



ANNUAL REPORT 2019

CIVIKOS PLATFORM



January 2020



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Contents

7	INTRODUCTION
8	CIVIKOS PLATFORM
8	DONORS
8	LIST OF ACRONYMS
9	MEMBERSHIP
9	CIVIL SOCIETY-GOVERNMENT COOPERATION
9	Government Strategy for Cooperation with Civil Society 2019-2023
11	Meetings of Council and Working Group members during 2019
12	MEASURES FOR PREVENTION OF MONEY LAUNDERING AND TERRORISM FINANCING AND THEIR IMPACT ON THE WORK OF CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS
12	Workshops with civil society organizations in Kosovo
13	Multilateral dialogue for NGOs' access to Financial Services: Roundtable organized by CiviKos and KCSF with support from ECNL
13	Discussions and Main Recommendations
15	INCREASING LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS' CAPACITIES FOR PUBLIC PROCUREMENT MONITORING

Dear member organizations of the CiviKos Platform,

Ever since I was appointed as the new Executive Director of CiviKos Platform in July of 2019, Kosovo has gone through a long electoral period which greatly impacted the internal and external functioning of the state.

The announcement of snap elections and the considerably long period being governed by the outgoing government, have deeply affected the work of the civil society sector in Kosovo. This institutional gap has had a negative impact in the work of every organization, and especially in the work of CiviKos Platform as a network of civil society organizations, which facilitates the cooperation between civil society organizations and public institutions.

However, CiviKos in cooperation with the Office of Good Governance (OGG)/Office of the Prime Minister, have worked together in order to create favourable conditions for the implementation of the Government Strategy for Cooperation with Civil Society (2019-2023), launched in April of 2019. The strategy was designed and developed in close cooperation with civil society, a process which was supported by CiviKos. During this year, CiviKos has facilitated the process of the selection of members of the Council for Cooperation between Civil Society and Government. The operationalization of the new Council has been a challenging process, since it developed under extraordinary circumstances.

The work of the Council and Working Groups for the implementation of the Strategy will again have four objectives as follows:

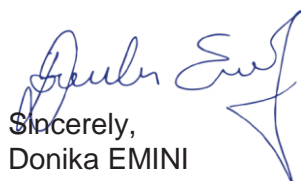
1) Increase civil society participation in policymaking; 2) Improvement of the regulatory and institutional framework for financing sustainability of programmes and projects of CSOs in public interest; 3) Develop practices and procedures of contracting of CSOs for the provision of public services; 4) Increase volunteering in programs of public interest.

Other CiviKos activities that serve the intent of improving the environment for the functioning of Civil Society in Kosovo include the law for prevention of money laundering and terrorism financing and their influence on registered NGOs in Kosovo. CiviKos together with its member organizations are working proactively towards addressing the concerns of Civil Society organizations and the way that the commercial banks in Kosovo treats the sector.

CiviKos has continued working with member organizations that operate in various regions of Kosovo. In cooperation with USAID, CiviKos has contributed in strengthening Civil Society operating at the local level through its regional hubs. A big number of organizations are unable to successfully monitor procurement due to lack of skills, capacities and funds. CiviKos, through USAID TEAM project, is working to equip local level Civil Society organizations with necessary practical skills in order to change this reality. CiviKos and its member organizations will continue their work through other projects as well, until the objectives of the Strategy of CiviKos are met, and the mission upon which this platform was built is completed.

This year will be a year of revitalization of CiviKos, as the biggest platform for Civil Society in the country. We will work with dedication to create a favourable environment for Civil Society, to build a network of non-governmental organizations and the government for the citizens. This will be a year of building constituencies and of bringing Civil Society organizations closer to the citizens.

To conclude, I will use the opportunity to thank you, through this letter, for supporting CiviKos and for your trust in me as Director of the Secretariat. I am also thankful to my team who has supported me every step of the way since the first day of work.


Sincerely,
Donika EMINI

CIVIKOS PLATFORM

CiviKos Platform is a voluntary union of civil society organizations, committed to the development of a favourable and conducive environment for cooperation between civil society and public authorities. Since it was founded, the CiviKos Platform has been committed to being a powerful voice of civil society organizations in Kosovo. Currently, CiviKos has a membership of 254 organizations.

