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# SOCIAL SERVICES CLOSE TO THE CITIZEN

MONITORING REPORT ON THE SOCIAL  
SERVICES DECENTRALIZATION PROCESS





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- Municipal Directorates of Health and Social Welfare in Prishtina, Prizren, Ferizaj, Fushë Kosova, Lipjan and Kamenica;
- Ministry of Finance, Labor and Transfers - Department of Social and Family Policies and the Department of Budget;
- Non-Governmental Organizations.

# ABBREVIATIONS

<b>AKTI</b>	Youth Organization - Akti
<b>COVID-19</b>	Coronavirus Disease
<b>MDSW</b>	Municipal Directorate of Social Welfare
<b>DSFP</b>	Department of Social and Family Policies
<b>DSK</b>	Down Syndrome Kosova
<b>MDHSW</b>	Municipal Directorate of Health and Social Welfare
<b>NIPHK</b>	National Institute of Public Health in Kosovo
<b>CRC</b>	Convention on the Rights of the Child
<b>KOMF</b>	Coalition of NGOs for Child Protection
<b>LLGF</b>	Law on Local Government Finance
<b>LSFS</b>	Law on Social and Family Services
<b>LLSG</b>	Law on Local Self-Government
<b>NOPM</b>	Network of Peace Movement
<b>MLGA</b>	Ministry of Local Government Administration
<b>MoF</b>	Ministry of Finance
<b>MoM</b>	Memorandum of Understanding
<b>MFLT</b>	Ministry of Finance, Labour and Transfers
<b>MLSW</b>	Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare
<b>PVPT</b>	Center for Protection of Victims and Prevention of Trafficking in Human Beings
<b>NGO</b>	Non-Governmental Organization
<b>CSW</b>	Center for Social Work
<b>AI</b>	Administrative Instruction

# INTRODUCTION

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Social and family services include the protection and direct provision of social care, counseling or, in special cases, material assistance to people in social need. Whereas social service providers are public institutions and non-governmental organizations.

The social services decentralization began in 2009, when competencies were transferred from the central level to the Kosovo municipalities.<sup>1</sup> The purpose of social services decentralization was to bring these services as close as possible to the citizens. However, this process has not yet been entirely implemented.

Social services in Kosovo are regulated by Law No. 02/L-17 on Social and Family Services and Law No. 04/L-081 Amending and Supplementing Law No. 02/L-17 on Social and Family Services as well as Law No. 03/L-040 on Local Self-Government. According to LSFS, the Ministry of Finance, Labor and Transfers is the responsible institution for all policies, licensing, monitoring, inspection and regulatory issues related to labor and social welfare. In addition, MFLT regulates the non-governmental sector for provision of social services, being responsible for licensing non-governmental organizations for providing social services. Whereas, according to the LLSG, municipalities have full and exclusive powers for the provision of social and family services. Municipalities are mandated to take responsibility for their social welfare issues and manage the Centers for Social Work. CSWs are public institutions established at the municipal level to provide relevant services. As to the financing of social services, according to the Law on Local Government Finance, they are financed by the General Grant and municipal-own source revenues.

This monitoring report presents the findings regarding the current state of social services and provides recommendations to relevant institutions in order to improve social welfare.

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<sup>1</sup>Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare, Ministry of Local Government Administration, Ministry of Finance and Municipalities, 2009



# PURPOSE

The main purpose of the Monitoring Report on the Decentralization Process of Social Services for 2021, is the reflection of current situation on the full implementation of this process. The report presents data on the state of social services provided to citizens in need, legislative processes, financing of social services, reporting, monitoring and inspection of social services, challenges and needs of social service providers for 2021.

Further, the Monitoring Report provides concrete findings and recommendations on improving the situation where shortcomings are observed. All recommendations are based on documents, research, international and domestic practices, as well as recommendations of the stakeholders responsible for the implementation of the decentralization process.

Also, this report intends to compare the progress of the decentralization process to 2019 and 2020.

# METHODOLOGY

The methodology of drafting the report relies on data collection based on the qualitative method including theoretical analysis and field research. Specifically, this monitoring report is based on:

- Analysis of legislation;
- Analysis of relevant publications;
- Interviews with relevant representatives in the area of social and family services.

Specifically, a total of 23 interviews were conducted in seven Kosovo municipalities. Interviews were conducted with the central and municipal level representatives:

- Three (3) interviews with representatives of the Ministry of Finance, Labor and Transfers;
- Six (6) interviews with representatives of the Directorates of Health and Social Welfare in six (6) Kosovo municipalities;
- Seven (7) interviews with representatives of the Centers for Social Work in seven (7) Kosovo municipalities;
- Eight (8) interviews with representatives of civil society organizations.

The Covid-19 pandemic has affected the way interviews were conducted. Due to Covid-19 prevention measures, KOMF conducted most of the interviews through virtual platforms. KOMF conducted two (2) physical interviews and twenty-one (21) virtual interviews. The main challenge in conducting the interviews was the replacement of directors of the Municipal Directorates of Social Welfare as a result of the municipal elections, where the directors of the monitored municipalities were appointed by the beginning of 2022. This brought difficulties in contacting, interviewing and obtaining information from the new directors regarding the social services decentralization for 2021. However, directors have been recommended to conduct interviews / meetings with social services officers who have been part of the processes throughout 2021. Out of seven (7) directors for social welfare, one (1) of them was not interviewed due to the lack of response to interview request.<sup>2</sup>

## GEOGRAPHICAL COVERAGE

The monitoring process was conducted with representatives coming from seven Kosovo municipalities: Prishtina, Prizren, Peja, Ferizaj, Fushë Kosova, Lipjan and Kamenica.

The selection of municipalities was made to:

- Ensure geographical coverage of Kosovo;
- Include municipalities with a larger number of inhabitants and consequently with a larger number of social cases, such as the municipalities of Prishtina, Prizren, Peja, Ferizaj;
- Include small municipalities but with a larger number of social problems, such as the Municipality of Fushë Kosova;
- Include municipalities with the largest number of ethnic minority communities in Kosovo, such as the municipalities of Lipjan and Kamenica.

<sup>2</sup> The Municipal Directorate of Social Welfare in the Municipality of Peja did not respond to the request for an interview



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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Compared to 2020, where social services were limited due to the Covid-19 prevention measures, in 2021 social services became operational and accessible to citizens in need. During 2021 an adaptation phase of service providers to the pandemic situation, was noticed. It should be noted that the need for social services has been increasing throughout 2021, while the capacities of social service providers have not increased.

The initiated legislative processes regulating social services and their financing have continued to drag on and have not been completed. Despite the Government's legislative plan projections for 2021, the two main draft laws that are expected to affect the social services decentralization and advancement, namely the Law on Social and Family Services and the Law on Local Government Finance, failed to be processed for approval. In addition to the lack of political will to push forward the adoption of these two draft laws, the pandemic and electoral processes in 2021 had a major impact.

Financing of social services remains the main challenge in providing social and family services for 2021. Even in 2021, there has been no progress on the decentralization of the social services budget, due to the non-approval of the draft Law on Local Government Finance. Despite the persistent recommendations of civil society, the Ministry of Finance, Labor and Transfers and the municipalities did not establish a sustainable social services procurement scheme. Support to the non-governmental sector has continued to be provided through short-term subsidies, which is not considered a sustainable form of financing. It is worth mentioning the fact that the Ministry of Finance, Labor and Transfers has increased the amount budget for non-governmental sector services compared to 2020. Also, out of the seven monitored municipalities, progress has been made by the Municipality of Prishtina which has recorded an increase in financing the non-governmental sector in the last three years.

In 2021, the capacities of municipalities for management and provision of social services have continued to be deficient as in the previous two years. Lack of professional staff in social services within the DHSW has been reported as a key difficulty in managing services. In all municipalities, DHSWs and CSWs need to increase the number of staff, especially the number of social service officers and increase the capacities of finance officers. The average number of cases handled by a social service officer at the Center for Social Work in Prizren is 170 cases. Municipalities and CSWs are not prepared for budget planning and

management of social services. There is a lack of capacity building activities for budget planning and management, there is a lack of needs assessments in each municipality and proper cooperation between CSWs and DHSWs for drafting a joint budget planning in accordance with these needs. Municipal budget planning tends to repeat preliminary budget planning, without any real and updated assessment of citizens' needs for social services.

The mandate of monitoring and inspecting social services has continued to be unclear and undefined. The Monitoring and Inspection Unit within the MFLT lacks the human capacity to carry out inspection processes. The Unit still has no executive powers, which dilutes the role of inspection among social service providers.

In 2021, none of the service providers experienced any proper monitoring by municipalities - DHSW or external monitoring. Municipalities do not have the necessary instruments and capacities to conduct a monitoring process for social service providers.



# **FUNCTIONALIZATION OF SOCIAL SERVICES DURING THE PANDEMIC**

# FUNCTIONALIZATION OF SOCIAL SERVICES DURING THE PANDEMIC

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Based on monitoring data, compared to 2020, 2021 was smoother in terms of adaptation in providing social services during the pandemic. However, the pandemic has significantly aggravated the situation of vulnerable groups and this has led to an increase in the number of cases in need of social services.

The provision of social services by the Centers for Social Work and non-governmental organizations was done in full compliance with the Government decisions and measures on the prevention of Covid -19.

The pandemic has undoubtedly affected the social, health and educational protection of children, although the exact level of indirect impact is not known, which according to many relevant experts, will have many consequences and be present for a long time in the lives of children.<sup>3</sup>

According to non-governmental organizations that were part of the monitoring, the discontinuation and suspension of social services for children has negatively affected their progress. This stagnation has been noticed especially in children with disabilities who have been beneficiaries of social services within day care centers. Although services were adapted to be provided through virtual forms, which also aimed to empower parents in conducting certain activities and services at home, their impact was subtler in increasing children's progress.

This is also evidenced by the Annual Report of the Ombudsperson, which states that the discontinuation and suspension of some services has deteriorated the health status of children, including children with disabilities. Thus, discontinuation and suspension of physical rehabilitation therapies, psychosocial counseling therapies, and day support programmes have deprived children with disabilities of basic therapeutic rehabilitation services. According to the same report, in certain cases this could have endangered the lives and development of children. Moreover, the burden of providing these services has fallen on the parents or their custodians. In addition, besides the financial aspect, this burden has aggravated and it became very difficult to find alternatives in order to ensure the continuation of planned services to children in need.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Special report "Health emergency and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on human rights in the Republic of Kosovo", Ombudsperson Institution, <https://oik-rks.org/en/2021/12/10/special-report-health-emergency-and-the-impact-of-the-covid-19-pandemic-on-human-rights-in-the-republic-of-kosovo/>

<sup>4</sup> Annual Report 2021, Ombudsperson Institution, <https://oik-rks.org/en/2022/03/31/annual-report-2021/>

Despite the restrictive measures in certain periods, in 2021 social service providers have continued to work and provide services to people in need without any obstacles.

Service providers have stated that even in 2021 they were not provided with any specific manual or guidelines on the provision of social services during the pandemic by the Ministry of Health or any other competent authority. The guidelines approved by the Ministry of Health did not contain specific recommendations or instructions for providing direct social services during the pandemic in day care centers, shelters, and community-based homes. According to the Director of the Center for Social Work in Kamenica, Rifat Hajdari, there have been cases when they had conduct home visits and avoid contact with family, and in these cases they did not have any specific instruction on how to behave, so social workers tried to act based on the general recommendations of the National Institute of Public Health of Kosovo.<sup>5</sup> Despite this, according to Liridona Zogaj, Executive Director of the Day Care Center “Pema”, the municipal stakeholders have been more united in providing support in 2021 compared to 2020 and the organization has been more prepared in providing services.<sup>6</sup> There have been cases where organizations have adapted similar guidelines for providing social services. NGO Down Syndrome Kosova has used and adapted the MESTI manual for returning to schools to provide social services<sup>7</sup>.

