

# euMOTION

EUROPEAN UNION IN KOSOVO  
JUNE 2015

**A Justice System  
to Be Respected**

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**Morinas Remember the Cold,  
but this is in the Past Now**

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Text:  
Linda Gashi

Design and Layout:  
Florim Mehmeti

Photographs:  
Astrit Ibrahimi

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# The European Union is the Biggest Donor in Kosovo



The financial allocation for Kosovo between 2007 and 2013 was 637.6 million EUR, or in other words, 354.2 EUR per capita! Thanks to these funds many good things have happened, from implementation of energy efficiency measures in 63 schools throughout Kosovo to the brand new Palace of Justice compound, from the heating system in Pristina to promising agricultural investment in growing, processing and marketing fruits and vegetables. This publication shows you in words, figures and images, with buildings and human destinies, what a variety of achievements were made possible with these funds.

## **Economic development is crucial for the future of Kosovo.**

For the moment, Kosovo covers only 16 % of its import by the export. Such ratio is not sustainable in the long term – making Kosovo too dependent on imports, and too vulnerable! Developing a production base that would improve the export figures and import substitution is crucial.

**So, what can we do?** The EU can get involved on at least three levels: by helping Kosovo draft economic policies; by investing EU funds in recognized priority areas such as agriculture, small and medium enterprises, energy or tourism; and last but not least, by organizing European investors in a structured dialogue with local authorities as we did through the European Investors Council.

**In the period 2014-2020 over 645 million EUR will be invested in Kosovo.** The EU funds will be mostly programmed to co-finance government priorities in sectors with sound long-term public policies. When searching for examples to show what was achieved with EU funds in Kosovo, we have deliberately chosen a few key sectors.

- Stable energy supplies, diversification of energy production sectors and energy efficiency are crucial not only for healthier life of citizens, but also for better functioning of economy and attracting foreign investors.
- Agriculture should play a significant role in Kosovo's economy and may even be considered as a growth engine. Reduction of pollution will also have a positive impact on agriculture.
- Gender equality is a crucial element of a smart economy: women's active role in the public domain and in business boosts competitiveness and overall economic development.

The EU takes pride in supporting Kosovo's reform agenda in all these crucial areas.

**Samuel Žbogar,**  
Head of the European Union Office in Kosovo  
and EU Special Representative

# European Investors Join Forces to Improve Business Environment in Kosovo



The EU Office in Kosovo/European Union Special Representative is an honorary member of the European Investors Council and acts as liaison with the Government of Kosovo to facilitate dialogue and achieve desired results for all.

Over the years, Kosovo has increasingly been viewed as a great destination country to invest in, regardless of the struggling economy or continuous political and justice reforms. There are a good many reasons for foreign investors to want to invest their money and technology in Kosovo. It is conveniently located in the heart of the region and is rich in natural resources and fertile agricultural land. It boasts a young, energetic population, vastly predominated by thirty-something and below and who speak many European languages. The official currency is Euro. Thanks to the support from international organizations, Kosovo now has an EU compatible legislation, a sound banking system, modern telecommunications, and free access to the EU markets and CEFTA members markets.

Foreign direct investment can play a critical role for the much-needed economic growth of Kosovo, and can create more jobs for everyone. For over a decade now, Kosovo has attracted the attention and money of European investors, who were looking to put the potential of Kosovo to its best use through establishing competitive businesses and increasing the capacities of the human capital.

The unpleasant side of this reality has been that often, these foreign companies have faced systemic and other obstacles in the business environment in Kosovo. Among the most quoted criticisms that we hear from European investors who do come to Kosovo are about the ineffective enforcement of laws by the courts, bad credits, aging infrastructure, unreliable electricity supply, lack of a qualified labour force in required occupations, corruption in different levels, and the overwhelming presence of the 'grey-economy' that puts a strain on fair market competition.

The tipping point for the foreign investors was apparently reached in 2013. Several European investors approached the EU Office in Kosovo with their concerns ranging from licensing or efficiency of administrative procedures, employment policies, fiscal compliance, to strengthening of the law and efficiency of court procedures, which had been affecting their business operations.

These advocacy efforts resulted in an initiative led by Head of the EU Office in Kosovo/European Union Special Representative in Kosovo Mr. Samuel Žbogar to establish a formal body that would hear the investors' issues and address those to the Kosovo institutions that are better suited to deal with the identified challenges. That is how the European Investors Council was born.



"I believe that the best mission for the European Investment Council would be constructive partnership with the Government of Kosovo and the Kosovo institutions, to contribute to the improvement of the business doing environment and promoting foreign investments in Kosovo" said Mr. Samuel Žbogar at the ceremony announcing the establishment of the European Investment Council.

This entity was formally established on 23 May 2014, as a non-governmental and non-profit organization. The overarching objective of the European Investors Council is to work closely with the Government of Kosovo and other local institutions to develop an efficient business environment that supports a sustainable economy and improves social conditions. The members of the European Investors Council (EIC) represent various sectors like mining, banking, insurance, service provision, audit, telecommunication. These are all foreign entities or subsidiaries of a foreign entity operating in Kosovo.

The European Investors Council is seen as a positive influence in creating a more stable market in Kosovo. The EIC speaks in one voice for all European investors in the country. It is a results-oriented organization that can provide a good role model for the local economic chambers. Through its proactive and strategic approach, the EIC contributes to the improvement of the business sector in the country through an open, constructive and lasting dialogue with the authorities at all levels on crucial issues that have a direct influence on the development of the private sector, which is the generator of economic growth for Kosovo.

