposing the secession occurred, while the EU provided additional police and civilian resources to Kosovo - the European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo (EULEX Kosovo) which included around 3,200 police and judicial personnel. Since then, EULEX's mandate has been extended up to 14 June 2018.

Since the declaration of independence in 2008 until March 2017 Kosovo has been recognized as an independent state by 115 countries out of which 23 are EU members, while 5 EU countries have not recognized it yet: Cyprus, Greece, Romania, Slovakia and Spain. The Government of Serbia in particular does not recognise Kosovo. After strong pressure and mediation by the EU a normalisation dialogue was initiated between Kosovo and Serbia in 2011 which resulted in signing of the "First Agreement of Principles Governing the Normalization of Relations" in April 2013. According to the agreement, Belgrade acknowledged the Prishtina government as the legitimate governing and administrative authority over the territory of Kosovo. Prishtina agreed to grant the Serbian community in northern Kosovo a separate status, allowing them to run their own affairs though affirming that they remain a nominal part of Kosovo. Despite some progress, in particular in regards to the integration of police and the organisation of elections in the northern part of the country, both countries failed to implement the signed agreements.

2.2 Current Socio-economic and Political Situation

According to the last 2011 census, Kosovo has a population of 1.7 million with only 8% being minorities, of which 4% are ethnic Serbs². The census was boycotted by majority Serb municipalities, so their percentage is most likely much higher. Serbs in North of Kosovo are the largest minority, followed by the Romani, Ashkali and Egyptians (RAE) RAE community.³ The constitution guarantees the rights of minorities, though the protection of orthodox cultural heritage remains a challenge and more needs to be done regarding the political, social and economic inclusion of the RAE community⁴. Kosovo largely

¹ <https://migration.ucdavis.edu/mn/more.php?id=1801>, Accessed on 20.04.2017

² <https://unstats.un.org/unsd/censuskb20/KnowledgebaseArticle10700.aspx>, Accessed on 21.04.2017

³ <http://ask.rks-gov.net/sq/agjencia-e-statistikave-te-kosoves/add-news/te-dhenat-demografike-sipas-komunave-2011>, Accessed on 21.04.2017

⁴ https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/near/files/pdf/key_documents/2016/20161109_report_kosovo.pdf, Accessed on 21.04.2017

recovered from the mass exodus of the late 1990s when hundreds of thousands people left their homes for safety. Nevertheless, mass emigration is currently a particular concern for the country, while its international isolation remains a key challenge, as Kosovo's citizens can travel without visa to 6 countries only.⁵

Kosovo is a lower-middle-income country with solid economic growth of 3.6% over the last decade. It has a GDP of EUR 6.05 billion and a GDP per capita of EUR 3,751.⁶ The biggest share in Kosovo's economy is of the services sector with 64.5% contribution to the country's GDP, followed by 23% share of the GDP of the industrial sector, mainly mining, manufacturing and construction, and a contribution of 13% of the GDP of the agricultural sector. Kosovo was ranked 85th out of 187 countries in the Human Development Index 2016.⁷ It has a 33% of unemployment rate and extremely high 57.7% of youth unemployment rate, while 29.7% of the population lives below the poverty rate.⁸

Reliance on remittances and the widespread informal economy further decrease employment incentives, resulting in low labour force participation, especially among women, and high unemployment rates, in particular among young and unskilled workers.⁹ From 2005 until 2017 remittances in Kosovo averaged 112.60 million EUR with highest amount of 608.70 million EUR in June of 2008 and a record low of 41.60 million EUR in January of 2014¹⁰.

The Government of the Republic of Kosovo is defined under the 2008 Constitution of Kosovo as a multi-party parliamentary representative democratic republic. The Assembly of the Republic of Kosovo is regulated by the Constitution of Kosovo and has 120 members, with 100 of them being directly elected into the Assembly whilst the rest of the seats are distributed as follows: 10 seats for the representatives of the Serbs, 4 seats for the representatives of the Romani, Ashkali and Egyptians, 3 seats for the Bosniaks, 2 seats for the Turks and 1 seat for the Gorans.

