



ERAC
EQUAL RIGHTS FOR ALL COALITION



An EU funded project managed by the
European Union Office in Kosovo

ERAC

EQUAL RIGHTS FOR ALL COALITION



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



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20

TABLE OF CONTENT



What is the purpose ERAC	01
Who are the Coalition Members	04
What we do	10
Areas of Focus	11
Main Activities	14
Contact Information	20



What is the purpose ERAC

01

Equal Rights for All Coalition (ERAC) brings together seven (7) NGOs that work in the domain of rule of **law** and **fundamental** rights that will work together with an additional nineteen (19) grass root NGOs, with a particular focus on the establishment of a sustainable network of NGOs that are active in the protection and promotion of the fundamental rights of vulnerable and/or marginalised groups (VMGs). The project special focus are the following groups: **all minority communities** in Kosovo, **women, youth and LGBT community**. Although working on similar topics and issues, these NGOs are often divided on the basis of the particular target groups they are working with or the region they are active in. By establishing structural cooperation between selected NGOs and providing formal opportunities for continuous learning, the action generates the sharing of knowledge and experience between NGOs (including on institutional matters), strengthen their capacities for advocacy with relevant central and municipal institutions, and increases their visibility.

This Coalition brings together and combines the strengths of **medium-sized** and **grassroots** NGOs. The former often have the capacities and contacts to make a strong case with relevant institutions, while the latter have close bonds with the members of VMGs, but limited access to decision- and policy-making bodies.

ERAC cooperates with the government at the central and local level to address shortcomings in the existing institutional mechanisms for the protection, promotion, and enforcement of fundamental human rights and for the reporting on and remedying

What is the purpose ERAC

02

of infringements on these rights. ERAC partners participate in mechanisms that are currently being developed to strengthen cooperation with civil society under the leadership of the Office for Good Governance, Human Rights, Equal Opportunities and Non-Discrimination.

Further, ERAC aims to establish structured dialogue with the relevant Assembly Commissions, in order to strengthen the inclusion of NGOs in the work of the Assembly and contribute to increasing the involvement of NGOs in law-making and in monitoring of the central and local governments. At the local level, community-based paralegals engage on a structured dialogue with relevant institutions.

Fundamental human rights for all citizens of Kosovo are de jure guaranteed by the Constitution of the Republic of Kosovo, in accordance with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. There is however a considerable gap between legislation and de facto access to and protection of fundamental rights. Vulnerable and marginalised groups, including minority communities, women, youth, and LGBT particularly face challenges when exercising their fundamental rights. ERAC organises its activities around a number of fundamental rights that have been identified by the ERAC and international actors as particularly problematic for VMGs which are: Equality before the Law; Right to fair and impartial trial; Right to Legal Remedy; Right to Liberty and Security; Freedom of expression; Right to access of public documents; Freedom of media; Right to education; Right to work and exercise profession; Health and social protection.

Who are the Coalition Members

03



Who are the Coalition Members

04

ECMI Kosovo

European Centre for Minority Issues Kosovo (ECMI Kosovo) is a principle non-government working with **ethnic minorities and interethnic relations** in Kosovo. ECMI Kosovo has three field of activities: (1) Providing capacity-building and policy recommendations to government institutions for them to function in a community-sensitive, accountable and transparent manner; (2) Empowering civil society within communities to effectively participate in decision-making and advocate for their rights; (3) Raising awareness among the general public and inform the public debate on the position of minority communities in Kosovo.

KGSC

The mission of the Kosovar Gender Studies Center (KGSC) is to integrate gender-sensitive analysis, programs, and policies in all sectors of Kosovar society by **increasing gender awareness** and a focus on gender issues, developing gender studies and ensuring the inclusion of gender-sensitive policies through research, policy development, advocacy, and lobbying.

KGSC is a gender-focused organization in Kosovo and the region. In its almost 14 years of its existence, it has contributed to gender mainstreaming and achievement of gender equality in all spheres of life. KGSC has implemented over 50 projects in the field of women's rights and gender equality. Their expertise in advocacy, monitoring and research as well as awareness raising campaign provide for an added value for the project activities.



Who are the Coalition Members

05

CSGD

Centre for Social Group Development (CSGD) is a non-governmental organisation that protects and promotes the **rights of LGBT community** in Kosovo. CSGD main focus is in: (1) Empowering the LGBT community; (2) Advocating and lobbying for LGBT human rights; and (3) raising awareness in society regarding issues faced by members of the LGBT community.

CEL Kosova

Centre for Equality and Liberty of the LGBT community in Kosova (CEL) was established in July, 2013 with the aim to empower the **LGBT community** in Kosovo, prevent the discrimination based on sexual orientation, raise awareness of the general population on LGBT rights and advocate for equal rights and non-discrimination of the LGBT community in Kosovo in accordance with the Constitution and the laws of the Republic of Kosovo.

CEL also seeks to strengthen the legal framework with effect to the LGBT community in the country as well as to increase the level of active participation of the LGBT community in Kosovo in relevant international and regional mechanisms and projects beneficial to the community and society at large.

Who are the Coalition Members

06

YIHR KS

Youth Initiative for Human Rights (YIHR KS) is a non-governmental organization active in protection and promotion of human rights, particularly **youth**. YIHR has been (1) contributing to strengthening the rule of law through documenting, reporting and advocating for the implementation of legislation that ensures human rights of all; (2) promoting human rights through education, activism, campaigns, local and regional networking, and enhancing critical thinking among youth; and (3) empowering the process of dealing with the past by establishing new links between young people from different ethnic groups in Kosovo and the region of the Western Balkans.