## How Does the European Investors Council Work

The Founding Members have elected a board of 9 members, the President, Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary General, and Executive Director.

The EIC has two working groups: one on legislative matters, and the other on the rule of law. The working groups conduct detailed analysis on subjects put forward by the European investors in Kosovo and produce paper with proposals for the European Union Office in Kosovo to review and consider how to deal further with the identified issues.

## European Investors Council Founders:

ARDA REI Baker Tilly Kosovo M & Sillosi  
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# Euro-Lona: Dairy Industry Made Modern



Milazim Berisha  
*Director, Euro-Lona*

Milazim Berisha who owns Euro-Lona has had product and market expansion on his mind since 2000, when he established the farm and dairy company. Now, Euro-Lona, located a few kilometres from the capital Pristina, in the village of Miradi e Epërme/ Gornje Dobrevë has become one of the leading dairy and agricultural producing and processing companies in Kosovo, with its own dairy farm and livestock breeding. It has been a long road for Berisha to reach the success his company enjoys today, and he has high hopes for what comes next.

Berisha was quick to realize that the traditional way of farming no longer served to produce and process sufficient amounts of dairy products and of the right quality. Milk collection from other farmers in the region was not always reliable and the company itself lacked sufficient gathering storage and processing capacities, which in turn influenced the price of milk and other products by Euro-Lona. The customers were increasingly requiring more variety of products, while competition from imports was high.







That was when Berisha decided to apply for one of the grants that were being given by the EU Office in Kosovo to support local producers and food processing companies.

“It was such a great opportunity for us. Thanks to the EU grant we expanded simultaneously the collection and production facilities and capacities. Now we have a new machine for product packaging in various quantities, new items were added to our list of products, our storage facilities and internal infrastructure

were upgraded to meet international food safety standards,” says Berisha. “On the other hand, we re-designed our company brand to inspire customer loyalty, and carried out a well-thought advertising and promotion campaign. Buyers across Kosovo know who we are.”

In addition to infrastructure and equipment, through this grant, the employers of Euro-Lona were trained by regional experts on the standards and technologies to improve the

quality and safety of products, so that Euro-Lona can now easily compete with imported dairy products. The farmers that supply the company with milk also received training on the proper techniques for milk gathering and storage.

Milazim Berisha has plenty of ideas how to continue growing his business. He is counting on continued support of the EU Office in Kosovo for the entire private sector in the country.

We would not have been able to achieve all this without the EU grant,” says Berisha, who considers that access to finance is one of the biggest impediments for business growth in Kosovo, due to high interest rates. “My company is not the only that benefited. I have expanded the network of farmers from whom we get to other villages, and I have increased the number of both regular and seasonal employees.

# Agro System Zubin Potok – Community Benefits from Food Program



Spurred by the philosophy that agriculture is the ideal way to develop a country, Rade Utvić and the agricultural cooperative he leads have taken an innovative approach to making the most of what nature and farmers in the area of Zubin Potok, north Kosovo, have to offer. All the while, the approach ensures high quality of food products and jobs a largely underemployed community.

Although labour cost in Kosovo is relatively cheap, food items produced are expensive, the quality or quantity are not always sustainable, mostly due to inefficient production processes. This results in loss of market. Agricultural Cooperative Zubin Potok (ACZP) has attempted since 2007 to take remedial steps but has had a challenging time to do that because of lack of funding and the general economic situation in the country.

With a grant support from the EU Office in Kosovo, the company launched an incentive-based programme that offers freezing, drying and storage space, as well as food processing, packaging and transporting services to all farmers in the surrounding areas of Zubin Potok.

“Our goal is to include through this programme as many farmers as possible from the surrounding villages so that the community at large but also the municipality and the region can benefit,” says Rade Utvić, Director. He strongly believes that the right way is to transform the economic pattern towards an economy based on sustainable fruit and vegetable production and processing.

Through the programme supported by the EU Office in Kosovo, the ACZP seeks to increase the production and collection of fruit, vegetables and non-wood forest products, to increase the surface of arable land in Zubin Potok, and to strengthen the capacities of farmers to build sustainable communities. How does ACZP achieve this? Firstly, all contractors and farmers have made profit by selling their agricultural and non-wood forest products to ACZP, which thanks to the EU grant, now has sufficient freezing and storage facilities to collect goods from a wider network of farmers. Next, more people were hired to process and package the collected food, which is then sold by the ACZP.

“The most important thing for me is that with the EU assistance we were able to implement in a very short time a programme that benefited all. The grant helped us establish new contacts, we met new people and we have reached out to all groups of population in the region,” says Utvić. ACZP cooperates with producers from Montenegro, FYROM, Albania, and Serbia. Raw products are sold





to processing companies in Germany, Serbia, Bulgaria, FYROM, and France to name a few.

Utvić's vision is to change the behaviour of local producers towards more profitable commodity production with modified or improved existing capital, and to build a business environment with incentive grounds for the individual capital investment in food production.

"Our plan is not to stop here but to continue investing until we complete the cycle of production and processing, so that everyone can find with us whatever food item they need. We plan to have all freezers operational in 2015 so that we can expand the range of agricultural products we trade in, and therefore increase the number of sub-contractors. We also plan to launch a new line of products that meets market requirements."

### In high season, ACZP works non-stop in shifts

**1** truckload of goods = **12** full-time employees per year

In 2014

**19** truckloads of goods were sold = **228** people were employed full-time

**2000-3000**

is the rough estimate of families that are direct beneficiaries of the EU-supported program.