To assist social service providers, KOMF published the Guidance on the Prevention of Covid-19 in Social Services.<sup>8</sup>

## Increased demand for social services and a significant increase of cases of domestic violence

In both 2020 and 2021, social service providers have faced an increase in the number of cases in need of social services, especially an increase in the number of cases of domestic violence. In the Municipality of Fushë Kosova, in 2021, CSW treated 140 cases of domestic violence, with an increase of over 50% compared to previous years, where the number of cases of violence in this municipality has been 40-50 cases per year. Another problem in this municipality has been the increase in the number of cases of children in street situations due to numerous discontinuations in the learning process. The only form of support that CSW managed to provide has been sending children to the day care center for children in street situation of the Terre

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<sup>5</sup> Interview with Rifat Hajdari, Director of the Center for Social Work in the Municipality of Kamenica, 10 February 2022

<sup>6</sup> Interview with Liridona Zogaj, Executive Director of the Day Care Center “Pema”, 9 February 2022

<sup>7</sup> Interview with Ermira Shabani, National Head of Services Program at Down Syndrome Kosova, 3 February 2022

<sup>8</sup> Guidance on the Prevention of Covid-19 in Social Services, KOMF, 2021, <https://komfkosova.org/guidance-on-the-prevention-of-covid-19-in-social-services/?lang=en>



des Hommes organization, which is located in Prishtina.<sup>9</sup> Even in the Municipality of Ferizaj, the number of social services cases has increased in the last two years. In 2021, they handled 27 cases of domestic violence, which records the largest number of cases in the last 10 years in this municipality.<sup>10</sup> Even in the Municipality of Kamenica there is a substantial increase in cases of domestic violence in 2021. CSW has treated 30 cases of domestic violence in 2021, while in 2020 there were 12 cases of domestic violence. Also, a discrepancy has been observed in cases of other natures such as the treatment of cases of children with antisocial behavior, with 22 cases in 2021, while in 2020 there were 3 cases, children in conflict with the law with 24 cases in 2021, while in 2020 there were 9 cases, also abused children with 10 cases in 2021, while in 2020 there were no cases at all.<sup>11</sup> In the municipality of Prizren, CSW handled 120 cases of domestic violence in 2021, while in 2020 there was a total of 70 cases.<sup>12</sup> Compared to 2020, there is an increase in cases of domestic violence in the Municipality of Prishtina. In 2020, CSW in Prishtina treated 178 cases of domestic violence, while in 2021 it handled 219 cases of domestic violence.<sup>13</sup>

Service providers from the non-governmental sector have also claimed that there has been an increase in demand for social services. Despite the work environment during the pandemic, everyone stated that they had different challenges in providing services. In the organization Down Syndrome Kosova, the number of cases increased during the pandemic compared to the number of static beneficiaries, there were 35 cases more of children (9 in Prishtina, 21 in Prizren and 5 in Ferizaj).<sup>14</sup> Meanwhile, there has been an increase in the number of cases in the Day Care Center “Pema”, especially an increase in referrals of cases that come directly from families. According to the Director of this Center, Liridona Zogaj, in the beginning when the day care centers were established, the largest number of referrals came from CSWs, while in recent years the referrals are coming mainly from families.<sup>15</sup> This also shows an increasing of awareness of families about the importance of receiving services for children in need of social services.

The main challenge in the Center for the Protection of Victims and the Prevention of Trafficking in Human Beings has been provision of out-of-center services and reintegration services. According to Teuta Abrashi, Director at PVPT, the reintegration process stagnated in 2021 due to pandemic prevention measures, where there have been frequent discontinuations of work.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>9</sup> Interview with Abaz Gjigoli, Director of the Center for Social Work in the Municipality of Fushë Kosova, 2 February 2022

<sup>10</sup> Interview with Adelina Rexhepi, Director of the Center for Social Work in the Municipality of Ferizaj, 16 February 2022

<sup>11</sup> Interview with Rifat Hajdari, Director of the Center for Social Work in the Municipality of Kamenica, 10 February 2022

<sup>12</sup> Data provided by Kumrije Bytyqi, Center for Social Work in the Municipality of Prizren, 13 April 2022

<sup>13</sup> Interview with Blerim Shabani, Director of the Center for Social Work in the Municipality of Prishtina, 11 February 2022

<sup>14</sup> Interview with Ermira Shabani, National Head of Services Program at Down Syndrome Kosova, 3 February 2022

<sup>15</sup> Interview with Liridona Zogaj, Executive Director of the Day Care Center “Pema”, 9 February 2022

<sup>16</sup> Interview with Teuta Abrashi, Executive Director at the Center for the Protection of Victims and the Prevention of Trafficking in Human Beings, 1 February 2022



# **DELAY OF LEGISLATIVE PROCESSES THAT REGULATE SOCIAL SERVICES**

# DELAY OF LEGISLATIVE PROCESSES THAT REGULATE SOCIAL SERVICES

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Based on the analysis of the legal framework, numerous shortcomings which hinder the completion of the decentralization process but also the improvement of the situation of social services, have been identified under the Law No. 02/L-17 on Social and Family Services,<sup>17</sup> Law No. 04/L-081 Amending and Supplementing Law No. 02/L-17 on Social and Family Services<sup>18</sup> and Law No. 03/L-049 on Local Government Finance.<sup>19</sup>

Both draft laws, the Law on Social and Family Services and the Law on Local Government Finance started to be drafted in 2018. Although they have been finalized for a long time now, due to the lack of political will, the Covid-19 pandemic and the unstable political situation in the country, these two draft laws failed to be endorsed in 2021. This is evidenced also in the 2021 EU Progress Report, which states that there has been no progress in legislative reforms to reorganize funds and powers between central and municipal government, to determine the financing of municipalities based on clear, fair and transparent criteria as well as to create a Specific Grant for Social Services.<sup>20</sup>

On 14 February 2021, Early Elections were held for the Assembly of the Republic of Kosovo, and after the constitution of the new government, essential changes took place in the organization of the ministries. On this occasion, the Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare, which was responsible for social welfare and social schemes merged with the Ministry of Finance, Labor and Transfers. Thus, social services and social transfers passed to MFLT. This led to delays in the continuation of work because for a while it was not known how the ministries would be organized.

However, according to the Director of the Department of Social and Family Policies within MFLT, in 2021 there was a greater focus on social programs compared to 2020. Also, despite the fact that the envisaged laws have not been endorsed, MFLT has managed to finalize a number of bylaws of the legislative program.<sup>21</sup> Makfirete Shamolli, Director of the

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<sup>17</sup> Law on Social and Family Services

<sup>18</sup> Law on Amending and Supplementing the Law on Social and Family Services

<sup>19</sup> Law on Local Government Finance

<sup>20</sup> European Commission 2021 Country Report on Kosovo, [https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/kosovo-report-2021\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/kosovo-report-2021_en)

<sup>21</sup> Interview with Mentor Morina, Director of the Department of Social and Family Services, Ministry of Finance, Labor and Transfers, 28 February 2022

CSW in the Municipality of Lipjan, stated that government plans in 2021 have not been a process hindered by the pandemic. According to her, elections, constitution of the Assembly, ministries, committees, postponement of plans for legislative reform, etc., have brought more delays than the pandemic factor.<sup>22</sup> Bashkim Rakaj from CSW in Prizren is also of the opinion that the legislative initiatives have not been blocked by the pandemic, since the activities and workshops have been carried out normally.<sup>23</sup> The Director of DHSW in Lipjan, Shkëlzen Hajdini thinks that the pandemic has not affected the processes initiated earlier and should not be used as an excuse for not pushing the processes forward.<sup>24</sup>

## Law on Social and Family Services

Based on KOMF monitoring report findings, the roles and responsibilities of central and municipal level institutions in Kosovo are not clearly defined. Institutions at both levels continue to have ambiguities in their responsibilities regarding social services. Specifically, the most serious ambiguities regarding decentralization relate to the establishment of new social service institutions, management, contracting, reporting, monitoring and communication. It is therefore recommended that these shortcomings be addressed within the Draft Law on Social and Family Services.

The Government Work Plan and the Legislative Plan for 2021 have foreseen the drafting and approval of the new Law on Social and Family Services by the Government by December 2021, aiming at developing a deep social services reform. Although this Draft Law was finalized and validated by the Working Group in October 2021, it failed to be approved this year either. Also, in 2020, this Draft Law was foreseen to be approved by November 2020, but such a thing did not happen, because the Working Group estimated that the draft Law still needed interventions.<sup>25</sup>

In 2021, KOMF continued to support the drafting of the Law on Social and Family Services. KOMF in cooperation with the Ministry of Finance, Labor and Transfers held four workshops with the Working Group where KOMF addressed specific comments and recommendations based on KOMF's position on the Law on Social and Family Services. As a result, KOMF proposals for classifying services into three categories: primary, secondary and tertiary were approved. Proposals for the integration of social services with the education and health

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<sup>22</sup> Interview with Makfire Shamolli, Director of the Center for Social Work in the Municipality of Ferizaj, 10 February 2022

<sup>23</sup> Interview with Bashkim Rakaj, Director of the Center for Social Work in the Municipality of Prizren, 10 February 2022

<sup>24</sup> Interview with Shkëlzen Hajdini, Director of Health and Social Welfare, Municipality of Lipjan, 22 March 2022

<sup>25</sup> Social Services Pandemic Times, KOMF, April 2021, <https://komfosova.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/Raporti-i-Monitorimit-2021-Eng-1.pdf>

sector, the development of an open scheme for the provision of social services among the public, non-governmental and private providers, the strengthening of inspection through the granting of executive powers, the licensing of services provided by public institutions, etc. were also approved.

## Law on Local Government Finance

Social services are municipal own competency and based on the Law on Local Government Finance, they are financed by municipalities through the two sources of funding, namely the general grant and municipal own-source revenues. The general grant is a closed-type grant with 10% of the projected revenue that will have to be collected centrally during a calendar year. But the problem for social services starts right here, because this form does not guarantee that there will be enough allocation in order to ensure the minimum funding for social services. This is because there is no funding formula for allocating an amount for social services, given that all departments budget their operating and capital expenditures from these amounts. In order for this municipal function not to remain at the will of the municipal level, it is suggested to establish a Specific Grant for Social Services.

In 2019, a new Draft Law on Local Government Finance was drafted, and for the first time, after many efforts and constant advocacy, the establishment of a Specific Grant for Social Services. was foreseen and included in the Draft Law. The Draft Law has passed the public consultation stage; however, it was not approved in 2021 either. The Secretary of the Ministry of Finance, Labor and Transfers established a new Working Group on LLGF, but there has been no meeting or action of the group as there is no response from the Cabinet of the Minister.<sup>26</sup> This Draft Law has been pending for almost three years now, and no steps have been taken towards its adoption.

On 1 June 2021, KOMF met with Prime Minister, Albin Kurti, addressing a request to find a solution for financing the social services, and requesting urgent proceeding of the Draft Law on Local Government Finance, in order to create a Specific Grant for Social Services. With the implementation of this Grant, it is expected to ensure a stable minimum financing of social services.

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<sup>26</sup> Interview with Jeton Gashi, Head of Municipal Budget Division, Ministry of Finance, Labor and Transfers, 24 March 2022

## Financing formula for social services

In 2019, the Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare issued a special decision to establish a Working Group on drafting the financing formula for social services, a formula on which the amount of budget allocated under the Specific Grant for Social Services, would be based. The financing formula for social services was not finalized in 2021. The Director of the Department of Social and Family Policies within MFLT said that in 2022, an analysis based on the new Law on Local Government Finance will be worked out, which will reflect the needs in the first year of financing of social services. According to him, with the approval of the Draft Law on Local Government Finance, efforts will be made on drafting an Administrative Instruction governing the operation and distribution of the Specific Grant for Social Services..<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> Interview with Mentor Morina, Director of the Department of Social and Family Services, Ministry of Finance, Labor and Transfers, 28 February 2022



**FINANCING  
OF SOCIAL SERVICES**

# FINANCING OF SOCIAL SERVICES

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## Financing of social services from the central level in 2021

In 2021, the total budget of the Ministry of Finance, Labour and Transfers (former MLSW programmes) was €512 million. Compared to the 2020 budget of the Ministry, the budget of MFLT (former part of MLSW) has decreased by €19 million.