According to the EC progress reports, one of the most serious problems plaguing the country is the lack of transparency and accountability in Kosovo's public administration and the widespread corruption which negatively affects also foreign investment. The judiciary, customs and public utilities sectors are the most-affected by corruption, and companies regularly bribe public officials¹¹. Another problematic issue for the country's democratic capacity is the media freedom, as newspapers which are not aligned with the government or ruling parties have been subject to intimidation through tax investigations or blocked from accessing public information.¹²

⁵<http://www.mfa-ks.net/?page=2,70>, Accessed on 21.04.2017

⁶<http://data.worldbank.org/country/kosovo>, Accessed on 21.04.2017

⁷http://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/human_development_report_2016.pdf Accessed on 21.04.2017

⁸<http://www.ks.undp.org/content/kosovo/en/home/countryinfo.html>, Accessed on 21.04.2017

⁹https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/near/files/pdf/key_documents/2016/20161109_report_kosovo.pdf, Accessed on 21.04.2017

¹⁰ <https://tradingeconomics.com/kosovo/remittances>, Accessed on 20.07.2017

¹¹<http://www.business-anti-corruption.com/country-profiles/kosovo>, Accessed on 13.04.2017

¹²<https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-press/2014/kosovo#.VK--E3u9FBE>, Accessed on 13.04.2017

3. Kosovo and the EU

Kosovo has a status of a potential candidate country being promised a prospect of joining once ready. Since the Thessaloniki Summit of June 2003, the country has participated in the Stabilisation and Association Process (SAP), the EU policy that prepares the Western Balkans for future EU membership. The EU's commitment to support Kosovo's future in the EU was outlined in detail in the 2005 Communication of the European Commission to the Council "*A European Future for Kosovo*¹³". The EU has conducted regular meetings with Kosovo authorities to monitor the progress in the EU enlargement process as part of the Stabilisation and Association Process Dialogue and has invested substantial financial support in the country both for reconstruction and reconciliation, and later for institution and state building in the form of pre-accession assistance. Along with the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance, the EU has managed to use different enlargement policy tools to leverage Kosovo to conducting crucial reforms. After Kosovo demonstrated a commitment to normalisation of its relations with Serbia, The Stabilisation and Association Agreement with the EU was signed in 2015, after two years of negotiations. The Agreement establishes the contractual relationship between EU and Kosovo and the mutual rights and obligations in core elements for the democratic principles and for the EU's single market.

Although Kosovo is still far from becoming an EU member, it has managed to implement numerous EU related reforms to demonstrate its commitment to the accession process. The fulfilment of wide-ranging rule of law reforms allowed the Commission in May 2016 to issue a formal proposal for transferring Kosovo to the Schengen visa-free list, which should be passed in the European Parliament and the Council pending the fulfilment of 2 remaining EU requirements. Kosovo institutions fulfilled the obligations on the establishment of the Specialist Chambers and Specialist Prosecution Office to investigate allegations of international crimes committed during and after the 1999 conflict and to extend the mandate of EULEX until June 2018.

Despite some progress, the EC in the 2016 Report has noted that for moving further in the accession process serious commitment and reforms are need in the judicial system in Kosovo, the fight against corruption and organised crime, while considerable efforts are also required for developing functioning market economy and for progress in the legislative alignment.

4. Development Assistance in Kosovo

4.1 Overview of International Assistance to Kosovo

After the war in 1999, significant amount of international aid was distributed in Kosovo, mainly for humanitarian relief, reconstruction purposes, refugee resettlement and ethnic reconciliation. As Kosovo

¹³ <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A52005DC0156>

was not a sovereign state, the reconstruction process was designed and led by the UN. During that period, more than 3 billion US dollars for international aid and assistance entered the country from 1999 until 2001, as direct assistance for people in need to reconstruct their houses and for community assistance¹⁴. Within these two years, Kosovo recorded double digit growth rates, falling down to moderate rates of 3-4 percent per annum. Kosovo is a case where aid has played an important role in boosting growth in the post-conflict period and the challenges of aid dependency (and heavy reliance on remittances) remain even more than a decade after the conflict¹⁵. The availability of funds resulted in a tremendous growth of the NGO sector, primarily driven by international donors, lacking adequate institutionalization and professionalism. “Furthermore, NGOs were primarily directed towards service-provision, while they have not developed strong constituencies and have sparingly vocalized civic concerns and interests in the political process. This, however, is not primarily the fault of NGOs; lack of transparency by UNMIK, the dominance of rigid party structures within politics, and an unfavorable legal and institutional climate have arrested the political power of civil society”¹⁶.

After the end of the war there was a gradual shift of the international community and donors from post-war recovery to state building, democratisation and economic development. Kosovo’s sovereignty resulted in a need for the establishment of many formal institutions which were almost entirely built from aid¹⁷.