**1280**

families worked on blueberry collection alone.

An additional

**1540**

families worked on collection of rosehips, blackberries, mushrooms, strawberries, raspberries and plums

**9** successful linkages have been established so far between producers and processors



# Mjellma – Healthy Environment Means Healthy Business

In 2012, brothers Bashkim and Arsim Haziri submitted a grant application form to the EU Office in Kosovo hoping to turn their long-time dream into reality. In 2015, their dream has come true. A large, brand new slaughterhouse constructed on their land in Krajkovë/Krajkovo village, around 35 km from the capital of Pristina, is the promise of a new business activity for the Haziris, and of employment opportunities for people in the area.

“We have our own livestock, our own pastures and farming land. This is our life – making our living in the village. So we thought it was high time to look into other opportunities, making the best of what we have and what we do,” says Bashkim Haziri, the elder of three brothers who run the family businesses. The new slaughterhouse will fill a significant gap of domestic demand for beef and meat by-products that are a key ingredient in the local dishes.

“Mjellma” was already a brand name in Kosovo, known as producer and distributor of paper towels and other hygiene products. Hygiene is a concept deeply-rooted in their new venture, the slaughterhouse. Through the action supported by the EU grant, the brand new slaughterhouse meets all standards required for food safety and hygiene, and provides equipment for proper slaughtering methods of the animals. The staff has also been trained to follow proper safety

and hygiene protocols. The company is fully compliant with the local legislation.

“Live cattle were being slaughtered in open air, in markets and backyards, polluting the environment and causing safety concerns for the buyers” says Haziri. There are no modern approved slaughterhouses in six surrounding municipalities with an approximate population of 258,000 inhabitants. “Mjellma” has the capacity to meet their needs for meat and its by-products, while observing appropriate hygiene for slaughter, animal welfare practices, and providing official control by authorities. “We plan to hire the existing experienced butcher in the area so we put nobody out of business,” says Haziri.

The owners of “Mjellma” feel they are ready to compete with imported products, and show the buyers they can trust their brand. Future plans are big, and include new assorted, ready-to-cook products and exporting of made in Kosovo meat products to Switzerland and other countries. The Haziris are grateful for the EU support without which they would not be where they are today, and hope that through continued support they will grow and help the country’s economy grow too.



Initial clients:  
supermarket  
chains in Kosovo,  
caterers, butcher  
shops

“Mjellma”  
slaughterhouse  
has capacity to  
store up to 60  
beef carcasses.





#### **A state-of-the-art slaughterhouse**

Infrastructure that maintains the required temperature to ensure meat hygiene

Cooling devices, thermal resistant doors, easy to sanitize panels, all connected to a central system

#### **Proper drainage of slaughtering waste system**

Special grease separator installed to prevent the spoilage of the municipal systems



RULE OF LAW

# A Justice System to Be Respected





The Palace of Justice is so far the biggest EU infrastructure investment in Kosovo. Combined with EU technical assistance in the justice sector, such as training of judges, prosecutors and court staff, support to the Kosovo Judicial Council and Kosovo Prosecutorial Council, promotion of disciplinary procedures and proper management and advancement of the system, the completion of the Palace of Justice project substantially supports the efforts of Kosovo authorities towards fulfilling standards for European future.







In March 2015, the European Commissioner Johannes Hahn was joined by the President of the Republic of Kosovo Atifete Jahjaga and Prime Minister Isa Mustafa to inaugurate the Palace of Justice, which is now house to several courts and prosecution offices serving the region of Pristina and entire Kosovo.

The inauguration of the Palace of Justice goes beyond the construction of a new courthouse and prosecution offices. Indeed, it reflects the positive changes of the reform that the justice system of Kosovo has gone through in the last sixteen years, and stands as the symbol of due delivery of equal justice for all.

The Palace of Justice compound is an impressive construction of a total of 51,780 m<sup>2</sup> – cutting edge design and modern look – located approximately 4 km from the centre of Pristina. The location has been earmarked as the future area for the re-location of several government buildings.



The Palace of Justice is home to these institutions:

Supreme Court  
Constitutional Court Basic Court of Pristina  
*State Prosecutor*  
Appellate Prosecution  
Basic Prosecution  
Office of Pristina

Court of Appeals

Special Prosecution of  
the Republic of Kosovo

#### Efficient Operations

In addition, having the courts and prosecution offices located within the same compound contributes greatly to efficient handling of paperwork and timely resolution of cases, thus providing better services to the citizens.

#### Increased Public Confidence

The Palace of Justice facilities are constructed in accordance with the EU and international standards that support easier public access, better functionality, and transparent services, all contributing to greater public confidence and positive perception of the justice sector.

#### Energy Efficiency Construction

All underground levels of the Palace of Justice are hydro-insulated. The drainage system designed specifically for this building ensures no subsurface waters will penetrate the structure and damage the works. The building is tested for earth-quake situations. The roofs have thermal insulation above the hydro-insulation for additional protection. The central geothermal plant has a major impact.

The information about the work of courts and prosecution mostly comes from media reports and word of mouth-shared experiences; people have rarely been inside a courtroom or had any contacts with justice sector personnel. Combined with the general public misperceptions based on prior disappointments and stories heard, the result has been lack of public understanding of the system.

On the other hand, justice sector has been under constant reforming and changes for the last sixteen years. These reforms culminated in 2013 with the new structure of courts and prosecution offices that is meant to make justice more accessible to all citizens, to make procedures more efficient and to make operations more professional and transparent. The Palace of Justice stands as a symbol of reform closure and as a symbol of due delivery of equal justice for all. The Palace of Justice represents justice delivery made in an efficient and transparent manner, and is seen as a symbol of increased public respect and trust in the institutions that guarantee the rule of law in Kosovo.