DONORS

In 2019 CiviKos was financially supported by:

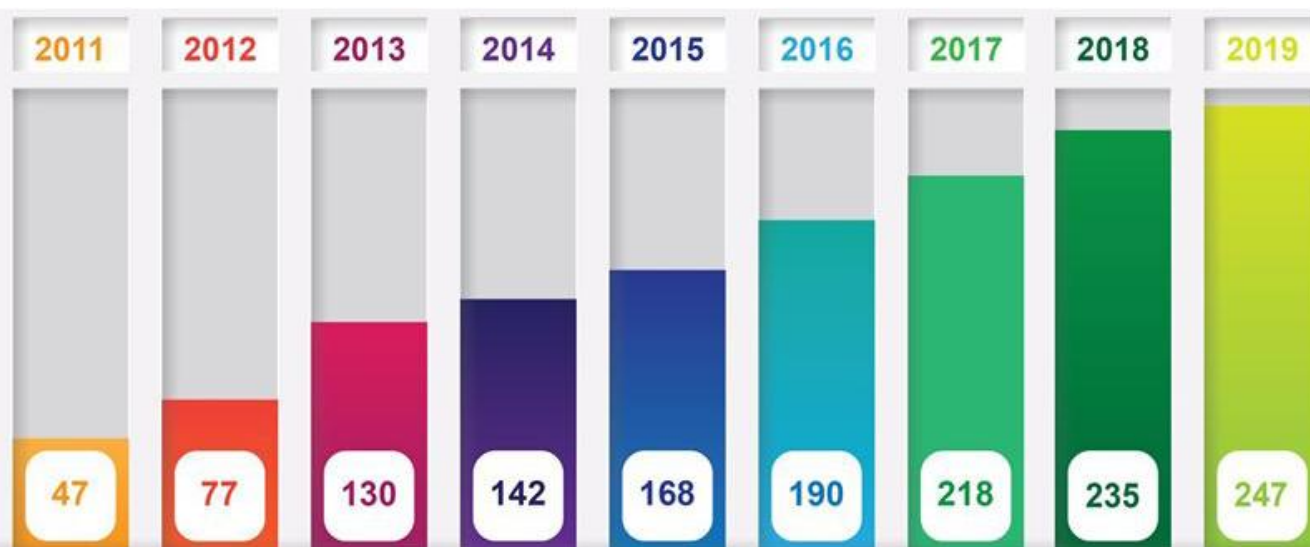
- Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands - MATRA.
- USAID /Transparent Effective and Accountable Municipalities, in which CiviKos is a subcontractor of the implementing company DAI.
- European Center for Not-for-Profit Law ECNL.

LIST OF ACRONYMS

CiviKos	CiviKos Platform
CSO	Civil Society Organization
OSCE	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
KCSF	Kosovar Civil Society Foundation
KFOS	Kosovo Foundation for Open Society
OGG	Office of Good Governance
OPM	Office of the Prime Minister
Government Strategy	Government Strategy for Cooperation with Civil Society 2019-2023
Council	Council for Civil Society – Government Cooperation
TEAM	Transparent, Effective and Accountable Municipalities

MEMBERSHIP

- 254 member organizations in CiviKos;
- 26 organizations became members in 2019;
- During 2019 CiviKos has sent 80 weekly newsletters to member organizations, with all relevant information's for civil society such as grant opportunities, conferences and other useful information.



The figures in each column show the number of registered organizations until the end of the year.

CIVIL SOCIETY – GOVERNMENT COOPERATION

Government Strategy for Cooperation with Civil Society 2019-2023

- The Government Strategy for Cooperation with Civil Society 2019-2023 was launched on April 4th 2019 in the premises of the Government of Kosovo. The launching conference of the Strategy was organized by The Office of Good Governance/ Office of the Prime Minister with the support of Technical Assistance (EU-Project) and CiviKos Platform as a main partner on the structured cooperation between civil society and the government. Besides members of civil society, in the launch of the Strategy, there were present Prime Minister of the Republic of Kosovo Mr. Ramush Haradinaj and the head of European Union office in Kosovo Ms. Natalya Apostolova



- May 2019 - CiviKos together with the OGG, through transparent and democratic procedures have facilitated the process of the selection of members of civil society for the Council for Civil Society – Government Cooperation.



