



ANALYSIS

LOCAL GOVERNANCE IN THE PROGRESS REPORT



Prishtinë, Republic of Kosovo
April 2018

Content

Introduction	3
The Addressed Topics in the Field of Local Governance	4
Local Elections and Gender Representation	4
Human and Financial Capacities	4
Implementation of Legislation in the Northern Municipalities	4
Conflict of Interest	4
Regulations and Procedures for Public Funding	4
Social Housing Plans/Social Inclusion and Protection	4
Preventing Discrimination.....	5
Revenue Collection and Capital Projects	5
Civil Society	5
Association/Community of Serb Majority Municipalities.....	5
The Education Strategic Plan and its Action Plan	6
Defining Competencies in Inspection	6
The Waste Management System	6
Auditor’s Report/Recommendations.....	6

Introduction

The Report Progress 2018 serves as a reference point for the European Union institutions on the assessment of the progress of Kosovo throughout its journey towards the EU. In the reporting period 2017 – 2018, the field of local governance in the Republic of Kosovo has been analyzed and evaluated in different sectors. The overall assessment of the Progress Report is that the efforts to further improve the capacity of local government have continued.

In comparison with the prior Progress Report, progress is noted in the field of local governance, with a special focus at the relations between local and central level, including the northern municipalities. This improvement of relations, specifically between the northern municipalities and central institutions has continued. In addition, progress is seen in the prevention of conflict of interest, with a significant reduction in the number of cases.

Local Government in 2017 was characterized by local elections; the Progress Report evaluates the constitution of most new municipal assemblies in a timely manner. Further, the Progress Report notes that women remain underrepresented in local decision making. While local municipalities have been given more powers, their human and financial resources are often insufficient. The Progress Report also emphasizes the process of the Law on Local Government Finance, recommending the amendment of this Law by including a Specific Grant for Social Services to ensure transparency in the budget and a minimum level of support to social services.

The KLG Institute has analyzed the Progress Report, with a special focus on the topics related to local governance, as well as central policies extended in municipalities. This document can be used by institutions, public actors, civil society and media as a reference point for local governance challenges. On the other hand, for the KLG Institute, the document will be used to adapt the strategies and fields of intervention in the service of a common agenda towards European reforms.

The analysis is a summary of findings that derive from the Progress Report on the result and progress achieved by municipalities, as well as challenges and key criteria that need to be addressed. The analyzed areas in this analysis assessed by the Progress Report are as follows: Local Elections and Gender Representation; Human and Financial Capacities; Implementation of Legislation in the Northern Municipalities; Conflict of Interest; Regulations and Procedures for Public Funding; Social Housing Plans/Social Inclusion and Protection; Preventing Discrimination; Revenue Collection and Capital Projects; Civil Society; Association/Community of Serb Majority Municipalities; The Education Strategic Plan and its Action Plan; Defining Competencies in Inspection; The Waste Management System; and the Auditor's Report/Recommendations.

From the first assessment, for the KLG Institute, a special focus should be placed to: further strengthen the cooperation between the central and local level; strengthen the capacities in sustainable planning; achieve sustainable financing and efficient management of resources, enhance the cooperation between civil society and local authorities; define the competencies and functions; deliver social services; and fully address the recommendations deriving from the Auditor.

THE ADDRESSED TOPICS IN THE FIELD OF LOCAL GOVERNANCE

- **Local Elections and Gender Representation**
 - The Progress Report assesses that most new municipal assemblies were constituted in a timely manner;
 - Women remain underrepresented in local decision-making;
 - The Progress Report indicates that elections were generally competitive and well-administered;
 - However, the Progress Report notes that within the Serb community, the electoral campaign was marred by a pattern of intimidation targeting in particular non-Srpska Lista political entities and their candidates. Instances of violence from within the Kosovo Serb community and an insufficient response from the law enforcement authorities were reported. The EU election observation mission noted that during the campaign, senior officials in Belgrade repeatedly urged voters to vote for Srpska Lista.

- **Human and Financial Capacities**
 - The Progress Report indicates that while local municipalities have been given more powers, their human and financial resources are often insufficient;
 - Referring to the Progress Report, the Law on Local Government Finance should be amended by including a specific grant for social services to ensure transparency in the budget and a minimum level of support to social services at municipal level.
 - Based on the Progress Report, provision earmarking specific funding from the general grant for social services should be included in the upcoming draft Law on Local Finance.