# The Palace of Justice Brings the Judiciary to the 21st Century!

**Arbër Jashari,**  
Public Information Officer, Court of Appeals

“The Palace of Justice is a major investment that gives Kosovo justice a new, modern face. Gone are now the court and prosecution offices inside old buildings that underwent several renovations and changes. Now, the new Palace of Justice has appropriate facilities for court staff, judges and most importantly, the parties. This modern infrastructure is an incentive for more efficient and professional work. The investment has a long-term impact and will directly result in better quality of our work. Finally there are sufficient courtrooms to meet the courts’ needs, especially of the Basic Court of Pristina. This palace brings back the dignity to the Kosovo judiciary.”

According to Jashari, the EU assistance in increasing judicial capacities has resulted in more efficient courts and more professional staff. “We have benefited a lot from the EU mechanisms in Kosovo,” says Jashari. “I have attended several training programs by the EULEX Information Office, and I am very happy with that. The experience shared by the EULEX judges and experts has helped us a great deal in our work.”

The Law on Courts brought a radical transformation of the Kosovo judiciary. One of the most important aspects of that transformation was the establishment of a Court of Appeals, dedicated to the review of nearly all cases appealed from the new Basic Courts and their Branches throughout Kosovo. Being a first ever court of its nature Kosovo, informing and educating a general audience about its role and competences for disposition of second instance cases was seen as a challenge.

A challenge that was overcome smoothly thanks to the dedicated work of Arbër Jashari, Public Information Officer at the Court of Appeals, who applied his legal background and experience as journalist for justice sector issues to his talent for communicating clear messages and ensuring a good flow of information. “The best part of my work day is every moment I spend doing something useful for my court and my country,” adds Jashari.



# Training of Judges and Prosecutors Achieves High Standards with EU Support

**Lavdim Krasniqi,**  
Director, Kosovo Judicial Institute



“The EU Office in Kosovo support has been essential and critical for the performance improvement of the Kosovo Judicial Institute (KJI). EU projects have promoted the role of the KJI and thanks to them, today the observance of accepted standards in the area of judicial training are functional,” says Lavdim Krasniqi, Director. He adds that through the various EU projects, the KJI has gained experience in developing training programs, implementing projects to strengthen training methodology including distance learning, and also to establish useful contacts with other training institutes in Europe.

The latest EU Office in Kosovo initiative in cooperation with the KJI is the first ever training program for court administrators that just started. This training program was tailor-made to respond to the needs of increasing capacities of court administrators to manage cases, to advance their communication skills, ethics, and to apply the legal framework that is relevant to the function of the court administration.

“Indeed, this is a new program and we came up with this idea upon noting the need of court and prosecution administrators for continued training, and the lack of such program under the KJI,” says Krasniqi. “We are drawing on the experience and examples from Germany, France and the Netherlands, other countries too. The KJI expects this training program shall increase the knowledge and skills of the administrative and managing staff of courts and prosecution offices to provide more efficient services.”

For Krasniqi, the EU Office in Kosovo should in the near future focus more on harmonization of laws for the judiciary and prosecutorial service, on strengthening the recruitment criteria for judges and prosecutors and strengthen the accountability, as priorities for further advancement of the rule of law.

Lavdim Krasniqi leads the Kosovo Judicial Institute since 2007. Under his management, the KJI has successfully gone through the transition from international to local leadership, and putting in place of all legal acts and strategic planning that ensure its effective operations.



# Committed to Strengthening Equal and Fair Justice for All

**Fejzullah Hasani,**

President of the Supreme Court of Kosovo

## The Challenges We Faced

"The reform has been challenging from both the professional and personal aspects considering the obstacles and difficulties that were present but we were encouraged by the inspiration to establish a system that would meet the constitutional criteria for a true rule of law and satisfy the expectations of the people of Kosovo for a professional judiciary."

## What We Have Achieved

"Since 2010, our main focus has been the further consolidation of the Supreme Court of Kosovo, to increase the quality of justice delivery. The success indicators at the Supreme Court of Kosovo are the increased quality of our work and continued increased satisfaction of the parties every year. We are committed to keep this up. One positive change is that parties at the Supreme Court no longer have to wait for long periods of time to receive responses on issues addressed with our court. We are now working on cases dated 2015, and the complaints of parties about our work have drastically fallen."

## Our Commitment to Justice

"The reform of the judiciary may come in different ways, with a varied scope in time and location. However, the main goal of any reform is to install efficiency, effectiveness and accountability to improve access to and delivery of justice. There has been progress in Kosovo in spite of many setbacks. In fact, by identifying these setbacks or challenges in implementation especially with the new court structure, we can adequately address those and advance the work of Kosovo's judiciary. We are privileged with our position as the ones who deliver justice and we need to make sure that the judiciary runs smooth processes."



## Taking Back the Dignity of the Judiciary

"The role of the international community in Kosovo, emphasizing the role of the European Union, has been essential in establishing and increasing the functional capacities of the judiciary, such as the legal education, training, the re-appointment process and most recently, the modernization of our working conditions thanks to the construction of the Palace of Justice. Kosovo, and its judiciary, have lacked such representation as we have now. The Palace of Justice – not only from the visual aspect – influences our dignified representation and provides an environment that inspires dignity for all justice employees and the citizens we serve. Having one Palace of Justice means we are all located within the same space, and this has rendered communication and collaboration among justice institutions much easier. Being under the same roof is a physical symbol of the independence of the judiciary from the other two powers. It is up

to us now to accomplish this in practice in the most professional manner."