Members of the Council

After closing the voting process, in total 172 organizations had voted, from which 164 of them voted through email and 8 in the office of CiviKos.

After counting the votes from 22 candidates, 14 most voted candidates who were elected members of the Council are:

- Abetare Gojani - [Ipko Foundation](#)
- Alutrim Dermaku - [General Youth Education of Kosovo-GYEK](#)
- Avdyl Gashi – [Youth Center -Drenas](#)
- Besmir Kokollari – [ICCHAT Institute](#)
- Dajana Berisha - [Forumi for Civic Initiatives -FIQ](#)
- Dardan Qadraku - [Partners in Action- PACT](#)
- Dren Puka – [Kosovar Civil Society Foundation- KCSF](#)
- Ekrem Bajrami - Initiative for Kosova Community
- Jeton Krasniqi – 21st Century Vision
- Lura Limani – [Kosovar Foundation for Open Society \(KFOS\)](#)
- Nertila Qarri - [Kosovo Women’s Network \(KWN\)](#)
- Sadri Rrmoku – [Kosovo Local Government Institute](#)
- Shemsi Jashari - [Iniciativa for Ideas and Alternatives](#)

After the member Ms. Nertila Qarri from Kosovo Women’s Network had to leave the Council, through transparent procedures, Ms. Nerina Guri from Kosovo Women’s Network was chosen as a new member of the Council.

Meetings of the Council and working groups during 2019

- 18 July 2019: After the consolidation of the Council, OGG in cooperation with CiviKos have organized the first meeting of the Council for Civil Society-Government Cooperation. During the meeting the members of the council were presented together with the working rules of the Council.



- 16-17 September 2019: OGG/OPM in cooperation with CiviKos supported by the Technical Assistance Project of the EU office in Kosovo, have organized a workshop with the Council for Civil Society – Government Cooperation. During the workshop, the working plan of the Strategy for four strategic objectives for 2020 was developed.



- 9-10 December 2019: OGG in cooperation with CiviKos organized a meeting of four working groups of the Council. During the meeting, the working plan for 2020 was finalized.



- 20 December 2019: The regular meeting of the Council was held. The achievements and challenges of the implementation of the Strategy were presented during the meeting. Additionally, the activities of the four working groups were divided accordingly to the four strategic objectives, which they will jointly work to implement the activities of the Strategy set out on the working plan for 2020.



MEASURES FOR PREVENTION OF MONEY LAUNDERING AND TERRORISM FINANCING AND THEIR IMPACT IN THE WORK OF CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS

Workshop with civil society organizations in Kosovo

On March 28th 2019, in ORION conference hall, CiviKos together with ECNL organized a full day workshop to exchange information regarding evaluation processes that Kosovo is undergoing concerning prevention of money laundering and terrorism financing and their impact on registered NGOs in Kosovo.



Some of the objectives of the workshop were:

- *To inform Kosovo NGOs about the Evaluation Report, New law on NGOs and other processes related to Prevention of money laundering and terrorism financing.*
- *To inform Kosovo NGOs regarding the international standards and good practices in similar processes, and how NGOs can work towards preventing restrictive measures that violate freedom of association;*

- *Discuss the main findings and recommendations of the Evaluation Report and agree on strategy to ensure that future measures will comply with international standards and good practices.*
- *Inform the NGOs in Kosovo about challenges of bank de-risking in Kosovo and globally, and to discuss how to approach them.*

Multi-stakeholder dialogue for NGOs' access to Financial Services: Roundtable organized by CiviKos and KCSF with support from ECNL

On October 29th 2019, CiviKos Platform and Kosovo Civil Society Foundation (KCSF) organized a joint meeting between civil society organizations and relevant public institutions in order to discuss challenges and problems of NGOs in accessing financial services. This roundtable was organized in cooperation with the European Center for Non Profit LAW (ECNL) with headquarters in the Netherlands. Moreover, experts from the Human Security Collective have shared good European practices and how some countries have addressed similar problems that NGOs have faced in accessing financial services.



