

6 September 2024

Dear Minister of Finance, Labour, and Transfers Hekuran Murati,

Gender-responsive budgeting (GRB) seeks to ensure that funds are budgeted and spent towards addressing the potentially differing needs of diverse women, men, boys, and girls, as identified through gender analysis. According to Kosovo [Law No. 05/L-020 on Gender Equality](#), GRB is mandatory for all public institutions. The non-implementation of GRB, as stipulated by this Law, constitutes a legal offense and is subject to sanctions. Further, the Government has an interest in implementing gender budgeting in the context of its [commitments to the UN Sustainable Development Goals](#) (SDG), precisely [SDG 5, indicator 5.c.1](#); the Supplementary Public Expenditure and Financial Accountability Framework ([PEFA](#)) for the assessment of gender responsive public financial management ([GRPFM](#)) in the context of ongoing public finance reforms; and, most importantly, as a best practice in financial management. Implementing GRB can contribute to more effective, efficient, accountable, and transparent spending of government resources, including towards achieving gender equality. Thus, the Ministry of Finance, Labour, and Transfers, through the budget circular, has requested that all [budget organisations](#) provide an addendum to their budget allocation requests for 2025 explaining how their 2025 budget ensures GRB. [budget organisations](#) provide an addendum to their budget allocation requests for 2025 explaining how their 2025 budget ensures GRB.

Notably, the Government must involve gender equality officers from government entities and civil society organizations in public consultations pertaining to the budget, as mandated by Law [03/L-048](#) on the Management of Public Finances and Responsibilities. To support the Government of Kosovo in implementing its responsibilities, the Kosovo Women's Network (KWN), a network of 141 diverse women's rights organisations, has prepared this letter with recommendations towards improving GRB related to the Law on Budget Appropriations for 2025. Recommendations are based on KWN's research and evidence of needs, towards furthering gender equality in Kosovo.

OUR RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE 2025 BUDGET

- Increase the budget allocated for Centres for Social Work in the category of Wages and Salaries as part of the Government General Grant to employ more social workers in each municipality, specifically tasked with handling gender-based violence cases. The additional cost of employing two social workers in each municipality to address gender-based violence cases, including sexual and domestic violence, would amount to approximately €444,000 annually. This amount considers that Prishtina, the largest municipality, would require four such social workers considering its size. This should be required of all municipalities as part of their budgets towards implementing the legal framework and new State Protocol for Treatment of Sexual Violence Cases.
- Establish a clear and permanent budget line for financing the Personal Assistance Scheme, considering gender analysis and the [actual time required from personal assistants in assisting persons with disabilities to prevent current violations of personal assistants' labour rights](#). Increase the budget allocated per personal assistant from the current €150 for personal assistants of paraplegic and tetraplegic (PTTP) persons and €125 for blind persons to at least the current minimum wage (€350). Considering that as of June 2024, [there were 3,021 PTTP persons and 1,849 blind persons in Kosovo](#), this would cost approximately €20,454,000.¹

¹ To estimate the total cost for one year based on the minimum wage salary for personal assistants, the total cost per year for PTTP persons was calculated by multiplying the monthly salary (€350) by 12 months and then by the number of PTTP persons (3,021), totalling €12,688,200. Similarly, the total cost per year for blind persons was calculated by multiplying the monthly salary (€350) by 12 months and by the number of blind persons (1,849), totalling €7,765,800. The total cost for financing personal assistants is approximately €20,454,000.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPLEMENTING GENDER RESPONSIVE BUDGETING AS PART OF THE 2025 BUDGET PROCESS

- Ensure all budget organisations have conducted the required Gender Impact Assessments (GIA) using the Guidance by the Agency for Gender Equality to inform their multiannual and annual budget requests, including intersectional gender analysis. This analysis should shape the Medium-term Expenditure Framework (MTEF), Medium-term Budget Framework (MTBF), and annual budgets, incorporating clear gender-related objectives, indicators, baselines, and targets. Review the quality of budget proposals from a gender perspective, returning those lacking sufficient GRB addenda for revision. Ensure addenda include gender analysis, clear objectives towards gender equality, indicators, and planned expenditures to achieve gender equality objectives. These should be published online, implementing UN SDG 5.c.1.
- Publish online a Gender Budget Statement with the 2025 Kosovo Budget, explaining how the Kosovo budget is contributing to furthering gender equality, inclusive of planned expenditures, in accordance with PEFA GRPFM and UN SDG 5.c.1 guidelines, so citizens have access to transparent information regarding Government efforts to further gender equality through public expenditures.

Additionally, we kindly recall our prior requests for the Ministry to finalise in close cooperation with the Agency for Gender Equality and experts, like KWN, legislation to institutionalise GRB in the operations and systems of all budget organisations, as part of public finance legislation and management systems in line with the LGE, PEFA GRPFM, and UN SDG 5.c.1.

We would be happy to provide further information and evidence to substantiate and justify these recommendations and expenditure calculations, if needed. We urge your Ministry to implement these recommendations, in line with existing commitments, and towards a more gender-responsive 2025 Budget.

Sincerely,



Igballe Rogova
Executive Director
Kosovo Women's Network