## Progress is a Continuous Journey

"The EU Office in Kosovo assistance in advancing justice in Kosovo is necessary and we have welcomed it. It is now time to establish a partnership and to determine jointly the needs for further assistance. We need to reflect jointly on what has passed and what we seek to achieve. Collaboration and coordination are critical to the success of the justice sector in Kosovo. The new court structure has created new professions that require advanced knowledge, for example, on how to fight economic and financial crimes, terrorism, we need advanced skills in legal writing and interpretation, in legal research, we need development of administrative capacities, human resources, procurement, logistics, and in the areas of international cooperation."

# Morinas Remember the Cold, but this is in the Past Now

The Morinas are a young, urban family living in the capital Pristina. Lulzim and Lule, and their three daughters: Fiona (12), Klea (5), and Ana (3) bought in 2009 their new place in one of the apartment blocks that have sprung up in the new neighbourhood nearby the city's hospital.

Lule recalls, "That year, we had a great winter in our new place. The heating worked just fine. But the following year, and for many other years to follow, I remember the cold."

Lulzim goes on telling how the weak heating would be one for 2-3 hours in the morning and in the evening. The couple had to invest in heaters using electricity to warm the living room, while the rest of their flat would be cold. "We paid double bills," says Lulzim. "We paid the regular district heating bill and twice the amount for electricity. And we still felt cold."

The couple was on the verge of disconnecting from the district heating system. When they heard of the EU investment to improve the capacities of Termokos, they decided to wait out and see what would happen in the winter of 2014.

This is almost unbelievable, the Morinas say. "The heating is on 24/24. The temperature is constant, and we all feel so comfortable because we can grade the room temperature as needed," says Lulzim.

"The electricity bills this winter have been almost insignificant. I have locked up the electric heaters because we have no longer any use for them," adds Lule.





# Improving the Future of Energy Consumption

Since 2008, the European Union has turned a more intense focus than ever on energy efficiency and use of renewable energy in Kosovo. Using a multi-pronged plan of action, the intent has been to ensure sustainable development of the energy efficiency sector, in compliance with the standards of the Energy Community of South East Europe, of which Kosovo is a member since 2006. EU has taken the positive steps further by including energy efficiency issues as cross-cutting issues across all other sectors that receive EU support.

The EU Office in Kosovo has provided full support to the Government of Kosovo in developing central policies and strategies in the energy efficiency areas to help Kosovo achieve European standards until the creation of a single energy market for the region. In 2011, the Ministry of Economic Development approved the Kosovo National Energy Efficiency Action Plan 2010 – 2018. According to the plan, it is expected that by 2018 Kosovo will achieve an overall energy saving of 9%, which is likely to increase by 2020.

The EU Office in Kosovo has worked closely with the municipal authorities to draw the Municipal Energy Efficiency Plans. These plans will change the future of energy consumption at municipality level. For the initial stage, the EU has selected 14 municipalities to prepare their plans. The goal is to include all, because as municipalities are owners of many public buildings – schools, hospitals – they are big consumers of energy. Energy is also consumed by lighting of public spaces, such as streets or squares. However, the main focus is on buildings to make them energy efficient.

The EU Office in Kosovo has given its contribution to increasing the awareness of public institutions and the general public to promote efficient use of energy and related environmental benefits, as well as the use of renewable energy sources. Through its technical assistance the EU Office in Kosovo has organized many workshops for central and local government officials.

## Energy Efficiency has a Social Dimension: Energy Efficiency and Schools

School buildings across Kosovo would heat their facilities with fuel or wood. Classrooms, corridors and other spaces were never fully heated. There were issues with humidity levels inside school premises. EU has implemented with success energy efficiency measures in more than 50 schools. These schools now have constant healthy temperature for the children.

## Energy Efficiency has an Economic Dimension: Energy Efficiency and City Heating

Pristina district heating system project is one of the EU-supported projects with the biggest impact on the economy, environment, and life of people. For many years, the citizens of Pristina faced winters made difficult by shortage of electricity or district heating supply. As most apartment blocks and houses are not properly

insulated, and the old district heating network experienced losses and released gas emissions in the air, the effects of the lack of an upgraded heating system were felt in many ways.

In 2011, the EU signed an agreement with the Mayor of Pristina to commence a project for the revitalization and improvement of the quality of the district heating services. In 2015, the project has achieved all it set out to do.

The efficiency of the district heating network is improved, which has resulted in reduction of electricity consumption for heating purposes. Less demand for electricity means less power cuts for citizens in other parts of Kosovo. The gas emissions released into the air are reduced, which has resulted in cleaner air and more environmentally friendly heat production. The management skills in the district heating company Termokos have been strengthened, which has resulted in better business planning and customer service.

More importantly, the project has improved the quality of life of people living in Pristina.

## Energy Efficiency has an Ecological Dimension: Energy Efficiency and Our World

The level of energy consumption in the schools that were renovated by the EU Office in Kosovo funded project has dropped drastically, up to **50%**, and the carbon dioxide emission has dropped by **40%**.

This alone contributes to cleaner air, reduced hazards to health and better quality of life.

