



YOUTH INITIATIVE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS  
NISMA E TË RINJVE PËR TË DREJTAT E NJERIUT  
INICIJATIVA MLADIH ZA LJUDSKA PRAVA



## **Press Release: Youth Initiative for Human Rights - Kosovo and Kosovo Women's Network**

### **Gender Discrimination in Kosovo**

Discrimination in Kosovo is prohibited on fourteen defined grounds including gender based discrimination. This is embodied in the Anti-Discrimination Law of 2004 and the Constitution of the Republic of Kosovo, which provides that the constitutional order of the Republic of Kosovo is based on the principles of equality and non-discrimination.

Additionally, international conventions such as the European Convention of Human Rights (ECHR) and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), which are directly applicable in Kosovo, prohibit such discrimination. Further, the application of such instruments requires governing institutions to ensure discrimination is appropriately addressed particularly if there is a culture of gender discrimination, as well as to refrain from discriminating against citizens.

Regardless of this legal framework, however, discrimination and particularly gender discrimination remains a fact of life in Kosovo. Youth Initiatives for Human Rights comprehensive report on the implementation of the Anti-Discrimination Law 2004 found a systematic lack of implementation, as well as gaps in the law itself. Most recently, the highest legislative authority in Kosovo, the Assembly, through its actions and the actions of its deputies have shown the very gender discrimination culture that continues to exist in Kosovo. Furthermore, such actions also show the complete disregard of the constitutional order, international obligations and legislative framework, which the Assembly has contributed to establishing in respect of discrimination and particularly discrimination based on gender.

Similarly, public education bodies such as the University of Prishtina through their vacancy announcements show the discriminatory culture based on gender that exists within this institution.

We condemn this gender discrimination culture, the disregard shown by institutions of the international and national law prohibiting such discrimination. Additionally, we remind all governing institutions that they are under an obligation to refrain from gender based discrimination and where such discrimination has occurred to take appropriate action as a matter of urgency. In respect of the Assembly of Kosovo and the University of Prishtina, we will be making individual representations regarding the incidents and requesting appropriate action to be taken as soon as practically possible.

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**Youth Initiative for Human Rights – Kosovo (YIHR KS)** is part of the regional network of Youth Initiative for Human Rights in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Montenegro and Serbia. The mission of the Initiative is to protect the victims of human rights violations, establish new connections in the region among the post-war generations, as well as to include the young in the process of transitional justice, through promoting the truth about the wars in former Yugoslavia. The Youth Initiative for Human Rights promotes the truth, justice, responsibility and equality as the basic values.

**Kosova Women’s Network (KWN)** is a network that advocates on behalf of 84 women’s organizations of all ethnic groups from throughout Kosova. KWN supports, protects and promotes the rights and interests of women and girls throughout Kosova, regardless of their political beliefs, religion, age, level of education, sexual orientation and ability. KWN fulfills its mission through the exchange of experience and information, partnership and networking, research, advocacy, and service.