As in previous years, the vast majority of the total budget is allocated for schemes and transfers, respectively €489 million, or 96% of the budget of this Ministry. The schemes cover basic social and contributory pensions, pensions for veterans, war invalids, disability pensions, compensation for political prisoners, early pensions (Trepça), etc. Under the schemes, MFLT allocated €3 million for the Material Support scheme to Families with Children with Permanent Disabilities and €784,785 for the Foster Care Programme within the biological family and outside the biological family. Meanwhile, €53 million of transfers are dedicated to the Social Assistance Scheme for families in poverty, with children being also beneficiaries.

Based on the above-mentioned data, it is confirmed that just like in 2020, the MFLT oriented social support towards monthly monetary assistance within social schemes in 2021 as well.

The budget allocated for social services has continued to be very low. Specifically, from the total MFLT budget of €512 million, within social services, MFLT allocated €2 million to the Home for the Elderly without Family Care in Prishtina, €1 million to the Special Institute in Shtime and the Community-Based Home in Shtime for children with disabilities without parental care.<sup>28</sup>

The Ministry of Finance, Labour and Transfers continued to fund social service providers from the non-governmental sector through subsidies. MFLT announced a public call for financial support for NGOs licensed by MFLT in the area of social and family services in February 2021. The total projected amount of the call was 900,000 Euro. The minimum amount of financial support that could be allocated for a project was 10,000 Euro, while the maximum amount for a project was 50,000 Euro. The project implementation period in this

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<sup>28</sup> Data provided by Mentor Morina, Director of the Department of Social and Family Policies, Ministry of Finance, Labour and Transfers, 12 April 2022



call was from 6 to 10 months.<sup>29</sup> On 14 April 2021, MFLT published the decision on approved and rejected NGOs by the public call for financial support for NGO projects. Based on this decision, 39 organizations were approved for financial support in the area of social and family services.<sup>30</sup>

● The Ministry of Finance, Labor and Transfers has increased the financing amount compared to 2020. In 2020, MLSW allocated 355,000 Euro for social services, while in 2021, it allocated 900,000 Euro, with an increase of 153%.

It is worth mentioning that MFLT has increased the funding threshold for social services of the non-governmental sector. Specifically, in 2021 the maximum amount for a project was 15,000 Euro for six months, in 2020 the maximum amount for a project was 40,000 Euro for 10 months, while in 2021 the maximum amount for a project was 50,000 Euro for 10 months. However, despite the continuous advocacy of civil society for the establishment of a sustainable scheme for contracting social and family services by the non-governmental sector for three-year periods, this recommendation has not been implemented in 2021. Specifically, it was requested not to have funds allocated through subsidies but through the purchase of services for a three-year period to eliminate time gaps. In this regard, organizations licensed to provide social services have expressed their dissatisfaction with MFLT calls, due to the short duration of projects and low financial support, especially given the dire situation due to Covid-19. According to them, the short duration of published calls and the time gaps between MFLT calls are constantly causing difficulties in the functioning of social service providers. The maximum duration of projects, even of one year, is considered too short and inappropriate by social service providers. The respondents during the interviews, recommended that the duration of the projects should be three years, in order to ensure sustainable operation of the services.

Liridona Zogaj from the Day Care Center “Pema” said that organizations usually draft strategic plans for three-year periods and often remain uncovered due to funds being exhausted or completion of the project. Thus, the closure of services for certain periods of time is also endangered. It even creates difficulties in involving co-donors because of short periods of

<sup>29</sup> Public call for financial support for NGO projects licensed by MLSW in the area of social and family services, 23 February 2021, <https://mpms.rks-gov.net/wpdm-package/thirja-publike-2/?wpdmdl=12211>

<sup>30</sup> Decision on the public call for financial support for NGO projects dated 23 February 2021, 14 April 2021, <https://mpms.rks-gov.net/wpdm-package/vendim-per-approvimin-e-ojq-ve-te-licencuara-ne-Fushën-e-sherbinave-sociale/?wpdmdl=12443>

time funded by MFLT and municipalities, co-donors may refuse to provide funds due to the non-coverage of activities for certain periods of time. Funding should be done on time and for three-year periods.<sup>31</sup>

The Center for the Protection of Victims and Prevention of Trafficking in Human Beings - PVPT is licensed to provide housing and services at the national level and to handle cases from all over Kosovo. Teuta Abrashi from PVPT said that in terms of funding, 2021 was a better year because the amount of MFLT call was higher and there was also an emergency fund in the first two months of 2021 to avoid the time gap not covered by the regular financing call. According to her, compared to previous years, the period not covered by funds has been shorter in 2021. Despite support from MFLT and the municipal level, she said it was impossible to provide services without the support from another donor. According to her, it is extremely problematic to be challenged with the same problem every year and one of the ways to solve this problem is through concluding long-term contracts with MFLT and municipalities.<sup>32</sup>

Out of eight interviews with representatives of social service providers from the non-governmental sector, six of them benefited from the MFLT call for financing social services for 2021. According to them, financial support has started to increase in the last two years, yet the current budget does not cover the needs of these organizations to provide quality services.

**MFLT should establish a sustainable scheme for contracting/purchasing social and family services from the non-governmental sector for three-year periods.**

All respondents to this Monitoring Report have stated that the best solution for financing social services is to apply for a Specific Grant for Social Services. The total amount of current expenditures for all expenditure categories for CSWs and financing of residential institutions is about €10 million. It is recommended that in the first year of implementation of the new Law on Local Government Finance, the total amount allocated through the Specific Grant be €15 million, which means to increase the budget for social services by €5 million.

<sup>31</sup> Interview with Liridona Zogaj, Executive Director of the Day Care Center "Pema", 9 February 2022

<sup>32</sup> Interview with Teuta Abrashi, Executive Director at the Center for the Protection of Victims and the Prevention of Trafficking in Human Beings, 1 February 2022

## Financing of social services from the municipal level in 2021

### Financing for Centers for Social Work:

In 2021, as in previous years, none of the monitored Centers possessed a special budget from municipalities dedicated only to social services. As in 2019 and 2020, in 2021 the municipalities have mainly covered the monthly salaries and administrative expenses for the Centers for Social Work, thus not allocating a budget for the CSWs, for the provision of social services based on the citizens' needs within the municipalities. All municipalities indiscriminately responded that the current budget does not even closely meet the real needs for social services.

The total amount of budget from the General Grant for 2021 for social services was €7 million. This includes the costs of CSW staff salaries and other operating expenses. Although there has been an increase in the General Grant in recent years, there has been no increase in the budget for social services in municipalities. Financing of social services by municipalities is still at the lowest possible level.

Regarding the budget for social services provided by the Centers for Social Work, the data for the seven monitored municipalities are listed below.

**Municipality of Prishtina** has not allocated specific budget for social services for the Center for Social Work. The only form of funding has been cash subsidies to foster families, families in need and children with disabilities.

**Municipality of Fushë Kosova** as in 2020, in 2021 enabled the contracting of a part-time psychologist (50%) for the provision of psychological services within the CSW, in the amount of 150 Euro.

**Municipality of Kamenica** has not allocated specific budget for social services for the Center for Social Work. The only form of funding was the current assistance to families in need from the Office of the Mayor in the amount of 200 Euro.

**Municipality of Prizren** has not allocated specific budget for social services for the Center for Social Work. The only form of funding was financing for foster families from the Office of the Mayor in the amount of 250 Euro.

**Municipality of Lipjan, Municipality of Peja and Municipality of Ferizaj** did not allocate budget for social services for the Centers for Social Work in 2021.

Blerim Shabani from the Center for Social Work in Prishtina said that there is a more advanced approach regarding the responsibilities of the Municipality of Prishtina. However, the Municipality has not yet managed to finance the social services of the CSW in Prishtina and it is extremely necessary to allocate an emergency fund to handle CSW cases. According to him, it is necessary to process the Law on Local Government Finance as soon as possible, in order to start operating with Specific Grant for Social Services, which would enable the advancement of social services.<sup>33</sup>

Abaz Xhigoli from the Center for Social Work in Fushë Kosova said that in 2021 there is an increased will in this municipality in terms of focusing on social welfare. He said that CSW does not make any budget request to the Municipality, because in spite of requests, the Municipality allocates the budget dedicated to CSW only for salaries and administrative needs.<sup>34</sup>

Makfirete Shamolli from the Center for Social Work in Lipjan said that the budget allocated to CSWs is an operating budget and not a budget for social services.<sup>35</sup>

Drita Kukaj from the Center for Social Work in Peja alleged that the Municipality has not allocated a budget for social services and that apart from salaries there has been no other support. According to her, the Municipality should include CSW when doing budget planning because for years now, the budget is offered as finalized draft by the Municipality, without the possibility of intervention.<sup>36</sup>

Adelina Rexhepi from the Center for Social Work in Ferizaj also said that the Municipality of Ferizaj has never allocated a budget for social services and apart from salaries, there has been no other support.<sup>37</sup>

Bashkim Rakaj from the Center for Social Work in Prizren said that the Municipality orients the budget in capital investments. The municipality announces calls only for the financing of services from the non-governmental sector. He points out that in emergencies, social work

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<sup>33</sup> Interview with Blerim Shabani, Director of the Center for Social Work in the Municipality of Prishtina, 11 February 2022

<sup>34</sup> Interview with Abaz Gjigoli, Director of the Center for Social Work in the Municipality of Fushë Kosova, 2 February 2022

<sup>35</sup> Interview with Makfire Shamolli, Director of the Center for Social Work in the Municipality of Ferizaj, 10 February 2022

<sup>36</sup> Interview with Drita Kukaj, Director of the Center for Social Work in the Municipality of Peja, 4 March 2022

<sup>37</sup> Interview with Adelina Rexhepi, Director of the Center for Social Work in the Municipality of Ferizaj, 16 February 2022

officers are forced to pay by themselves for the child needs, such as bread, milk, etc. This is because there is no emergency fund for such cases. He said that the budget planning is done at the DSW level, the CSW proposals are never taken into account and thus the requests are not approved.<sup>38</sup>

The same is affirmed by Rifat Hajdari, Director of the Center for Social Work in Kamenica, who points out that in emergencies social workers pay by themselves even for a hotel for emergency accommodation of children. Non-payment of social workers in cases where they work as custodians after work, represents another concern. According to him, there should be an incentive for custodians.<sup>39</sup>

- A special budget for Centers for Social Work, dedicated only to the provision of social services, was not recorded in any of the municipalities monitored. As in the previous two years, in 2021 the municipalities have mainly covered the monthly salaries and administrative expenses for the Centers for Social Work. All CSW representatives responded that the current budget does not even meet the real needs for social services.

All representatives from the Centers for Social Work have stated that the best solution for sustainable financing of social services is the Specific Grant for Social Services. According to them, this Grant would be oriented only to social services and the municipality would not be able to allocate it for expenditures in other areas.

### **Financing for the non-governmental sector:**

Throughout 2021, the support of municipalities to NGOs has continued to be provided through subsidies for the provision of social services, which has not proven to be a sustainable form of funding. Municipalities have not established a sustainable scheme for contracting or purchasing social services.