Linking energy efficiency with ecology is an essential move to ensure sustainability of energy efficiency investment and increase the number of people aware of the impact their energy choices have on our environment.

up to 50% less energy consumption





# Women in Charge of Their Lives Can Lead Social Change in Kosovo

Real life examples of women becoming more prominent and powerful in the political, economic and social life are on the rise. Atifete Jahjaga, President of Kosovo, is the first woman to have this position in the modern Balkans, and the youngest too! President Jahjaga speaks with a strong voice on behalf of all women in Kosovo and under her leadership numerous initiatives for more gender equality and women empowerment have taken off.

In 2015, women of Kosovo have come a long way. There is a plenitude of laws that ensure gender equality and more opportunities for women. Several strategies have been put in place to assist institutional mechanisms implement affirmative actions for improving the conditions of all women.

Although the trend of women on the rise is headed in the right direction, most women – especially in the rural areas or belonging to marginalized and disadvantaged groups of population, are

affected by high unemployment and limited opportunities for getting a job, discrimination in matters of inheritance, property or businesses registered in their names, and domestic violence and abuse.

Equal treatment of women and men and empowerment of the position of women in the society guide every activity of the EU Office in Kosovo. In spite of existing inequalities, thanks to EU efforts significant progress has been achieved through the fundamental principle of EU that equality between women and men must be ensured in all areas, including employment, work and pay.

The EU support in Kosovo for gender equality is expressed through the tangible and diverse projects that target the policy-level of women advancement ranging from legislation for equality to integration of gender perspective to more specific measures and concrete steps such as business grants or skills development.





President Jahjaga welcomes HR/VP Mogherini - National Library, Pristina

## Women and Security

In 2012-2014, the EU Office in Kosovo partnered with **UN Women** and **UN DP** to implement a two-year programme to increase the meaningful participation of women in the public sphere and peace-building processes. The project focused on the implementation of the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security, which is the first resolution recognizing women's roles and needs in wartime and post-conflict situations of peace building and democratic transition and acknowledges that peace and security cannot be just and inclusive without the full and equal participation of women in matters of peace and security.

This programme partnered with civil society organizations, Women Caucus of the Kosovo Assembly, the Agency for Gender Equality, government institutions at central and local level, media, youth organizations and men, ensuring knowledge-building and dialogue to support social cohesion and peace-building.

The initiative was in line with the EU Policy on Women, Peace and Security.



## Strengthening Women-Led Civil Society Organizations

In January 2015, the EU Office in Kosovo started a two-year project to strengthen the capacities of local civil society organizations in policy and decision-making processes, particularly at the local level. The project is implemented by Kosovo Women's Network 83 members, mainly marginalized rural, heads of households, with special needs, and minority women, who are among the most disadvantaged in terms of citizen participation in decision-making.

# ReViVe – Networking to Assist Victims of Domestic Violence Journey to Self-Actualization

The European Union-funded project ReViVe worked with women's centres across Kosovo to improve the services provided for women victims of domestic violence, services that mainly consist in counselling, sheltering, reintegration programmes and professional trainings aiming to support the empowerment of beneficiaries. In doing so, ReViVe introduced a new approach, one that focused on re-building the victims' self-esteem and making them the protagonists of the process of their empowerment and choices made for their future.

In cooperation with the Kosovo Shelter Coalition the project conducted a needs assessment, which identified the types of training to be delivered for the agencies, especially the Social Welfare Centre and Health Centre. Experts from the Kosovo Shelter Coalition held the training sessions and provided a conceptual framework about gender based violence focusing on how to recognize such cases and how to deal with them. Moreover, the training provided the basis to continue coordination of actions on dealing with gender based violence cases. As a result, the shelters signed an agreement with the social and health agencies to adopt a common protocol for the first meeting with women victims of domestic violence.

As a result of the exchange of good practices and approaches of each stakeholder, a manual "From Violence to Empowerment" was adopted and distributed in Albanian, Serbian and English to all relevant institutions, organizations and agencies. The manual will help all these entities to continue improving their services for women.

Another innovation of the project is the establishment of a network of entities dealing with cases of gender based violence. As part of project activities, each shelter promoted the set up of a coordination body comprising of Municipalities, Social Welfare Centres, Employment Centres, courts, police, health centres and hospitals to foster the implementation of the Standard operation procedures for protection from domestic violence in Kosovo.

The critical role of the coordination bodies is to deal promptly and effectively with gender based violence, and provide a successful recovery of the women.

ReViVe – or Reintegration of Victims of Domestic Violence has achieved two main results:

- Services provided by Women's Centres of the Kosovo Shelter Coalition have improved
- Coordination bodies among stakeholders at municipal level have been created and strengthened.



# Making Room for the Influence of Single Mothers

The aim of EU gender equality actions is to make gender equality in Kosovo a reality and adjust that to the real needs of the people. This aim is reflected by the diverse EU-funded projects in Kosovo that have touched the lives of many women in need: single mothers, victims of domestic abuse, uneducated, impoverished, women with special needs, women from rural or minority communities – all of whom have one critical feature in common: the right to lead decent lives and be dignified members of the society.



In 2014, Medica Kosova provided psychosocial and legal support and counselling, awareness raising and group education sessions to 130 women and 30 girls from 11 villages of Gjakovë/Đakovica and Deçan/Dečani municipalities

Widows and divorced women affected by war trauma and violence are amongst the most vulnerable groups in Kosovo, whose voices are rarely heard and whose struggle for making a living for their families often leads to more hardship, exclusion by social stigma and lack of a support network.