According to official data available on development assistance since Kosovo’s independence in 2009 till 2015, more than 1.77 billion USD of official development aid¹⁸ have been disbursed to the country (or 2.25 billion USD of total receipts including besides ODA, Other Official Flows and Private Donations). By comparison during the same period, Kosovo’s Gross National Income (GNI) varied between 5.7 billion USD in 2009 to 7.5 billion USD in 2014 (World Bank Open Data¹⁹), meaning that in average the total official development assistance distributed to Kosovo was more than 3.5 % of the annual GNI. Similarly, Kosovo’s national Aid Management Platform (a tool created by the government for tracking and information sharing of aid-funded activities) for the same period of 2009-2015 has accounted 2.1 billion USD of actual aid disbursements.

¹⁴ <http://www.ajbms.org/articlepdf/4ajbms2012262708.pdf>, Accessed on 20.04.2017

¹⁵ Ibid

¹⁶ http://www.kipred.org/repository/docs/A_Changing_Society,_A_Changing_Civil_Society_846905.pdf, Accessed on 20.04.2017

¹⁷ http://www.dww.cz/docs/global_synthesis_report.pdf, Accessed on 15.07.2017

¹⁸ Official Development Assistance (ODA) is defined as those flows to developing countries and multilateral institutions provided by official agencies, including state and local governments, or by their executive agencies, each transaction of which meets the following tests: i) it is administered with the promotion of the economic development and welfare of developing countries as its main objective; and ii) it is concessional in character and conveys a grant element of at least 25 per cent.

¹⁹ <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GNP.MKTP.CD?locations=XK>, Accessed 01.07.2017

AID (ODA) Disbursements in Kosovo for 2009-2015, in million US Dollars:

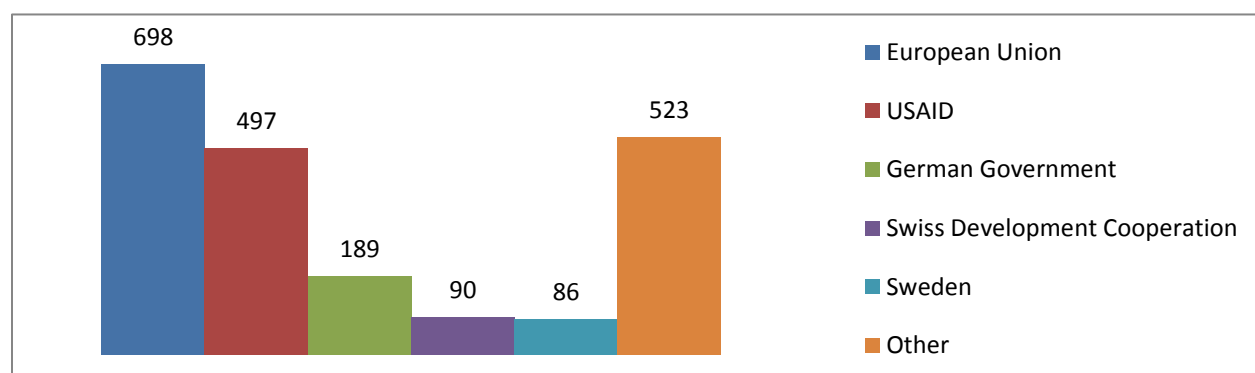
Year	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Total ODA	438.99	183.77	179.77	282.75	256.19	243.24	186.29
Total net receipts (ODA+ Other Official Flows +private)	445.22	202.71	213.69	293.61	276.61	441.10	379.93

[Data extracted on 18 June 2017 from OECD.Stat](#)

Year	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
ODA as % of GDP	7.6	3.1	2.6	4.2	3.5	3.2	2.8

[Data extracted on 18 June 2017 from data.worldbank.org](#)

Aid Disbursements in Kosovo by Donor for the period 2009-2015, in millions US dollars:



