

“The Role and Functioning of the Municipal Officers for Gender Equality in Kosovo”

SUMMARY

The report on “The Role and Functioning of the Municipal Officers for Gender Equality (MOGE) in Kosovo” is based on the assessment conducted by the OSCE Municipal Monitoring Teams in March 2006, and subsequent follow-up covering the 30 municipalities and one of the three pilot municipalities in Kosovo.

The Kosovo-wide assessment of the functioning of the MOGE and their role in improving equal gender participation in the civil service displays some general trends and shortcomings related to the implementation of existing legislation on gender equality.

- **The main concerns identified relate to:**
 - non-improvement of equal gender participation at the decision-making level, lack of female candidates for municipal-level vacancies;
 - a practice of excluding the MOGE from important decision-making and consultative processes, at the same time, insufficient activity and efficiency on the part of the MOGE in some municipalities; and
 - a Kosovo-wide shortage of support to the MOGE to allow them to fulfill their mandate; lack of or insufficient access to funds/budget for gender-related activities.

1. A few selected recommendations to the MOGE and the municipal administration regarding strengthening the MOGE’s position within the municipality:

- **Municipalities should stop the practice of hiring one staff for two or three positions.** The MOGEs should focus exclusively on their tasks and no other additional position. This would serve as a much needed basis to improve the overall performance of the MOGEs in fulfilling their designated duties.
- **All applicable legislation related to gender equality should be fully implemented at the municipal level.** The MOGEs should be able to review local government decisions prior to their endorsement as outlined in the relevant legislation.
- **Municipal administrations should ensure that MOGEs take part in the recruitment process** by including the MOGE as permanent members on recruitment panels, therefore increasing the gender balance in the municipal civil service and ensuring that their involvement in the decision-making process is not just nominal.
- **Municipalities using the MOGEs should conduct gender awareness campaigns** with the approval and participation of the CEO in order to promote gender sensitivity within the civil service.
- **The MOGEs should have access to a separate budget** to ensure the implementation of all gender-related projects and activities. This would allow for the prioritisation of annual goals; increased coordination with the Chief Financial Officer, BoD and the Policy and Finance Committee; and bring the gender agenda to the forefront in the municipality.

2. A few selected recommendations to the central authorities concerning providing the necessary guidance and support to the local level structures:

- **The OGE should provide regular guidance to the MOGEs** to facilitate communication with the CEO and relevant directorates as a means of support and follow-up on concrete actions taken by the MOGE. The OGE should develop detailed reporting guidelines for the MOGEs to increase individual accountability.
- **The OGE could co-ordinate the exchange of information among the MOGEs at the regional level.** This process would help facilitate and lead to a more substantive focus on the part of the MOGEs to draft effective municipal work plans thus improving their overall performance.
- **The OGE should urgently finalise the Kosovo Programme on Gender Equality** outlining who are the responsible actors and what kind of actions should be taken regarding the implementation of the Law on Gender Equality and the fulfilment of gender equality objectives in the Standards for Kosovo.
- **The regular monthly meeting should take place between the MOGEs and the OGE.** This should include the facilitation of transport or reimbursement of travel costs by the central level to ensure the equal participation of all MOGEs Kosovo-wide. The OGE should follow all available examples at the regional level to encourage communication, information sharing, and the development of joint activities among the MOGEs.
- **The MOGEs should be encouraged and also guided by the OGE to organize in-house specialised training on gender equality and gender mainstreaming at the municipal level.** This would increase gender awareness among civil servants and would make the commitment of the MOGE more visible among fellow municipal colleagues. Training alone of MOGEs is not adequate to address the lack of advocacy of gender equality at the local level, and should therefore be supplemented by trainings on gender equality issues organized and conducted at the central or regional level for CEOs and other decision making civil servants.
- **The MLGA should allocate adequate financial and human resources to support the MOGEs** and address gender inequalities as specified in the appropriate legislation.