To help single mothers in Gjakovë/Đakovica and Deçan/Dečani municipalities and eleven surrounding villages improve their living conditions, the European Union (EU) in Kosovo enlisted the assistance of Medica Kosova organization. Since 2006 Medica Kosova has helped single mothers – mostly in the rural areas – to provide for their families. One of the organization's recent projects made possible thanks to the EU Office in Kosovo funding is the project "Strengthening of the role of single mothers in influencing social and political life."

As a result of the project activities, the support to this group of population comes in the shape of a formal support network. The entity already has a name: the Association of Single Mothers. The overarching goal of the association is to help single mothers promote their status for social inclusion and political participation, and to participate in advocacy actions.

Meribone Deda from Medica Kosova says that the organization has identified the most influential single mothers from all villages that were included in the project. These women received training on how to establish an association, how it functions and how to design the strategic plan. Following these sessions, sixteen women were selected in the leadership of the association to push forward the agenda of single mothers.

The Association is an entity that gives its members the "strength and determination to follow the success that can overcome all obstacles, increase hopes for a better future and get back their lost dignity" writes Vepore Shehu, the Executive Director of Medica Kosova. "These activities would not have been possible if there wasn't support provided by the EU Office in Kosovo."

The Association of Single Mothers, through psychosocial support programs helps single mothers cope with their trauma and overcome cultural barriers.

## Strong, As Women Know How to Be

Gjyle Hyseni lives in Molliq/Molić village, municipality of Gjakovë/Đakovica. She lost her husband during the war and was left alone, with no house to live in, and two very young sons to look after. Through Medica Kosova, Gjyle discovered a new skill that would soon become the love of her life. She is now a passionate bee-keeper, and the heart and soul of the growing community of single-mother bee-keepers in the area.

"I started with three beehives," Gjyle starts her story. "Now I own more than a hundred". Gjyle is also the first woman in her village who got a driver's license and owns her own tractor.

Gjyle believes that knowledge and goodness should be spread around. So now, she teaches other single mothers in the villages of Deçan/Dečan how to become bee-keepers and earn a good living for their families. Melihate Beqaj from Racaj/Racaj village is one of Gjyle's new 'students' and is eagerly waiting to learn new skills, which can help her launch a business of her own.

"Bee-keeping is not just an occupation for me, it's liberating and gives me strength to go on," says Gjyle.

# Responsible Media for Kosovo

Media, in all its forms: broadcast, online and print, is increasingly more accessible. It is one of the most important sources of information for all. Therefore, as the media industry and good journalism standards continue to evolve, it is critical to equip existing and future journalists with the right skills and tools to carry out their mission.

On the other hand, the legislative framework in Kosovo provides protection for the freedom of the media and freedom of expression. The role of the judiciary is critical for the protection of these freedoms. Between balancing the right of the public to know and of the media to inform, there are the authorities that regulate the information environment. Together, all these groups of the society play vital roles for the sustainability of a democratic society in Kosovo. This is exactly what the EU Office in Kosovo had in mind while designing the approach to development of media environment in Kosovo that aligned strengthening media regulation and increasing the quality and ethics of journalists. This is a first initiative of this kind that is being implemented by the Thomson Foundation ([www.thomsonfoundation.org](http://www.thomsonfoundation.org)) and Balkan Investigative Reporting Network – Kosovo (<http://birn.eu.com/en/network/birn-kosovo-home>).

The specific focus of media regulation activities is to increase the quality of print and broadcast media through improved capacity, standing and public understanding of the Independent Media Commission (IMC) and of the Press Council of Kosovo (PCK).

As a first step, the EU Office in Kosovo commissioned a consultation study that assessed the public profile of the PCK and IMC – the role of which is still not understood

sufficiently by the public in general. The study, recommends that both organizations encourage a wider public debate about standards of reporting in all media, with particular emphasis on internet content. A public service announcement for the TV in Albanian and Serbian has already begun airing and a public debate has already been organized. PCK and IMC are proactively seeking out opportunities to educate the public about their role.

The study deals with another crucial component of media strengthening in Kosovo: the complaint submission and processing. Evidence shows that the majority of complaints submitted to PCK or IMC are mostly personal in nature, whereas more complaints about issues of general interest would serve to improve the media and information environment in the country. The efficient processing of complaints resulting in longer and elaborate decisions is deemed to be a good way of educating the public on the role of IMC and PCK as defenders of media freedom, and also create a good case law for future reference. The project has been busy holding a series of roundtables for a diverse audience, ranging from IMC and PCK staff, to journalists, editors, judges, prosecutors and others in the legal community. The themes for the legal roundtables were selected upon consultation with the Kosovo Judicial Institute.

Key themes discussed in the training sessions with media regulation professionals included improving public awareness of the work of the Independent Media Commission and the Press Council of Kosovo, regulating internet news portals, combating piracy and copyright theft, preparing for a smooth switchover to digital-only television in Kosovo, and how

to write and edit decisions on complaints that are comprehensible by the public, legal community and the press.

The project organized jointly with the Kosovo Association of Independent Journalists the first media roundtable “Media Reporting on Terrorism and Extremism”, which attracted over sixty editors, reporters and representatives from NGOs, prosecutors and judges. The aim of the roundtable was to engage participants in critical observations on the relationship media against terrorism and extremism using international media practices as examples. As the program unfolds, there are more activities in store for the media regulation professionals. The project has planned two study tours. The first one will be to London, UK, to focus on topics such as defamation, strengthening of the PCK, how to self-regulate in a converged media environment, relations between the press council and the broadcast regulator. The second will be to the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) Strasbourg where the Kosovo group will have an opportunity to learn more about the role of ECHR as the ultimate arbitrator of media law in Europe.