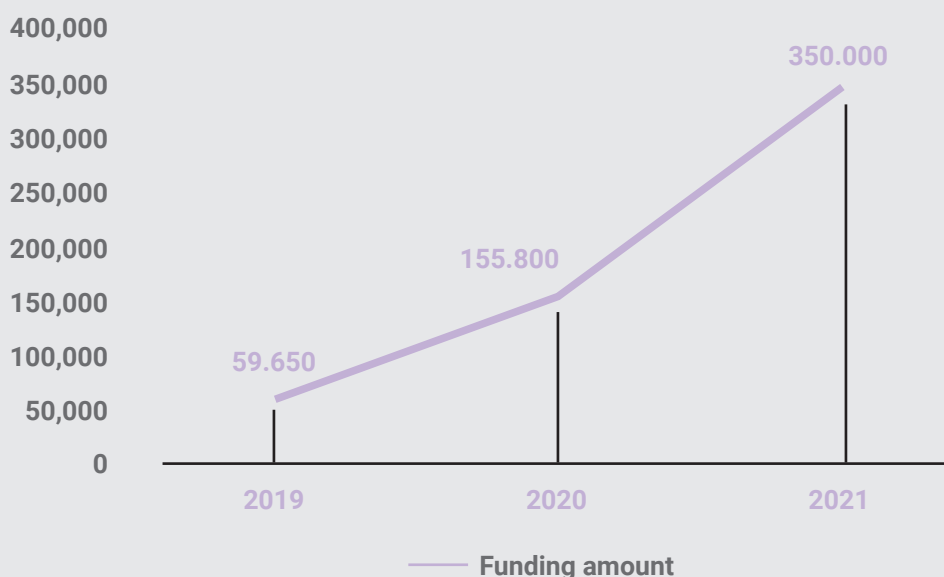
<sup>38</sup> Interview with Bashkim Rakaj, Social Service Officer, Center for Social Work in the Municipality of Prizren, 10 February 2022

<sup>39</sup> Interview with Rifat Hajdari, Director of the Center for Social Work in the Municipality of Kamenica, 10 February 2022

- Out of seven municipalities monitored, two of them did not announce calls for financing of social services provided by the non-governmental sector, namely the Municipality of Ferizaj and the Municipality of Lipjan.

- In contrast to 2020, where three municipalities (Municipalities of Prishtina, Prizren and Ferizaj) had increased budget for social services from the non-governmental sector, in 2021, only one municipality has increased the budget for social services for NGOs. The Municipality of Prishtina has increased by 125% the budget for subsidizing NGOs for the provision of social services.

### Financing amount for NGOs by the Municipality of Prishtina



Also, two municipalities that did not announce calls for financing of social services last year, have announced this year calls on their websites for financing of social services, namely the Municipality of Fushë Kosova and the Municipality of Kamenica.

In general, calls published by municipalities for subsidizing social services provided by the non-governmental sector have been announced late, approximately during the months of March - September 2021.

Below you may find the amounts of the allocated budgets for subsidizing NGOs providing social services by municipalities:



**Municipality of Prishtina** announced for 2021 a public call for financial support for NGO projects for social services to provide public financial support for the financing of NGO projects/programme under the platform “Prishtina e Secilit”, in September 2021.<sup>40</sup> The total amount of this call was 350,000 Euro. 24 non-governmental organizations have benefited from this amount.<sup>41</sup> The minimum amount of financial support that could be allocated for each individual project was 500 Euro, while the maximum amount for a project was 14,000 Euro. Whereas, the project implementation period was a maximum of 12 months.

Municipality of Prishtina allocated 59,650 Euro in 2019, 155,800 Euro in 2020, while in 2021 there was an increase of 125%, with a distribution of 350,000 Euro.

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**Municipality of Prizren** announced a public call for 2021 for financing NGO projects in the social area in June 2021.<sup>42</sup> The total amount allocated under this call was 36,500 Euro, 12 non-governmental organizations have benefited from the subsidy.<sup>43</sup> In the call published by the Municipality of Prizren, the duration of the project implementation was not specified.

Compared to 2020 where the budget for financing of non-governmental sector was 90,520 Euro, the Municipality of Prizren has reduced the funding amount for NGOs for social services in 2021 to 36,500 Euro, which is about 60% less. In 2020, the Municipality of Prizren recorded an increase compared to 2019, where the budget at that time was 26,100 Euro.

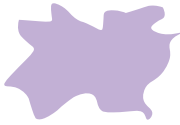
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<sup>40</sup> Call for public financial support for the financing of NGO projects/programmes in the service of the social welfare platform “Prishtina e Secilit”, DSW, Municipality of Prishtina

<sup>41</sup> List of evaluated/scored projects of the public call in the area of protection of social welfare platform groups “Prishtina e Secilit”, Municipality of Prishtina, [https://prishtinaonline.com/uploads/lista\\_e\\_projekteve\\_te\\_vleresuara\\_dhe\\_refuzuara.pdf](https://prishtinaonline.com/uploads/lista_e_projekteve_te_vleresuara_dhe_refuzuara.pdf)

<sup>42</sup> Call for applications for NGO projects in the area of social welfare, Municipality of Prizren <https://bit.ly/3j7N2zh>

<sup>43</sup> List of beneficiary NGOs in the Municipality of Prizren, <https://bit.ly/3Jg2QdQ>



**Municipality of Fushë Kosova** announced a public call for 2021 the provision of public financial support for the financing of NGO projects and programmes in April 2021. This call was dedicated not only to social services, but included support of activities related to improving the health and social status of families and individuals in need, facilitating the situation of categories of persons with special needs and providing services to persons in need. The total amount of the call was 15,000 Euro. 15 non-governmental organizations have benefited from this call.<sup>44</sup> The minimum amount of financial support was 500 Euro, while the maximum amount for a project was 2,000 Euro. The project implementation period was one day to six months.

In 2020, the Municipality of Fushë Kosova did not announce any call for financing social services from the non-governmental sector, while in 2019 it opened a public call, but did not provide data on the amount of the budget allocated.

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**Municipality of Kamenica** announced a public call in 2021 through the Office of the Mayor for Public Financial Support of NGO Projects, in March 2021. This call was dedicated not only to social services, it also included advocacy campaigns for people with disabilities, lectures and training on human rights, involvement in education, employment and service provision for people with disabilities, support for sports activities for people with disabilities, provision of exercises in physiotherapy for children with disabilities as well as provision of orthopedic services for people with disabilities. The total amount of the call was 10,000 Euro.<sup>45</sup> One organization benefited the amount of 9,000 Euro from this call. The project implementation period was six months. Whereas, the Directorate of Health and Social Welfare in Kamenica has not announced any public call for financing of social services.<sup>46</sup>

Compared to 2020, where the call content was unclear and was dedicated to sports projects<sup>47</sup>, in 2021 this municipality funded an organization for the provision of social services.

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<sup>44</sup> Public call for public financial support for the financing of NGO draft projects and programmes, DHSW, Municipality of Fushë Kosova

<sup>45</sup> Call for Public Financial Support of NGO Projects, Office of the Mayor of Kamenica

<sup>46</sup> Interview with Durim Biqkaj, Social Service Officer, Municipal Directorate of Health and Social Welfare, Municipality of Kamenica, 19 April 2022

<sup>47</sup> Social Services in Pandemic Times, KOMF, April 2021, <https://komfkosova.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/Raporti-i-Monitorimit-2021-Eng-1.pdf>





**Municipality of Peja** has not responded regarding the financing of social services for the non-governmental sector and no call was founded to have been announced by this Municipality on the website of the Municipality.

The Municipality of Peja announced a public call for 2020 for subsidizing NGOs for the provision of social services, in the amount of 80,000 Euro. Whereas, for 2019, this Municipality did not provide information on the amount allocated for subsidizing NGOs for the provision of social services.

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**Municipality of Lipjan** did not announce any public call for 2021 financing of social services. This Municipality, through the Office of the Mayor, subsidized the shelter for violence cases in the amount of 2,830 Euro. In 2020, the Municipality of Lipjan did not announce any public call for subsidizing social services by NGOs, but it subsidized through the Office of the Mayor the shelter for violence cases in the amount of 3,000 Euro. Also, through the Office of the Mayor, this Municipality allocated 7,200 Euro in 2020 as support during the pandemic for children without parental care. The last call announced by this Municipality was in 2019, where DHSW in Lipjan had announced a public call and allocated 5,000 Euro for non-governmental organizations in the social area.

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**Municipality of Ferizaj** did not announce any calls for financing of social services for 2021. In 2020, the Municipality of Ferizaj had a budget increase of 128% for social services compared to 2019. In 2020, through a public call, this municipality allocated 30,000 Euro, and 13,125 Euro in 2019. According to the head of social services in this municipality, the municipal budget for 2021 has been extremely limited, thus making it impossible to allocate the budget for social services.<sup>48</sup> Regarding the funding difficulties of the Municipality, the Director of Handikos in Ferizaj said that the funds for 2020 call were not allocated in that year due to the pandemic and the same were reallocated in 2021. Whereas, they did not receive any financial support from the municipality in 2021.<sup>49</sup>

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Despite the recommendations from previous reports, even in 2021 municipalities did not establish a sustainable scheme for the purchase or long-term contracting of services of NGOs providing social services, thus compromising the quality and sustainability of social

<sup>48</sup> Interview with Emira Sallahu, Head of Social Welfare Sector, Municipal Directorate of Health and Social Welfare, Municipality of Ferizaj, 3 February 2022

<sup>49</sup> Interview with Xhemile Murseli, Executive Director in Handikos, Ferizaj, 9 February 2022

services. The financing has continued to be done in the form of subsidies, without making a preliminary analysis of the community needs. No field analysis on the number of people in need and the types of services to be provided was conducted in any of the municipalities monitored. In all municipalities monitored, representatives from the Municipal Directorates of Social Welfare stated that all information on people in need is received from the Centers for Social Work based on reported cases, and currently they do not have the capacity to conduct such research. Therefore, calls from municipalities keep being announced on ad-hoc basis and with pre-determined amounts which do not match the needs and strategies of non-governmental organizations that provide social services and do not address the real community needs.

Municipalities have not created a model of public calls for financing of social services which contains the basic requirements for financing so far. Also, the calls announced by the municipalities monitored were not dedicated exclusively to NGOs providing social services. Some of them (as in the section above) also included NGOs engaged in other activities such as education, vocational training and sports. In addition, NGOs that are not licensed in social services were also funded this year. This is because in some of the calls announced, the licensing of NGOs for social services is not defined as a criterion. In the four analyzed calls, only the Municipality of Prizren has set the licensing of NGOs by the relevant Ministry as a criterion, while the Municipalities of Prishtina, Fushë Kosova and Kamenica have not specified the licensing of organizations as a criterion.

- The lack of licensing criterion for the provision of social services in calls for funding by municipalities has created dissatisfaction among licensed providers who have rigorously adhered to the systematic licensing process. Also, such a thing reduces the quality of services provided and affects the monitoring and inspection process which also aims to maintain quality standards in the provision of social services.

The low amount of funding for services and the short duration of project implementation are the main concerns of service providers from the non-governmental sector. Although over the last three years, an increase in the funding amount has been observed in some municipalities, social services continue to face a lack of doable budget.

Municipalities mainly distribute the budget in proportion to the organizations that have applied, regardless of the type, cost of service or beneficiaries. This form of financing undermines the market of fair competition and values among the NGOs by impairing the quality of social services. Based on the calls announced by the municipalities monitored, the average implementation of projects from these calls is six months.