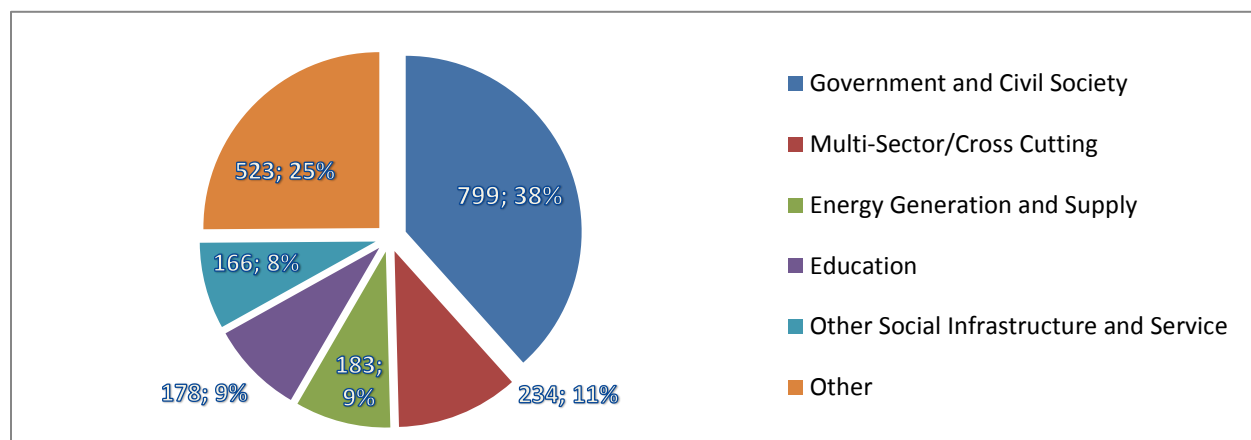
[Data extracted on 15 May 2017 from Aid Management Platform](#)

The European Union is the biggest donor to Kosovo with almost 698 million US dollars (around 600 million EUR) distributed to Kosovo in the period from 2009-2015. As Kosovo is a potential member, the EU has allocated substantial financial support to Kosovo's development and accession related assistance first through the CARDS instrument (Community assistance for reconstruction, development and stabilization, an instrument of technical and financial assistance that is intended to support the stabilization process and the association of Western Balkan Countries) when 170 million EUR (app. 200 million USD) were allocated, followed by allocation of 635 million EUR (app. 750 million USD) with the first Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance – IPA for the period 2007—2013 period. A similar amount of 645.5 million EUR (761 million USD) has been allocated from the same instrument for the new IPA the 2014-2020 period.

The largest portion of the development aid to Kosovo distributed in the period 2009-2015, has been to the government and civil society sector with almost 800 million USD or 38% of the total amount

followed by tight distribution from 11% -8% to cross-cutting issues, the energy sector, education and social infrastructure and services.

Aid Distributions to Kosovo by Sector for period 2009-2015, in millions US Dollars:



Data extracted on 15 May 2017 from Aid Management Platform

According to the Government report for 2015 on donor activities produced using the Aid Management Platform (AMP) most donors channel their funding through international technical assistance projects. In general, technical assistance projects are largely designed and implemented and evaluated by the donor organizations. In most sectors, direct budget support and capital investment are rarely used categories of external aid.²⁰

4.2 Institutional Arrangements for Aid Coordination from 2009-2017

This mosaic of donors in the post war period did not foster coordination between them due to the lack of a “home-made” agenda for orienting the international aid, leaving each of the donors decide its own agenda and priorities. The responsible government institution for coordination until 2009 was the Office for Donor Coordination within the Office of the Prime Minister, which was then merged with the Agency for European Integration into a newly established Agency for Development Coordination and European Integration. Currently the Ministry of European Integration is the main government body in charge of donor coordination in Kosovo. The Government of Kosovo, supported by the European Union Office to Kosovo (EUO), has implemented the Aid Management Platform (AMP) as a tool for the government and donors to track and share information related to aid-funded activities. Additionally, the Ministry of European Integration releases annual report on donor activities.

The coordination of donor assistance was aimed to improve the effectiveness of donor funds and to integrate foreign assistance into national and regional planning priorities. The relevant government documents for the planning of the assistance are the National Development Strategy (NDS) (the last one

²⁰ http://www.mei-ks.net/repository/docs/annualreport_english_3.pdf, Accessed on 20.04.2017

is for the period 2016-2021), Statement of the Mid Term Priorities and a Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF) (latest adopted during 2015 covering the budget planning process for 2016-2018). The NDS is a multi-annual planning document that outlines the national priorities of high importance and the measures need to achieve success. It was prepared with consultations with international partners and non-governmental stakeholders and is divided into 4 thematic pillars: human capital, the rule of law and good governance, development of competitive industries and development of infrastructure. The MTEF describes the government priorities for the forthcoming period in detail, harmonised with other strategic documents and budgeting of these priorities for the mid-term period.