The aim of this meeting was to foster an inter-institutional dialogue between representatives of Kosovo institutions, which are responsible for offering financial services, and civil society organizations in Kosovo, to discuss challenges and problems that NGOs are facing on accessing financial services. Simultaneously, the risk of possible money laundering and terrorism financing in the non-governmental sector was discussed.

This roundtable gathered officials from the Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Public Administration – Department of NGOs, Central Bank of the Republic of Kosovo - Anti-Money Laundering Division, Financial Intelligence Unit, Kosovo Banking Association, and representatives from civil society.

This event marks the second public activity that CiviKos has organized in relation to this matter, meanwhile other advocacy events will be organized in order to strengthen the inter-institutional cooperation and facilitate NGOs' access to financial services.

Discussions and Main Recommendations

CiviKos has presented the report of findings on problems that NGOs are facing with commercial banks in Kosovo. You can find the full report [here](#).

Some of the identified problems in the report are:

- Some commercial banks had closed bank accounts of NGOs without any warning, thus causing difficulties in their overall functioning.
- Commercial banks have a general misunderstanding about the management structure of NGOs. Banks insist that NGOs should bring the founders of the NGOs to the bank to open a bank account, or during the process of updating data, or request for their identity card although they do not have a managerial role in the organization. Banks do not recognise other managerial structures of NGOs such as the Board or the General Assembly.
- Requiring for members of the board or founders to be physically present in the process of updating data.
- They increased of bank account maintenance fees for NGOs only, leading to unaffordable prices for them.

Some of the representatives from NGOs who were present in the meeting: NGO INPO, NGO Kosovo Law Institute, IKS, ATRC etc., have shared their experiences about problems that NGOs (they represent) have had with commercial banks.

Some of the problems that these NGOs faced with commercial banks were:

- Banks are requiring Board Members to be physically present when updating data at the bank.
- Banks are requesting for signatures of founders of the NGOs during the process of updating data in the bank.
- Negligence in the process of updating data and contacting previous directors of the organizations to be present in the bank.

Some of the main recommendations from this meeting were:

- Commercial banks need financial education in order to better understand the nature and functioning of NGOs.
- Founders of the organization should not be contacted for opening the account, or updating the data, if they do not have a managerial role in the organization.
- Banks must recognize decision-making bodies in an NGO such as the General Assembly and the Board.
- Since the legislation on money laundering and terrorism financing is being reviewed, this should be taken into account to address all these problems through the working group created by the Government of Kosovo.

INCREASING LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS' CAPACITIES FOR PUBLIC PROCUREMENT MONITORING

Applied Learning Workshops within the framework of USAID - Transparent, Effective and Accountable Municipalities project

During 2019 CiviKos has organized Applied Learning Workshops with civil society organizations in seven regions of Kosovo. The aim of these workshops was to increase capacities of the local organizations on monitoring public procurement at the local level based on the real contracts that they monitored in seven municipalities.



Group of civil society organizations from Peja municipality.