This is an extremely short period to implement a project, and it even aggravates the situation of people in need by being forced to discontinue services from time to time due to the completion of projects. In addition, the frequent application of providers in calls announced, takes considerable time and staff energy. According to the interviewees, this staff, instead of using the energy for the provision of quality services, several times per year they have to focus and deal both at the municipal level and at the central level. According to the Director of Social and Family Policies in MFLT, this year it is planned to amend the regulation to support NGOs through subsidies, which provides the opportunity to determine the time period of project implementation and where funding is intended to be done in three-year periods. On the other hand, in 2022 it is intended to draft a bylaw governing the contracting of services by the non-governmental sector.<sup>50</sup>

Handikos organization in Kamenica provides services to people with disabilities, including mainly orthopedic services, advocacy and lobbying. Hyrmete Morina from Handikos in Kamenica stressed that they did not have any project and funding in the last four months from the central or municipal level, as the last project funded by the Municipality for a period of six months was completed in October 2021. Therefore, this has led to the discontinuation of services for a certain time, as it happens in other cases, and they are active only in emergencies. She highlighted that these time gaps, among the other things, are also affecting the loss of contacts with beneficiaries. According to her, the main challenge is the sustainable financing of social services and the lack of human capacities, with only three staff members working in this center.<sup>51</sup>

Autism Organization in Prishtina provides services under three programs. Early intervention programme, school preparation programme as well as independence and vocational training programme for adolescents with autism. Aida Topanica from Autism appreciates the fact

<sup>50</sup> Interview with Mentor Morina, Director of the Department of Social and Family Services, Ministry of Finance, Labor and Transfers, 28 February 2022

<sup>51</sup> Interview with Hyrmete Morina, Executive Director at Handikos, Kamenica, 3 March 2022

that in 2021, the call announced by the Municipality of Prishtina has been dedicated to social services, however according to her, the current budget of the organization does not cover the needs of the organization and does not provide financial sustainability. Another concern is the lack of accurate and timely information at the moment when calls are announced by the Municipality, where the only way to be informed is through constant visit of the municipal website for new announcements.<sup>52</sup>

Down Syndrome Kosovo has two programmes, one for intervention and early education as well as autonomy and vocational training programme. Currently, this organization has 300 registered beneficiaries of services. Ermira Shabani from DSK said that there has been an improvement in the Municipality of Prishtina in terms of social area, and there is a greater focus compared to previous years. According to her, what remains to be improved is to make an analysis of the needs of persons in need of social services and then have calls announced in accordance with this analysis. However, the main challenge for DSK remains the provision of social services due to lack of funding.<sup>53</sup>

Day Care Center “Pema” provides community-based day care services to children with disabilities in the Municipalities of Prizren, Peja, Ferizaj and Gjilan. Liridona Zogaj from “Pema” emphasized that some municipalities have gradually started over the years to announce calls for financing of social services and that there is a better mobilization in this regard. However, funding standards or financing formula should be in place and the annual cost of social services provided by the non-governmental sector should be set. The main concern is the time gaps between calls, as they are endangering the temporary discontinuation of services.<sup>54</sup>

Handikos organization in Ferizaj provides multidisciplinary community-based services and home-based services. Xhemile Murseli from Handikos in Ferizaj stated that the Municipality of Ferizaj is not interested in supporting social services in general. Regarding the calls announced by the Municipality, she highlighted that there is no re-evaluation of the call criteria and the organizations are not evaluated whether they have met the standards for providing social services or not. According to her, the financing from the central level is not done based on the needs and projects of organizations, since projects are usually approved with activities as they are, while the budget proposed in these projects is halved.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> Interview with Aida Topanica, Head of Projects Department at the NGO Autism in Prishtina, 2 February 2022

<sup>53</sup> Interview with Ermira Shabani, National Head of Services Program at Down Syndrome Kosova, 3 February 2022

<sup>54</sup> Interview with Liridona Zogaj, Executive Director of the Day Care Center “Pema”, 9 February 2022

<sup>55</sup> Interview with Xhemile Murseli, Executive Director in Handikos, Ferizaj, 9 February 2022

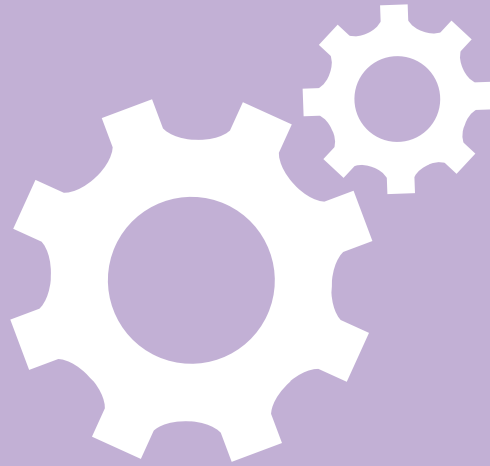
ORA Akti organization in Fushë Kosova is implementing a project for the early identification of potential victims of trafficking in Gillan, Ferizaj and Fushë Kosova by providing support through social workers. Rexhep Gojnovci from this organization said that they have not applied in any of the open calls (neither in the MFLT call nor in the municipal call) and that these calls are made without any analysis on the current needs. According to him, a proper planning of expenditures and activities should be done and institutions must find ways to start implementing the Specific Grant for Social Services so this Grant can be used only for social services, without being channeled in other areas. In addition, municipalities need to identify cooperation partners in order to cover services that cannot be covered by the municipality.<sup>56</sup>

NOPM organization in Kamenica provides training to municipal officers, citizens and NGOs in the area of education. This organization is forced to orient its activity in other areas due to the lack of funding for social services. Besime Tusha from NOPM said that the Municipality of Kamenica usually announces open or public calls for applications for organizations that provide services, but the problem is that in municipality there are not many organizations that provide social services or are licensed for social services. Tusha also thinks that the main challenge is the financial viability of organizations.<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>56</sup> Interview with Rexhep Gojnovci, Executive Director of the NGO ORA - Akti, 3 February 2022

<sup>57</sup> Interview with Besime Tusha, Executive Director of NOPM, 15 February 2022



# **MUNICIPAL CAPACITIES FOR SOCIAL SERVICES**

# MUNICIPAL CAPACITIES FOR SOCIAL SERVICES

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Municipalities are responsible for providing social services within their territory, according to the standards and policies of the Government or relevant ministries.<sup>58</sup> The Municipal Directorates of Health and Social Welfare are responsible for municipal social welfare issues and manage the Centers for Social Work. CSWs are public institutions that have the responsibility to provide social and family services to people in need. All municipalities in Kosovo have Centers for Social Work. In total, in the territory of Kosovo there are 40 Centers for Social Work with about 400 social workers.

## Capacities of the Directorates of Health and Social Welfare in the management of social services

In 2021, the capacities of municipalities for management and provision of social services have continued to be deficient as in the previous two years.

From the monitored municipalities, the Municipality of Prishtina, the Municipality of Prizren and the Municipality of Peja (the latter from 2021) have Municipal Directorates of Social Welfare as separate directorates. Meanwhile, in the other four municipalities, this department operates jointly with the Directorate of Health. This was considered by the interviewees as one of the reasons for the lack of focus in the social welfare sector, given that the greatest importance is given to the health sector, and in this case the budget is dedicated to this sector.

Local Elections were held on 17 October 2021 and in the seven municipalities monitored, there were changes in the Municipal Directorates of Social Welfare and now new directors have been elected and have taken office by the beginning of 2022. Changes in leadership have affected the organization of work in municipalities and caused delays in the work process. Only in the Municipality of Ferizaj, within four years, three directors of social welfare have been replaced, which has led to difficulties in adapting staff and running processes smoothly.<sup>59</sup> According to social service providers, frequent political changes have greatly

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<sup>58</sup> Law on Local Self-Government and Law on Social and Family Services

<sup>59</sup> Interview with Emira Sallahu, Head of Social Welfare Sector, Municipal Directorate of Health and Social Welfare, Municipality of Ferizaj, 3 February 2022

delayed the decentralization process due to the disruption of processes in general. Liridona Zogaj from the Day Care Center “Pema” considers that in those municipalities where there have been no frequent changes of municipal heads, they have finally managed to understand the decentralization process and the importance of social services.<sup>60</sup>

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All elected directors were asked about the plans for the next term regarding social services decentralization and organization. Specifically, when asked if they plan to organize a field research on the needs of citizens in need of social services, Adelina Sahiti, Director of Social Welfare in the Municipality of Prishtina said that a field research on the needs of citizens for social services will be conducted within the first year.<sup>61</sup> In the Municipality of Prizren, Vjollca Kabashi, Director of Social Welfare said that this municipality has already initiated such research.<sup>62</sup> Meanwhile, Shkëlzen Hajdini, Director of Health and Social Welfare in the Municipality of Lipjan thinks differently, stating that there is a need for a multi-sectoral approach and such research should not be left only to the competencies of the municipality or CSW. Therefore, during the first year of the mandate, such thing is not foreseen.<sup>63</sup>

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As in the two previous years, the lack of professional staff in social services within the DHSW has been reported as a key difficulty in managing services. There is no special staff for social welfare in the DHSW in Lipjan and the team consists of two lawyers.<sup>64</sup> The Municipality of Prizren, despite having a separate Directorate of Social Welfare, is considered not to have professional staff in social services within this Directorate. In DSW in Prizren, the staff consists of the Director, a Coordinator and an Assistant.<sup>65</sup> Whereas, in the Directorate of Health and Social Welfare in Ferizaj there is a profiled staff for social welfare, as it consists of the Director, two Heads of Sector (one for health and one for social welfare) and the Financial/Administrative Assistant. However, representatives from this Directorate consider that the number of staff is not sufficient.<sup>66</sup> Representatives of the Directorate of Health and Social Welfare in the Municipality of Fushë Kosova are of the same opinion, despite the fact

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<sup>60</sup> Interview with Liridona Zogaj, Executive Director of the Day Care Center “Pema”, 9 February 2022

<sup>61</sup> Interview with Adelina Sahiti, Director of Social Welfare, Municipality of Prishtina, March 14, 2022

<sup>62</sup> Interview with Vjollca Kabashi, Director of Social Welfare, Municipality of Prizren, 28 March 2022

<sup>63</sup> Interview with Shkëlzen Hajdini, Director of Health and Social Welfare, Municipality of Lipjan, 22 March 2022

<sup>64</sup> Interview with Shkëlzen Hajdini, Director of Health and Social Welfare, Municipality of Lipjan, 22 March 2022

<sup>65</sup> Interview with Vjollca Kabashi, Director of Social Welfare, Municipality of Prizren, 28 March 2022

<sup>66</sup> Interview with Emira Sallahu, Head of Social Welfare Sector, Municipal Directorate of Health and Social Welfare, Municipality of Ferizaj, 3 February 2022



that there is a social welfare officer in the Directorate, they consider that the number of staff in the Directorate is small to ensure quality management and monitoring of services.<sup>67</sup> In the Municipality of Prishtina, the number of staff in the Directorate of Social Welfare is eight and there is a profiled staff in social services, but there is a need for additional human resource capacities since the need for social services in the capital city is very high.<sup>68</sup> Although the municipality of Kamenica is considered a municipality with a large territory and numerous social problems among some communities living in this municipality, the capacities of DHSW continue to remain low. The number of staff in DHSW is three officers, including a lawyer, an economist and a sociologist. It is worth mentioning that this Municipality has a social services officer, but does not have sufficient capacities for procurement and contracting of social services.<sup>69</sup>

Another challenge is the lack of utility and needs-based budget planning. In none of the municipalities monitored, budget planning was done based on a preliminary analysis of needs for social services on an annual basis. Municipal budget planning tends to repeat preliminary budget planning, without any realistic assessment of citizens' needs for social services. Furthermore, this planning does not take into account the needs of CSWs and NGOs providing social services in municipalities. To date, no municipality has identified needs and drafted a budget plan based on such needs. On the other hand, even in case of CSWs requests, the budget allocated for these centers is managed by DHSW and is not transferred to CSW.