4.3. Kosovo as a Donor of Development and Humanitarian Assistance

With accession of Kosovo in the EU, the country will go from being a recipient of Official Development Assistance (ODA) to becoming a donor country. For this, the Government will need to prepare and establish necessary institutional and legal frameworks for the provision of development and humanitarian aid and align with the Chapter 30 of the European Acquis Communautaire. Since Kosovo is not yet a candidate country, the preparations towards aligning with the EU policy in the area of humanitarian aid and development policy are likely to start after the country receives official status of a candidate country and prepares National Program for Adoption of the Acquis. Currently, EU does not make assessments of the country's legislative alignment in the area of development policy and humanitarian aid and there is lack of information about any actions being undertaken in this area.

5. Civil Society in Kosovo

5.1 Overview of the Civil Society

According to the analysis of the CSO Partnership for Development Effectiveness (CPDE) Global Synthesis Report 2016²¹, in the 1990s, the post-war civil society in Kosovo looked very different than what it is today and served as a substitute for the lack of institutions which were trusted and recognized by the citizens. The availability of aid and foreign funds after the war resulted in a boom of local NGOs and by 2004, more than 2,300 NGOs were registered – although not all of them were active – compared to around 65 NGOs during the 1989-1999 period. In the abundance of foreign funds and the focus of donors on providing short-term grants for different projects, NGOs were driven more by available funds than by their missions, thus highly reflecting a donor-driven agenda. According to the 2016 Monitoring report on the enabling environment for civil society development for Kosovo prepared by Kosovar Civil Society Foundation (KCSF), the number of active CSOs in Kosovo is estimated to be around 1,500 – despite around 9,000 registered NGOs and few other unregistered initiatives as less than 1,000 CSOs had any financial activity or employees during 2015.

²¹http://www.dww.cz/docs/global_synthesis_report.pdf, Accessed on 15.07.2017

The majority of the sector is comprised of small CSOs, in terms of both funding and staff. CSOs based in Prishtina and other regional centres in Kosovo dominate the sector. The trend of registration of new NGOs has been stable for the past six years, with around 500 new NGOs registered every year. In addition, despite trade unions formally being in the scope of civil society definition, in Kosovo they are rarely seen as such; cooperation between different trade unions and the other parts of civil society is limited, with trade unions rarely being part of civil society initiatives and forums. Religious communities, in general, are not considered part of Kosovar civil society. Media remains both in and outside the sector – most of them are registered as private business, but their role in specific issues of democracy may be considered as part of civil society.²² According to a survey conducted by KCSF in 2016, transparency and accountability, rule of law, democratisation, European Integration and gender issues have been among the areas where CSOs are most active²³.

Enabling environment for civil society

The enabling environment for civil society is broadly defined as the conditions within which civil society works. Specifically, enabling environment is viewed as the varied array of conditions – economic, political, social, cultural, legal, and otherwise – that affect the capacity of citizens, whether individually or collectively, to voluntarily participate in civil society. The analysis of enabling environment for civil society development is based on the 2016 Monitoring Matrix Report on the Enabling Environment for Civil society Development in Kosovo, of the Kosovar Civil Society Development Foundation.

In the recent years Kosovo has seen some progress in the legislation regarding the enabling environment for civil society development; however in practice many of the standards are not met yet. In number of areas, such as freedom of association, the existing legislation is generally positive, with some isolated but serious restrictive provisions. In other areas, such as involvement of civil society in decision-making, the positive legislative framework has been advanced with more specific implementation instruments, although its implementation started as of 2017. There are still areas, such as state support to civil society, where the policy and regulatory framework is still at the stages of its development.²⁴

On the other hand, the civil society sector seems to be largely apathetic towards public life in general, including low levels of their engagement with only a few well-established CSOs being those that create a domestic demand for enabling environment and thus a low pressure to public institutions for increased engagement and results in an enabling environment for civil society.