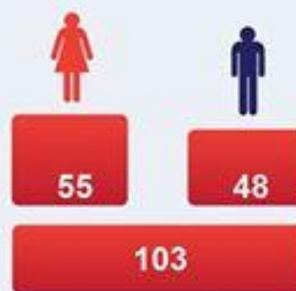
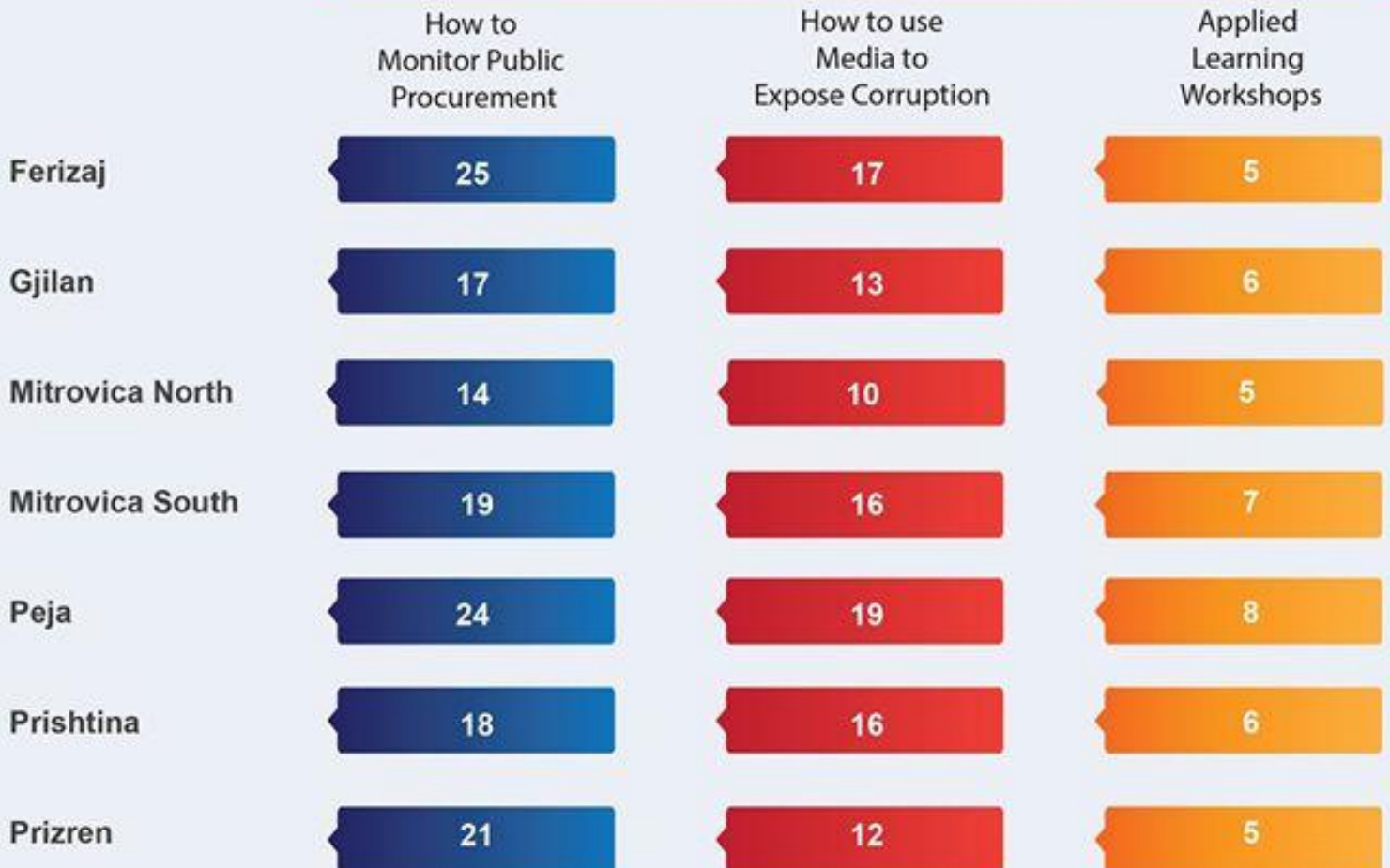


Group of civil society organizations from Prishtina municipality.



Group of civil society organizations from Prizren municipality.

Number of participants in three (3) workshops
organized in several cities of Kosovo:



Thirty-three (33) **Non-Governmental Organizations** have been included in the series of workshops in the framework of this project.



Seven (7) **Monitoring Reports on Procurement Activities** drafted by the Monitoring Groups of Non-Governmental Organizations have been published by CiviKos.

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CiviKos

The reports are conducted by the Monitoring Groups comprised of Non-Governmental Organizations which gained knowledge and practical skills through applied learning workshops on monitoring public procurement. Workshops have been organized by CiviKos Platform and supported by USAID Transparent, Effective and Accountable Municipalities activity in Kosovo (USAID TEAM).

Published in 2019