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<sup>67</sup> Interview with Mimoza Shala Kolshi, Director and Hysen Sllamniku, Social Welfare Officer at the Directorate of Health and Social Welfare in the Municipality of Fushë Kosova, 1 March 2022

<sup>68</sup> Interview with Adelina Sahiti, Director of Social Welfare, Municipality of Prishtina, 14 March 2022

<sup>69</sup> Interview with Durim Biqkaj, Social Service Officer, Municipal Directorate of Health and Social Welfare, Municipality of Kamenica, 19 April 2022

## Capacities of Centers for Social Work in the provision of social services

Unlike 2020, when due to the caseload during the Covid-19 pandemic as well as limited staff, the work focus has not directly aimed for provision of social services, in 2021 there was an adaptation to the pandemic situation and work continued at a normal pace. Despite this, the professional social service staff continues to be low and disproportionate to the number of cases in need.

The small number of officers was reported as the main challenge in the Centers for Social Work. There are a total of 13 social service officers in CSW in Prishtina. This is a very low number compared to the number of cases in need of social services in this Municipality.<sup>70</sup>

**In the CSW in Prishtina, in 2021 there was a case when 230 active cases were managed by only one social service officer, which is contrary to the minimum standards.**

In the Municipality of Prizren, in 2021 there were 11 social service officers, with three of them being retired, while their positions have not yet been filled with new staff. The average number of cases handled by one social service officer at the CSW in Prizren is 170 cases.

Even in the Center for Social Work in Peja, it is considered that the number of social workers is very small. There are currently seven social service workers in this CSW.<sup>71</sup> In the Center for Social Work in Kamenica, due to the nature of the municipality where several communities live, there is a huge caseload and a small number of staff. The Director of CSW said that the Center is short of two social service officers, but the Municipality has not yet announced a vacancy to fill these two positions.<sup>72</sup>

Due to limited human and financial resources, social services are focused on providing emergency protection services. There is a lack of prevention and reintegration services, which are essential for the well-being of children and persons in need. Furthermore, for some of the children or persons in need of social services, the system does not provide any services, such as for children or persons who are victims of drug abuse, children involved in hazardous labor, etc.

<sup>70</sup> Interview with Blerim Shabani, Director of the Center for Social Work in the Municipality of Prishtina, 11 February 2022

<sup>71</sup> Interview with Drita Kukaj, Director of the Center for Social Work in the Municipality of Peja, 4 March 2022

<sup>72</sup> Interview with Rifat Hajdari, Director of the Center for Social Work in the Municipality of Kamenica, 10 February 2022

KOMF Monitoring Report shows that even in 2021, CSWs have continued to have a reactive approach in terms of measuring vulnerability in the municipalities where they operate. No CSW in the municipalities monitored had the opportunity and capacity to go on the field and assess citizens in need.

Based on the monitoring data, the principle of multidisciplinary work is not complied with, which is a basic principle for CSWs, since CSWs do not have professionals in various areas required by law as social service officers, psychologists, pedagogues, sociologists and lawyers. Social service officers are not profiled and consequently work with all cases and categories in need.

In addition to the needs for financial and human capacities, CSW staff and providers of other social services need further professional development.

- **As in the previous two years, there was no annual training plan designed by MFLT, despite the fact that the minimum standard requirement is to conduct regular annual trainings for each category. In addition, there are no accredited training services for social services.**

Also, the monitoring findings show that CSWs are not prepared for planning and managing the budget for social services. In all municipalities there is a lack of capacity building activities for budget planning and management, lack of evaluation needs in the respective territories as well as the genuine cooperation between the CSWs and the DHSW for drafting a joint budget plan in accordance with these needs.

Given that after the implementation of the Specific Grant for Social Services, the budget is expected to be transferred to the CSWs, they should be prepared to receive competencies for budget planning and management for the provision of social services.

- **In none of the monitored municipalities, the requests of the Centers for Social Work were taken into account by the DHSW. Moreover, the representatives from CSWs have stated that the municipalities do not consult them during the budget planning for social services at all.**



# REPORTING

# REPORTING

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According to monitoring data, there are no clear protocols and specific reporting formats in place for all social service providers.

Same as in the previous two years, respondents stated that they report in two levels, central and municipal, thus sending various reports to the MFLT and DHSW. At both levels, social providers draft regular periodic reporting on cases. More general information related to customer types, services, CSW challenges, etc. are reported to DHSW. Meanwhile, CSWs continue to report detailed data on cases handled to MFLT. Many social service providers consider that they are doing dual work by reporting at both levels. But according to Makfirete Shamolli from CSW in Lipjan, the implementation of the applicable provisions of LSFP regarding the manner of annual reporting must be ensured, at both government levels. Bashkim Rakaj from CSW in Prizren considers that CSWs have no obligation to report to MFLT, since with decentralization of services it is the Municipality (DHSW) that should report to MFLT.<sup>73</sup>

The Director of the Department of Social and Family Policies, Mentor Morina, believes that the unclear division of competencies has led to double reporting. According to him, to regulate the reporting issue, the ministry has initiated a bylaw. In general, representatives from the municipalities monitored think that the reporting issue should be regulated by the new Law or through administrative instructions, in order to avoid duplication of work and regulation of the reporting line.

Even after 12 years of starting the decentralization process, CSWs hesitate to exchange data with the municipality which is directly responsible for providing services within its territory, while they send detailed reports to the Ministry.

What is considered problematic by the interviewees is the communication and cooperation between the Ministry of Finance, Labour and Transfers and the Municipal Directorates of Health and Social Welfare. Based on the interviews conducted, there is more cooperation between CSWs and MFLT than between DHSW and MFLT. There is a huge communication gap between the central and municipal level. It is more than necessary to regulate reporting horizontally and vertically, standardize reporting forms and share data, taking into account the preservation of confidentiality.

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<sup>73</sup> Interview with Makfirete Shamolli from CSW in Lipjan and Bashkim Rakaj from CSW in Prizren, February 10, 2022

Regarding the reporting of providers by the non-governmental sector, NGOs have stated that there is no reporting line at either the central or municipal level, in cases where they are not funded by public institutions. In most cases, representatives of NGOs providing social services, during the monitoring stated that they are funded by non-governmental donors, and the reporting is therefore done only to donors.

Another unclear issue remains the protection of beneficiaries' personal data. Service providers are unclear whether the beneficiaries' data can be shared with the municipality, specifically with the Directorate of Social Welfare.

Regarding the technical part, the social services database managed by MFLT keeps being un-digitalized and the data are sent physically via USB or in electronic form via e-mail.



# **INSPECTION, MONITORING AND LICENSING OF SOCIAL SERVICES**

# INSPECTION OF SOCIAL SERVICES

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Pursuant to Administrative Instruction No. 17/2013, its Article 19 “Monitoring and Inspection”, monitoring and inspection shall be done by the central level, so the mandate for monitoring and inspection of social services shall remain at the competency of the Department of Social and Family Policies (DSFP) within the MFLT.

- In 2021, the Monitoring and Inspection Unit within MFLT conducted a total of five inspections, which have been performed by the two officers in this Unit. In 2020, there were three inspection officers, but due to the departure of one officer, there are now only two left as the position is not still filled in.

The Monitoring and Inspection Unit faces operational problems, such as the small number of inspection officers, the minimum operating conditions, the lack of professional training of staff and the lack of inspection guidelines. According to the assessment of the officer of this Unit, the number of inspection officers should be increased to seven persons to meet the needs of the Unit.

This Unit is responsible for inspecting about 40 CSWs in 38 municipalities, the Special Institute in Shtime, the Community-Based Home for Children in Shtime, the Home for the Elderly in Prishtina, the Shelter for the Protection of Victims of Trafficking in Lipjan, Community-Based Homes for People with Disabilities in 12 municipalities, Community-Based Homes for the Elderly in four municipalities and 48 licensed NGOs providing social services.

Another problem of the inspection function is related to the determination of the mandate and competencies of this Unit. According to the Senior Monitoring and Inspection Officer at MFLT, Fitore Rexhaj, the Monitoring and Inspection Unit of Social and Family Services should be separated and independent from the current Divisions, and be established as an independent inspection body. She considers that the current functioning of the Monitoring and Inspection Unit may present a conflict of interest because in many cases the unit inspects its own divisions. According to her, the monitoring should be separated and the current Unit should be transformed into a Social Services Inspection Unit. Although the name of this unit also contains the name “monitoring”, in 2021 this Unit has not carried out any monitoring process for social services, as the monitoring is carried out by competent officers ex officio



for certain social services (categories) within the Social Services Division (SSD) and the Division for Persons with Disabilities and the Elderly (DPDE) within the Department of Social and Family Policies (DSFP).

International practice shows that monitoring and inspection of social service providers should be separated and done by two different bodies and it would be more efficient if regular monitoring is done by the municipality, while regular inspection by the Ministry.

In the course of the Position published in 2020 on the new Law on Social and Family Services, KOMF has recommended that the executive mandate of inspection and monitoring should be determined by the new Law on Social and Family Services. Specifically, it is recommended to separate the inspection and monitoring functions, specifically the monitoring to be done by the responsible officers in the respective Divisions ex officio within the DSFP and by the municipal level, while the inspection with executive powers to be done by the central level. Furthermore, KOMF has recommended the transformation of the internal inspection unit into a unit or agency outside the ministry, which would impact on independent inspection to assess the quality of service delivery and to administer licensing.

Also, the current Inspection Unit operating within the MFLT does not have executive powers and consequently does not have the opportunity to impose measures, fines and sanctions. Consequently, the recommendations given by this Unit remain unimplemented. This is due to the non-definition of the inspection role under the Law on Social and Family Services, where the Inspection Unit has no executive mandate.

- The current functioning of the Monitoring and Inspection Unit within the MFLT may present a conflict of interest because in many cases the unit inspects its own divisions. For this reason, the division of inspection and monitoring functions should be done, specifically the monitoring should be performed by the municipal level, while the inspection with executive powers should be performed from the central level.

There is no sustainable mechanism in Kosovo with executive powers that would ensure transparency and accountability regarding the provision of social services in Kosovo.

# MONITORING OF SOCIAL SERVICES

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Currently, monitoring is carried out by competent officers ex officio for certain social services (categories) within the respective Divisions in the Department of Social and Family Policies (DSFP).

Based on the interviews conducted, currently, there is no proper monitoring system for social services from municipal directorates. Municipalities do not have the monitoring tools and capacities. Monitoring is usually done through visits, work reports or meetings.

None of the seven monitored municipalities have carried out a proper monitoring process of social services, either in the public sector or in the non-governmental sector. Representatives from the non-governmental sector have stated that especially in cases when they do not have a project or contract with the municipality, they do not take the initiative for a visit or for monitoring.<sup>74</sup> In this regard, representatives from the Municipal Directorates of Health and Social Welfare have stated that monitoring is done through visits, reports and various meetings with service providers. However, except for the Municipality of Prishtina, all respondents stated that there is no proper monitoring in terms of conducting a regular monitoring process. Whereas the Director of Social Welfare in Prishtina stated that DSW appoints a team, which carries out systematic visits to beneficiary NGOs to see closely the implementation and progress of activities. According to them, the main reasons for not carrying out a monitoring process are the lack of human and financial capacities for this issue.

Apart from the lack of monitoring by public institutions, none of the interviewed institutions indicated that there are any cases when an external monitoring process has been carried out by the non-governmental sector.

- Therefore, none of the interviewed social service providers from the public and non-governmental sector underwent a proper monitoring process carried out by the municipal level. Also, during the interviews it was found that municipalities do not have developed monitoring instruments.

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<sup>74</sup> Interview with Rexhep Gojnovci, Executive Director of NGO ORA Akti, 3 February 2022

## LICENSING OF SOCIAL SERVICES

Currently, the services provided by the Centers for Social Work are not licensed, as the applicable Law on Social and Family Services does not foresee licensing of services provided by the public sector. KOMF has requested that in addition to licensing officers in CSW, social services provided by CSW should be licensed, based on minimum standards. This would increase the quality of social services provided by CSWs and increase accountability. Whereas public service providers are subject to the licensing process.