Legal environment

The basic legal framework for establishment, registration and operation of CSOs in Kosovo is in place. Its implementation through remains incomplete mostly with regards to the provisions related to their

²² http://monitoringmatrix.net/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/155-3c-2016-MM-KS-18012017_First_Final_Published.pdf, Accessed on 07.04.2017

²³ http://www.kcsfoundation.org/repository/docs/05_11_2016_4070877_Kosovar_Civil_Society_Index_2016_KCSF.PDF

²⁴ Ibid.

operation. Freedom of assembly and expression are guaranteed by law and in general CSOs exercise these rights freely, although cases of threats to journalists and some activists are present occasionally and the rate of CSOs engaged in organizing or attending assemblies continues to be low. The Secondary legislation on registration and operation of CSOs adopted during 2014, which contains restrictive provisions for CSOs, remained in force and a group of CSOs was suspended during 2015. CSOs continue to freely seek and secure funds from various domestic and foreign sources. As freedom of assembly is guaranteed by law, CSOs continue to exercise these rights freely.

Financial sustainability

There is partially disabling environment for **financial viability of CSOs** and Kosovar CSOs are still highly dependent on international funding. Some **tax incentives** for private donors exist, but they hardly produce any concrete effect in practice. **Public funds** for CSOs are increasing; however until 2016 there were no standard procedures and criteria on their programming, selection, monitoring and evaluation. A model on **public funding for CSOs** was adopted by the government and drafting of the necessary regulation has been initiated. However, until this regulation is adopted and implemented, public funds for CSOs continue to be distributed without any clear criteria.

In general, very few CSOs are engaged in economic activities. There are ambiguities in the legal framework on tax benefits for the economic activities of CSOs, in particular those which do not have the public benefit status. The main interpretation is that the economic/commercial activities of Public Benefit Organizations are exempt from the corporate income tax if the income destination is solely for the public benefit purpose and up to a “reasonable level” of income. While the article regarding tax exemptions mentions only PBOs, another article on commercial activities refers to all registered CSOs whose “commercial or other activity shall be exclusively related to its public purpose up to a reasonable level of income”. This implies that the economic activity of any registered CSO shall be directly linked to its mission and the income should be reasonable, and all other economic activities are subject to income tax. Nevertheless, this incoherence causes difficulties in its interpretation and implementation.²⁵

Relationship with government

The Government Strategy for Cooperation with Civil Society 2013-2017 had its first activities completed during 2015 however, the practice of public consultation remains with many challenges. A new Regulation on Minimum Standards on public consultation process has been adopted by the Government during 2016 and entered into force in January 2017. Participation of CSOs in cross-sector bodies is partial, with few cases of open and transparent selection.

There are legal requirements for consulting with CSOs at government level. Nevertheless, legal opportunities are not utilized properly, mostly due to the weak implementation from the side of public authorities. While access to information has been improved during the last two years, less than 1/3 of

²⁵ http://monitoringmatrix.net/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/155-3c-2016-MM-KS-18012017_First_Final_Published.pdf

CSOs declare to have been regularly invited to comment on policy/legal proposals in their fields of interest during 2016. Although feedback on the results of the public consultations is rarely provided or made public, almost half of those CSOs that have participated in the public consultation process assess that their comments were partly accepted. There are no standard selection mechanisms, and only few bodies have selected CSO representatives through an open, transparent and democratic process. As there is no systematic monitoring and reporting on this area, no exact data is available on the percentage of laws/bylaws, strategies and policy reforms which are effectively consulted with CSOs. At the local level, the majority of municipalities do not regularly include civil society in their work, while a large number of legal instruments for participation are not functional. At the Assembly level, the legal provisions on consultation with CSOs are nonbinding. Only a part of the laws in procedure undergo public hearings, while other types of public consultations are not common.²⁶

6. Conclusion

Kosovo has been significant recipient of development aid, much of it channeled through civil society organizations. Due to this, the civil society in the country has developed significant capacities and experience in implementation of development projects in various areas. Even more importantly, the civil society has been an important factor in the country's social and political life and driver of change in the country's state building and democratization processes.

Since Kosovo should eventually go from aid recipient to aid donor, especially since it aspires to become an EU member, the civil society should be valuable partner to the government and to donors and driver of the development cooperation agenda. However, in order to do so, it is necessary to further improve the environment in which it operates, its capacities when it comes to development cooperation, and be involved in all cycles of policy making in meaningful and systematic manner.

According to the monitoring reports, the civil society in Kosovo is operating in relatively enabling environment; there is still much to be done though, in order legal guarantees for freedom of association, freedom of assembly and other related freedoms to be preserved and properly implemented in practice, to have meaningful involvement of the civil society in the policy and decision making processes and the financial viability of the civil society to be stimulated.

²⁶ ibid

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Slovenian NGDO Platform for Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Aid (SLOGA)

CONCORD – European NGO Confederation for Relief and Development

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