[http://www.thomsonfoundation.org/assets/News\\_Features/2015/Kosovo%20report/Kosovo\\_Report\\_new1602\\_setting\\_media\\_standards.pdf](http://www.thomsonfoundation.org/assets/News_Features/2015/Kosovo%20report/Kosovo_Report_new1602_setting_media_standards.pdf)





The approach of the project to combine local and international expertise seems to have produced a very effective program that is helping participants acquire a comprehensive set of new skills on media freedom and regulation.

On the other hand, twenty journalists will be part of an intensive training course on publicly beneficial journalism. The training program goes hand in hand with a year-long mentorship program and on-the-job training, which means investigative reports for local and national media. The long-term goal of the project is to establish a centre for journalism excellence that will continue to facilitate media development, provide mentorship to local media, and serve as a press club.

Direct beneficiaries of this project are journalists of broadcast, print and online media, including public and minority media with a special focus on RTK, and TV Mreža broadcasting in Serbian as well as other local media outlets in Kosovo.

## What Will Be Achieved:

*More investigative reports of improved quality as a result of enhanced skills of journalists*

Increased media coverage of concerns and challenges faced by citizens all over Kosovo

Transfer of skills from experienced professionals to journalism students

*Strengthened role of the media regulatory bodies and media institutions in promoting media ethics, freedom of expression and the utilisation of the media legislation*

## For the advancement of skills of judges and prosecutors

**Valon Jupa,**  
Head of Continuous Training Program, Kosovo Judicial Institute

The training events organized by Thomson Foundation with the Kosovo Judicial Institute on the rights of media in the spirit of the European Charter on Human Rights bear special value for the advancement of skills of judges and prosecutors. These training events have dealt with the local and international legislation, including best standards and practices in this field. The combination of local trainers with international trainers has resulted in a very effective program that helped participants acquire a comprehensive training.

## For a serious platform of self-regulation of media

**Qerim Ondozi,**  
Public Relations Officer, Press Council of Kosovo

The project Media for All / Strengthening Media Self Regulation, Media Law and Media Freedom in Kosovo is one of the most successful and most important projects that the Press Council of Kosovo (PCK) has been involved in since its establishment.

Considering the role, scope and position of the Independent Media Commission (IMC) in the area of media regulation, and in the case of the PCK the self-regulation, this project aims to strengthen our position, bring these two institutions closer, increase their visibility and inform the public about these two institutions.

The report on the needs and position of these two institutions in Kosovo – which undoubtedly is a comprehensive report that holds a great importance for PCK – has identified key areas and issues that we should work on. This project has strengthened the position of PCK making it a serious platform of self-regulation of media in Kosovo.

## For media regulators during the digitalization process

**Mirand Tafarshiku,**  
Head of Monitoring Division, Independent Media Commission

The Independent Media Commission implemented several activities with Media for All / Strengthening Media Self Regulation, Media Law and Media Freedom in Kosovo. The study “Awareness and Effectiveness of the Independent Media Commission and the Press Council of Kosovo” analyzed the standing of these two organizations, as well as the perception of the public and media industry. Our staff attended a training program on public awareness for media regulators during the digitalization process received training. For the first time we organized for about 60 media representatives a roundtable on “Media Reporting on Terrorism and Extremism” to discuss about challenges of media and regulatory bodies regarding the media coverage of terrorism and extremism.





### **Constitution of Kosovo**

#### **Article 42 Freedom of Media**

1. Freedom and pluralism of media is guaranteed.
2. Censorship is forbidden. No one shall prevent the dissemination of information or ideas through media, except if it is necessary to prevent encouragement or provocation of violence and hostility on grounds of race, nationality, ethnicity or religion.
3. Everyone has the right to correct untrue, incomplete and inaccurate published information, if it violates her/his rights and interests in accordance with the law.

### **European Convention on Human Rights**

#### **Article 10 Freedom of Expression**

1. Everyone has the right to freedom of expression. This right shall include freedom to hold opinions and to receive and impart information and ideas without interference by public authority and regardless of frontiers. This Article shall not prevent States from requiring the licensing of broadcasting, television or cinema enterprises.
2. The exercise of these freedoms, since it carries with it duties and responsibilities, may be subject to such formalities, conditions, restrictions or penalties as are prescribed by law and are necessary in a democratic society, in the interests of national security, territorial integrity or public safety, for the prevention of disorder or crime, for the protection of health or morals, for the protection of the reputation or rights of others, for preventing the disclosure of information received in confidence, or for maintaining the authority and impartiality of the judiciary.





EU INFORMATION AND  
CULTURAL CENTRE

Str. "Mother Teresa" no.16 Pristina 10000, Kosovo.

T: +381 (0) 38 25 99 99

F: +381 (0) 38 25 99 25

M: +377 (0) 44 50 95 10

E: [pr@euicc-ks.com](mailto:pr@euicc-ks.com)

Čika Jovina n.n., North Mitrovica

T: +381 (0) 64 44 04 662

M: +381 (0) 64 90 97 882

E: [mi@euicc-ks.com](mailto:mi@euicc-ks.com)

[www.euicc-ks.com](http://www.euicc-ks.com)

European Union Office in Kosovo / European Union Special Representative in Kosovo

Kosovo Street 1 (P.O. Box 331) Pristina, KOSOVO

Tel: +381 (0) 38 51 31 200; Fax: +381 (0) 38 51 31 305

**E-mail:** [delegation-kosovo@eeas.europa.eu](mailto:delegation-kosovo@eeas.europa.eu)

**Web:** <http://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/kosovo>