In 2021, MFLT licensed 188 officers and 48 legal entities, non-governmental organizations, to provide social and family services.<sup>75</sup>

According to monitoring data, in 2021 it is evidenced that there are still unlicensed non-governmental organizations operating as social service providers. In the calls for financing announced by municipalities analyzed during the monitoring, beneficiaries were also social service providers operating without a license. The Director of Social and Family Policies within the MFLT said that there may be such NGOs. About 300 NGOs registered have the mission of providing social services, while only 50 NGOs are licensed so far. He informed that the legal framework for licensing individual providers and NGOs has been amended since the end of 2020. Thus, with these amendments, the possibility of licensing private companies has been created, as well as the list of social services has been specified, where social services are grouped in a total of 35 services.<sup>76</sup>

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<sup>75</sup>Data provided by Mentor Morina, Director of the Department of Social and Family Policies, Ministry of Finance, Labour and Transfers, 12 April 2022

<sup>76</sup>Interview with Mentor Morina, Director of the Department of Social and Family Services, Ministry of Finance, Labor and Transfers, 28 February 2022



# CONCLUSION

# CONCLUSION

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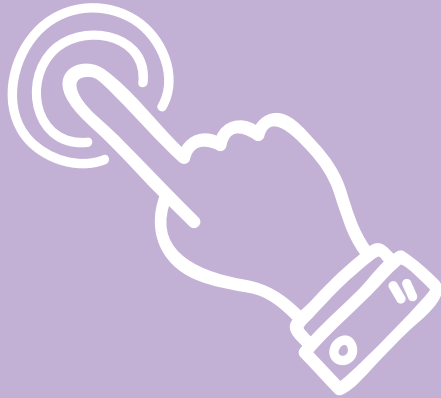
The Monitoring Report “Social Services Close to the Citizen” on the social services decentralization process for 2021 confirms that this process has not been fully implemented in 2021 either. Based on the report, the three main reasons for not implementing this process are the lack of political will, the pandemic situation and the political changes in the country.

The main challenge of all social service providers continues to be the regulation of sustainable financing of social services. In Kosovo, the financing of social services remains in the free will of the municipalities, which according to the monitoring report, have not prioritized social services even in 2021. The only exception is the Municipality of Prishtina, which has had an increase in the budget for social services over the last three years. The solution for ensuring financing of social services is estimated to be through the establishment and implementation of the Specific Grant for Social Services, which is expected to be applied with the entry into force of the Law on Local Government Finance.

The two main laws that are expected to have an impact on the implementation of the decentralization process, the Law on Local Government Finance and the Law on Social and Family Services, failed to be adopted in 2021, even though they have been finalized already. Another problem remains the lack of a sustainable contracting scheme for social services provided by the non-governmental sector, which would affect the provision of sustainable and quality social services.

Municipal capacities for management and provision of social services have continued to be deficient as in the previous two years. Despite the recommendations from civil society but also from service providers themselves, there has been no increase in the number of human and financial capacities in municipalities.

Accountability has continued to be low due to the lack of clear definition of monitoring and inspection roles, as well as the lack of executive powers of the Inspection Unit. Municipalities do not have the instruments or the capacity to conduct monitoring processes for service providers.



# RECOMMENDATIONS

# RECOMMENDATIONS

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## **Recommendations to the Government and the Ministry of Finance, Labour and Transfers:**

- Prompt endorsement of the Law on Social and Family Services to regulate issues such as: Dividing responsibilities of the central and municipal level institutions; Establishment of an open scheme for the provision of social services between the public, non-governmental and private sectors; Dividing the inspection and monitoring function between the central and municipal level, strengthening the inspection unit through the provision of executive powers; Transformation of the internal inspection unit into a unit outside the ministry, which would impact on the independent inspection; Licensing of social services provided by the public sector.
- Prompt endorsement of the Law on Local Government Finance and the Specific Grant for Social Services to ensure sustainable and equitable financing of social and family services. The total amount of current expenditures for all expenditure categories for CSWs and financing of residential institutions is about €10 million. It is recommended that in the first year of implementation of the new Law on Local Government Finance (after its approval), the total amount allocated through the Specific Grant be €15 million, which is to increase the budget for social services by €5 million.
- Drafting the financing formula for social services by MFLT. The financing formula should derive the unit cost for each social service client, as well as take into account social indicators.
- Establishing a sustainable scheme by MFLT for contracting social and family services from the non-governmental sector. Contracting should be done on behalf of purchasing services for the provision of social services for three-year periods in order to ensure sustainable financing and eliminate time gaps. MFLT should increase the minimum financing threshold for social services provided by non-governmental sector and financing should be based on the financing formula; At the same time, an administrative instruction regulating the contracting of services by the non-governmental sector should be drafted.
- Developing accredited programmes for social service providers in accordance to the minimum standards and licensing requirements. It is also more than necessary to create an annual training plan designed by MFLT and based on accredited programmes.

## Recommendations to Municipalities:

- Carrying out an analysis on citizens' needs for social services in each municipality, which would serve as a basis for planning the services and their budgeting.
- Increasing the budget for social services, Centers for Social Work and the non-governmental sector.
- Establishing a sustainable scheme by municipalities for contracting social and family services from the non-governmental sector. Contracting should be done on behalf of purchasing services and not through subsidies. Municipalities should draft specifications for the purchase/contracting of social services from the non-governmental sector and should adhere to the minimum MFLT standards during the contracting process.
- Contracting only licensed non-governmental organizations and proven with experience and expertise in providing social and family services, to guarantee quality and professionalism in providing these services.
- Capacity building of Directorates of Social Welfare for planning, management and monitoring of social services. It is recommended to the Municipal Directorates of Health and Social Welfare to develop and profile the professional staff in the area of social services. In each Municipality, it is recommended to have at least one person profiled for the management of social services within this Directorate.
- Developing the process and instruments for proper monitoring of social service providers.
- Strengthening DHSWs and CSWs for budget planning and management. Given that after the implementation of the Specific Grant for Social Services, the budget is expected to be transferred to the CSWs, they should be prepared to receive competencies for budget planning and management for the provision of social services. Budget planning should be based on the citizens' needs within the municipality, the need for quality social services, as well as the professional development of service providers.
- Enhancing capacity building of social services officers in CSW for the provision of social services. It is recommended to increase their number in order to comply with the minimum MLSW standards on the number of officers in relation to the number of beneficiaries. It is also recommended that CSWs have professionals in their areas required by law, such as social workers, psychologists, pedagogues, sociologists and lawyers. Also, it is recommended to profile the social service officers within CSW according to the categories of service beneficiaries. Given the limited human resources, it is recommended that this process be developed gradually and progressively. As a first stage, it is recommended to profile social service officers for work with children and adults.



**Recommendations to the non-governmental sector:**

- Providing quality services for children and families in need of social services.
- Advocating and getting mobilized to advance processes that improve protection and social services.
- Monitoring and evaluation by the non-governmental/private sector. In addition to monitoring and inspection by public institutions to increase accountability and quality of services, external and independent monitoring and evaluation by the non-governmental/private sector is recommended.
- Developing awareness campaigns on the importance of social services and the impact they have on the citizen's well-being.



# ANNEXES

# ANNEXES

## Annex 1 - List of respondents 3

1.

**Mentor Morina**

**Department of Social and Family Policies/MFLT**

**Director of the Department of Social and Family Policies**

2.

**Fitore Rexhaj**

**Department of Social and Family Policies/MFLT**

**Senior Monitoring and Inspection Officer of Social and Family Services**

3.

**Jeton Gashi**

**Budget Department/MFLT**

**Head of Municipal Budget Division**

4.

**Adelina Sahiti**

**DSW, Municipality of Prishtina**

**Director**

5.

**Vjollca Kabashi**

**DHSW, Municipality of Prizren**

**Director**

6.

**Mimoza Shala Kolshi and Hysen Sllamniku**

**DHSW, Municipality of Fushë Kosova**

**Director and Social Service Officer**

7.

**Shkëlzen Hajdini**

**DHSW, Municipality of Lipjan**

**Director**

8.

**Emira Sallahu**

**DHSW, Municipality of Ferizaj**

**Head of the Social Welfare Sector**

9.

**Durim Biqkaj**

**DHSW, Municipality of Kamenica**

**Social Service Officer**

10.

**Blerim Shabani**

**CSW, Municipality of Prishtina**

**Director**

11.

**Bashkim Rakaj and Avni Ademaj**

**CSW, Municipality of Prizren**

**Social Welfare Officer and Acting Head Director**

12.

**Drita Kukaj**

**CSW, Municipality of Peja**

**Director**

13.

**Abaz Gjigoli**

**CSW, Municipality of Fushë Kosova**

**Director**

14.

**Makfirete Shamolli**

**CSW, Municipality of Lipjan**

**Director**

15.

**Adelina Rexhepi**

**CSW, Municipality of Ferizaj**

**Director**

16.

**Rifat Hajdari**

**CSW, Municipality of Kamenica**

**Director**

17.

**Ermira Shabani**

**Down Syndrome Kosovo (NGO), Municipality of Prishtina**

**National Head of Services Programme at DSK**

18.

**Aida Topanica**

**Autizmi (NGO), Municipality of Prishtina**

**Therapeutic Work Head**

19.

**Teuta Abrashi**

**PVPT (NGO), Municipality of Prishtina**

**Executive Director**

20.

**Liridona Zogaj**

**Day Care Center "Pema"**

**Executive Director**

21.

**Rexhep Gojnovci**

**ORA - Act (NGO), Municipality of Fushë Kosova**

**Executive Director**

22.

**Xhemile Murseli**

**Handikos (NGO), Municipality of Ferizaj**

**Executive Director**

23.

**Hyrmete Morina**

**Handikos (NGO), Municipality of Ferizaj**

**Executive Director**

24.

**Besime Tusha**

**NOPM (NGO), Municipality of Ferizaj**

**Executive Director**

## Annex 2 - Questionnaires for monitoring the decentralization process:

### ■ Questionnaire for the Department of Social and Family Policies - Ministry of Finance, Labour and Transfers

1. Has there been any change or progress regarding the implementation of the decentralization process, compared to 2020?
2. How much has the Covid-19 pandemic affected the implementation of the decentralization process, including legislative initiatives, processes or projects launched earlier?
3. What are the main changes that the two new laws are expected to bring: Law on Social and Family Services and Law on Local Government Finance, in the area of social services?
4. Do you think there is a need for training, workshops for service providers at the municipal level on novelty arising from the Law on Social Services?
5. Has the budget for social services been decentralized in 2021?
6. Do you think that this process will be resolved through a specific Grant?
7. At what stage is the process of drafting the funding formula, or deriving the cost of services per unit in 2021?
8. How many social service providers are currently licensed in Kosovo?
9. Are there social service providers that provide services without a license?
10. Should CSWs be licensed to provide social services in the future? If yes, explain why.
11. How is the budget allocated to CSWs and NGOs providing social services?
  - Are there clear criteria and if so, what are they?
12. Has the call for financing of social services for 2021 been announced, if in which month, how much was the foreseen amount for financing of social services and what is the number of NGOs that have benefited from this call?
13. Subsidy financing has been shown as unsuitable form for financing of social services. Does the Ministry plan to develop a sustainable financing scheme through the purchase of services for three-year periods, given that this is foreseen in the government plan 2021 - 2025?
14. Has the Ministry or any other institution drafted accredited programmes for the professional development of social service providers?
  - How necessary is it to develop accredited programmes for social service providers?
15. What is the way of communication or internal reporting between the Ministry, DHSW, CSWs and other NGOs that provide social services and how did the communication work during the pandemic period?
16. Is there a plan by the MFLT to address the identified problem of reporting and communication between the central and municipal level (including reporting by NGOs) and is the MLSW expected to draft an Administrative Instruction or reporting protocol?