- **Implementation of Legislation in the Northern Municipalities**
 - According to the Progress Report, northern municipalities have continued to improve their relations with central government institutions;
 - Four (4) northern municipalities complied with legislation on the adoption of the 2017 municipal budgets;
 - However, due to continued inconsistencies in population figures, the Progress Reports recommends to conduct a census in all 4 municipalities.

- **Conflict of Interest**
 - The Progress Report finds that in more than 100 cases, the conflict of interest was prevented or the Agency gave an opinion to the institutions responsible. Most cases dealt with local government officials.

- **Regulations and Procedures for Public Funding**
 - The Progress Report assesses that several municipalities are still not ready to fulfil the obligations under the new regulations.
 - They also lack technical capacities to effectively execute the assigned budget in accordance with new regulations and procedures.

- **Social Housing Plans/Social Inclusion and Protection**
 - The Progress Report displays limited progress on behalf of municipal authorities in adopting three-year social housing plans;
 - Kosovo needs to ensure that municipalities have sufficient resources to deliver the social services that fall under their responsibility;

- The Progress Report indicates little progress on the social inclusion of Roma and Ashkali children and families.
 - The Progress Report recommends the state of Kosovo to be ensured that children with disabilities are able to attend public schools alongside their peers.
 - Since 2009, social welfare funds have been allocated through the general grant without any earmarking in relation to the local budget available for social services. This lack of clarity resulted in a considerable variation in levels of support by municipalities to social service delivery.
 - The Progress Report indicates that the population living below the poverty line is still high (17.6%), despite that this percentage has been decreasing.
 - The Progress Report evaluates that there has been no progress in licensing new providers of foster care for children in need.
 - The Progress Report recommends that foster care must be extended in all the municipalities.
 - The Progress Report recommends institutions to increase financial support to day-care rehabilitation centres and make more efforts to effectively integrate children with disabilities into educational institutions.
- **Preventing Discrimination**
 - The Progress Report noted some progress on non-discrimination, considering that in 2017 Kosovo adopted the Regulation Mechanisms for Protection from Discrimination in Government and Municipalities (defining the duties and responsibilities of the relevant staff at the municipal level, as well as defining the coordination, reporting and cooperation with other institutional mechanisms for protection from discrimination);
 - Women continue to face challenges with property ownership and inheritance;
 - The Progress Report assesses that the role of the Agency for Gender Equality and the role of gender equality officers in policy-making at the local level need to be strengthened;
 - Gender mainstreaming in Laws and policies remains poor.
- **Revenue Collection and Capital Projects**
 - According to the Progress Report, a challenge for municipalities remains the weak collection of municipal revenue;
 - Based on the Report, the weak collection of municipal revenue which is tied to execution of some small-scale capital projects delayed investments at the local level.
- **Civil Society**
 - The Progress Report notes progress in the improvement of cooperation between civil society and the central government, however, further efforts are needed to ensure meaningful involvement and cooperation at local level.
- **Association/Community of Serb Majority Municipalities**
 - The Progress Report notes that the implementation of the 25 August 2015 Agreement has overall been slow;
 - According to the Report, progress has been made on the Association/Community of Serb Majority Municipalities;
 - On 4 April 2018, Kosovo has given mandate to the Management Team to start drafting the statute of the Association/Community.

- **The Education Strategic Plan and its Action Plan**
 - The Progress Report recommends the implementation of the quality assurance strategy;
 - According to the Progress Report, the implementation of the curricula reform is undermined by a lack of qualified teaching staff, teaching material and supplies and an underdeveloped student assessment system;
 - Another challenge addressed by the Progress report is the announcement of the plans Ministry to introduce teacher profiling for grades 1-5, without proper baseline assessment.

- **Defining Competencies in Inspection**
 - The Progress Report assesses the implementation of an integrated food system as a challenge considering that the inspection responsibilities have still not been transferred from municipalities to the Food and Veterinary Agency.

- **The Waste Management System**
 - The Progress Report notes that the current solid waste management system is environmentally unsustainable;
 - The Strategy and Master Plan for waste management 2013-2022 are only partly reflected in municipal plans for solid waste;
 - The Progress Report recommends the responsible authorities to take steps towards a circular economy approach (separation of waste at the source, recycling and recovery of waste streams).

- **Auditor's Report/Recommendations**
 - The Progress Report indicates that the impact of auditor work is limited;
 - The Progress Report recommends municipalities to improve the implementation of audit recommendations.



Kosovo Local Government Institute
Address: Str. Enver Gjerqeku no. 20, 10000
Prishtinë, Republic of Kosova
Tel: +381 (0) 38 522 000
Mobile: +377 (0) 44 253 835
E-mail: info@klgi-ks.com | Web: www.klgi-ks.com