## ■ Questionnaire for the Department of Social and Family Policies - Ministry of Finance, Labour and Transfers, Social Services Monitoring and Inspection Unit

1. In general, has there been any change or progress regarding the implementation of the decentralization process, compared to 2020?
2. How much did the Covid-19 pandemic affect the inspection process and were there any difficulties during the inspection and was there any relief/improvement during 2021?
3. Did you have instructions from the Ministry of Health regarding the functioning of social services during the pandemic and how much was needed?
4. What actions has the Ministry taken to improve monitoring and inspection?
5. Are changes or novelties expected from the new Law on Social and Family Services in the area of monitoring and inspection of social services in Kosovo?
6. How is the licensing of social service providers done and what are the licensing criteria?
7. How many social service providers are licensed in Kosovo?
8. Are there social service providers that provide services without a license?
9. Should CSWs be licensed to provide social services in the future? If yes, explain why.
10. Does the Ministry have a monitoring role in relation to social services?
  - If yes, how is monitoring done?
  - If not, should there be a monitoring role?
11. What are the needs of the Social and Family Services Inspection Department?
12. What is the current number of social service inspectors for entire Kosovo?
13. How many times a year is the regular inspection process carried out in the municipalities of Kosovo?
14. How many times has regular inspection been carried out in Kosovo municipalities during 2021 and how was the inspection done?
15. What is the way of internal communication between the Ministry, DHSWS, CSWs and other NGOs that provide social services?
  - Are there forms (protocols) of reporting in place?
  - In what time periods is the reporting done?
  - If there are protocols, are they complied with?

## ■ Questionnaire for the Ministry of Finance, Labor and Transfers - Budget Department

1. Has the budget for social services been decentralized and what is the current form of financing social services during 2021?
2. For 2021, what is the amount of the budget allocated for social services within the budget of the Republic of Kosovo?

3. Was there a political will on the part of the Ministry to solve the problem of financing of social services, the creation of a Specific Grant for Social Services? (please explain)
4. What stage has the process of drafting the Law on Local Government Finance reached?
5. How much did the Covid-19 pandemic, as well as the national and local elections, affect the approval of the Law on Local Government Finance?
6. What is the right solution for decentralizing the social services budget?
7. Can you tell us how the Social Services Special Grant would help solve the problem of budget decentralization of the social services?
  - a) What will be the amount of budget that will be allocated under the Specific Grant for Social Services?
  - b) Do you have any comments about the funding formula?
  - c) When is the Grants Commission expected to approve the specific Grant in order for it to take effect?
8. What is the way of communication or internal reporting between the Ministry of Finance, MLSW and Municipalities?
9. How is the cooperation between the central, local level and NGOs?

■ **Questionnaire for the municipal level (municipalities/DHSW):**

1. What stage has the process of decentralization of social services in Kosovo reached?
2. In general, has there been any change or progress regarding the implementation of the decentralization process, compared to 2020?
3. How much has the Covid-19 pandemic affected the implementation of the decentralization process, including legislative initiatives, processes or projects launched earlier?
4. Has there been an increase in demand for social services as a result of the pandemic, and if yes how has the DHSW responded to such needs?
5. Has access to social services improved during 2021?
6. Were there clear or specific instructions from the Ministry of Health for the provision of social services during the pandemic?
  - If yes, what were the instructions?
  - If not, was it necessary?
7. Are the competencies regarding the decentralization process clearly defined between the central level and the local level? (please explain)
8. Was there political will on the part of the Municipality to implement the decentralization process? (please explain)
9. Has the budget for social services been decentralized?
  - 9.1 What is the right solution for decentralizing the social services budget?

- 9.2 Do you think that this process will be resolved through a Specific Grant?
- a) If yes, explain how this Grant would help solve the problem of budget decentralization for social services?
  - b) If not, what would be the right solution for decentralizing the social services budget?
10. Has the Municipality announced a call for financing of social services in 2021, if yes, what was the amount, for how many NGOs was the division made and in which month was it announced?
11. How is the budget allocated to NGOs providing social services?
- 11.1 How are social services contracted by municipalities?
  - 11.2 Are there clear criteria and if so, what are they (list)?
  - 11.3 How are the priorities and criteria set within the calls for financing of social services?
  - 11.4 Does the Municipality regularly announce calls for the contracting of social services by NGOs?
12. Do you as a Municipality have accurate information about the number of people in need within your Municipality?
- 12.1. How is this information obtained?
13. Does DHSW have the human capacity, qualified and experienced human resources for social services?
- 13.1. What is the number of staff within the DHSW?
  - 13.2. What are their profiles (professions)?
14. Does DHSW monitor institutions providing social services (including CSWs and NGOs)?
- 14.1. If yes, how is monitoring done?
15. Do DHSW and CSW have the capacity to draft budget planning (demand) for social services?
- 15.1 Who makes the budget request to the Municipality?
  - 15.2 Do the Directorate and CSW have capacity regarding procurement procedures for contracting social services?
  - 15.3 Does CSW have the capacity to do budget management?
16. What is the way of internal communication between the Ministry, DHSWs, CSWs and other NGOs that provide social services?
- 16.1 Are there reporting forms (protocols) in place?
  - 16.2 In what time periods is the reporting done?
  - 16.3 If there are protocols, are they complied with?
17. Do you think that CSWs should send the same case reports to MLSW and DHSW?



**For new directors:**

1. What will be the concrete changes that you will bring to this Directorate?
2. How much knowledge does the staff have about social services and is there a special staff for social welfare?
3. Do you plan to organize a field research on the needs of citizens in need of social services?
4. Do you have a concrete plan for organizing social services in the Municipality?

■ Questionnaire for Centers for Social Work:

1. In general, has there been any change or progress regarding the implementation of the decentralization process, compared to 2021?
2. How much has the Covid-19 pandemic affected the implementation of the decentralization process, including legislative initiatives, processes or projects launched earlier?
3. Has there been an increase in demand for social services as a result of the outbreak of the pandemic in the second year of the pandemic, and if yes how has the CSW responded to such needs?
4. Did you have clear and specific instructions from the Ministry of Health for the provision of services during the pandemic?
5. Are the competencies regarding the decentralization process clearly defined between the central level and the local level? (please explain)
6. Was there political will on the part of the and Municipality to implement the decentralization process? (please explain)
7. Has the budget for social services been decentralized?
  - 7.1. What is the right solution for decentralizing the social services budget?
  - 7.2. Do you think that this process will be resolved through a Specific Grant?
    - a) If yes, explain how this Grant would help solve the problem of budget decentralization for social services?
    - b) If not, what would be the right solution for decentralizing the social services budget?
8. What was the amount allocated for 2021 for social services in this CSW?
9. What was the amount allocated for 2020 for social services in this CSW?
10. Does the current budget cover the needs of social services?
  - 10.1 For which services do you have a sufficient budget (list)?
11. Does the CSW have the capacity to draft budget planning for social services?
  - 11.1 Who makes the budget request to the Municipality?
- 12 Does CSW have the capacity to manage the budget for social services?
  - 12.1 Do you think CSW should have its own bank account and manage the budget, or should the budget be managed by the Municipality (DHSW)?
  - 12.2 Is there a CSW cashier?

- 13 What is the way of internal communication between the Ministry, DHSWs, CSWs and other NGOs that provide social services?
- 13.1 Are there reporting forms (protocols) in place?
  - 13.2 In what time periods is the reporting done?
  - 13.3 If there are protocols, are they complied with?
  - 13.4 What reports are submitted to DHSW and what to MLSW (explain)?
- 14 Do you think that the same case reports should be sent to MLSW and DHSW?

■ **Questionnaire for NGOs providing social services:**

1. What services does the NGO where you currently operate provide?
2. In general, has there been any change or progress regarding the implementation of the decentralization process, compared to 2021?
3. Has there been an increase in demand for social services as a result of the outbreak of the pandemic in the second year of the pandemic, and if yes how has the CSW responded to such needs?
4. Did you have concrete instructions from MoH or MFLT for the provision of social services during the pandemic? What were the challenges?
5. How are social services financed in the NGO where you operate?
  - 5.1. Currently, from which sources (donors) are your organization's social services covered?
6. Does the Municipality announce calls for the financing of social services?
  - 6.1. If yes, are you informed in time and are the funding criteria clear?
7. What was the amount allocated for social services by the central level and by the municipal level for 2021 and 2020?
8. Does the current budget cover the needs of social services?
9. In your opinion, what would be the right way to finance social services for the non-governmental sector?
10. What is the way you report to the Municipality, DHSW, CSW and MLSW? (if such reporting is applicable)
11. Did you undergo any monitoring/inspection by the Municipality?
12. What are the challenges and needs faced by NGOs in providing social services?

## Annex 3 - Documents reviewed

### Legal framework

Law No. 03/L-049 on Local Government Finance

Law No. 05/L-108 Amending and Supplementing Law No. 03/L-049 on Local Government Finance

Law No. Law ON Budget Appropriations for the Budget of the Republic of Kosovo 2020

Law No. 2003/15 on the Social Assistance Scheme in Kosovo

Law No. 04 / L-096 Amending and Supplementing Law No. 2003/15 on the Social Assistance Scheme in Kosovo

Law No. 02/L-17 on Social and Family Services

Law No. 04/L-081 Amending and Supplementing Law No. 02/L-17 on Social and Family Services

Law No. 03/L-040 on Local Self-Government

MLSW sector strategy 2014 - 2020

Statutes of the Centers for Social Work

Concept Paper on Local Government Finance, Ministry of Finance

Concept Paper on Social Services, Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare

### Reports:

Needs Analysis for Capacities of Centers of Social Work in Kosovo in the Field of Child's Rights Promotion and Protection, SOS Children's Villages Kosovo, Handikos, October 2020

Health emergency and the impact of the COVID19 pandemic on human rights in the Republic of Kosovo, Ombudsperson, 2021

Financing of Social Services, KOMF 2017

Mapping child system protection in the EU, European Union Agency for Human Rights

Legal and fiscal context as well as the capacities of social service providers in Kosovo, Situation analysis, Save the Children 2018

Child Protection Index, KOMF 2017 and 2018

Budget platform, GAP Institute

Kosovo Progress Report 2021, EU Office in Kosovo

Report for 2021, Ombudsperson Institution, 2021

Challenges of Centers for Social Work in Kosovo during the COVID-19 pandemic, GAP Institute, 2021

KOMF member organizations: Association for Social Training, Research and Advocacy -ASTRA, Action for Mothers and Children, Balkan Sunflowers Kosovo, Childproof/ CIPOF, Education Comes First - ECF, Initiative 6, Youth Organization Akti - Ora, Organization for Children without Parental Care - OFAP, OPFAKKOS, Civil Rights Program - CRP/K, PL4Y International, Kosovo Education Center - KEC, Day Care Center PEMA, Center for Protection of Victims and Prevention of Trafficking in Human Beings - PVPT, Center for Advanced Studies - FIT, Kosovo Rehabilitation Center for Torture Victims - KRCT, Save the Children, SOS Children's Villages Kosovo, Hope and Homes for Children Kosovo - SDSF, Association of Patients' Rights in Kosovo - PRAK Kosovo, Association of Paraplegics and Paralysis of Children of Kosovo - HANDIKOS, Terre des hommes, The Ideas Partnership, VoRAE, Public Organization for Local Initiatives and Supports - POLIS, Network of Peace Movement - NOPM, Social - Educational Center SOS Villages, Nevo Concept, Labyrinth Center, Peer Educators Network (PEN), Down Syndrome Kosova, Organization "Autizmi", Handikos Gjakova and Handikos Ferizaj.

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