CLARD

Centre for Legal Aid and Regional Development (CLARD) has an experience in **provision of administrative, civil and criminal law providing legal aid and free court representation to vulnerable** and marginalised groups, strategic litigation, and research on legal issues affecting VMGs. Apart from the main office in Prishtinë/Priština, CLARD also has mobile teams identifying cases in the field and legal clinics throughout Kosovo.



Who are the Coalition Members

07

Kosovo 2.0

Kosovo Glocal is an independent media, which is based on the foundation and approach of **advocacy journalism**. It reports and examines the state of political/social issues of importance in Kosovo, but also pushes for change and reform. This includes coverage on gender equality, human rights, civic participation, greater access to information, improving inter-ethnic relations. Kosovo 2.0 runs a network of contributors and bloggers from across Kosovo and the region and is one of the few independent media venues that shares informed critique and analysis.

In addition, the Coalition has on its membership an additional 19 NGOs that represent all minority communities of Kosovo at the grass root level and cover all the regions where these communities live:

1. BRIGA Goraždevac – Based in Goraždevac/Gorazhdac, works on the empowerment of **Serb women**;
2. Choice of youth – Located in Parteš/Partesh, works with **Serb youth**;
3. Omladinska parteška organizacija – Located in Parteš/Partesh, works with **Serb youth**;
4. Durmiš Aslanio – Located in Prizren, works with the **Roma community**;
5. Nevo Koncepti – Located in Prizren and Gjakovë/Đakovica, works with the **Roma community**;
6. Association of Women Sabor– Located in North Mitrovicë/Mitrovica, works with **Serb women**;

Who are the Coalition Members

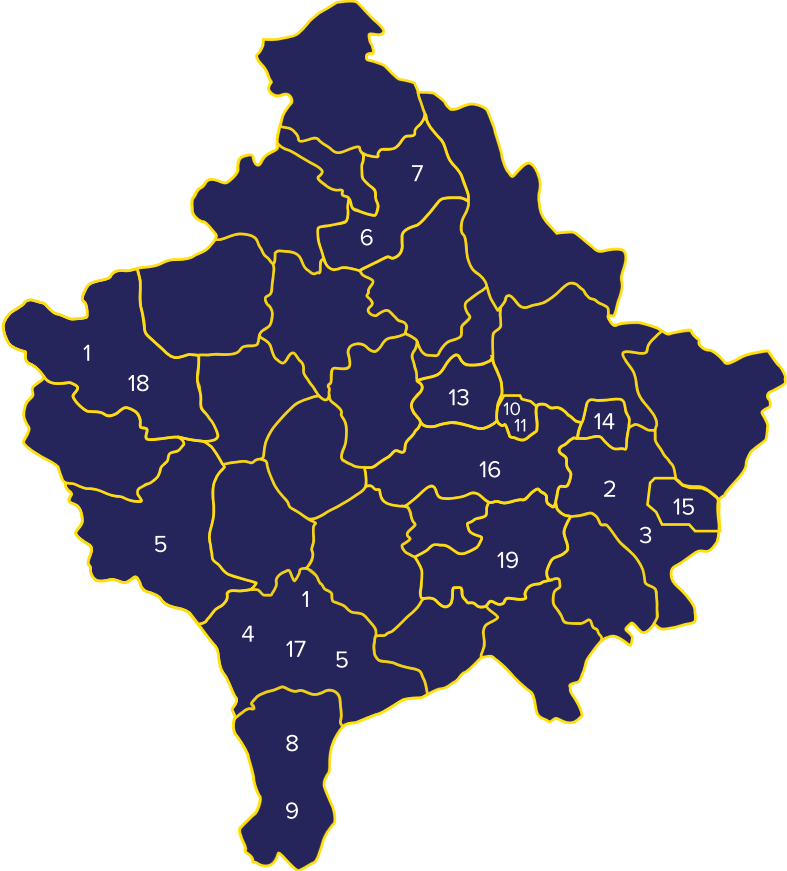
08

7. Youth Education Club Sinergy - Located in North Mitrovicë/Mitrovica, works with **Serb youth**;
8. GORA network – Located in Dragash/Dragaš, a network of local NGOs representing Gorani youth and women in the **Gora region**;
9. Omladinski Savez Dragash/Dragaš – Located in Dragash/Dragaš, represents Gorani youth in the **Gora region**;
10. Gračanačka Inicijativa za održljiv razvoj – Located in Gračanica/Graçanicë, works with **Serb youth**;
11. Oči budućnosti – Located in Gračanica/Graçanicë, works with the **Roma community**;
12. ICEC Prizren – Located in Prizren, works with the **Bosniak community**;
13. Kosovo Center for Multicultural Development – Located in Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje, works especially with the **Roma community**;
14. Naš dom – Located in Novo Brdo/Novobërdë, works with **Serb women**;
15. Prijateljstvo bez granica – Located in Ranillug/Ranilug, works with **Serb youth**;
16. Slobodna Produkcija Šilovo – Located in Šilovo/Shillovë, works with the **Serb community** in the Gjilan/Gnjilane area;
17. TUMED Prizren – Located in Prizren, works with the **Turkish community** in the area;
18. Udruženje Bošnjaka OASA – Located in Peja/Peć, works with the **Bosniak community**;
19. Gzimi Yin Rinore – Located in Ferizaj/Uroševac, works with with **Ashkali youth**.



Coverage of Minority Communities and Regions of Kosovo

09



The Aim

Establish and maintain an effective coalition of grassroots and medium-sized human rights based NGOs with the aim to strengthen their capacities to advocate for the promotion and protection of fundamental rights of selected vulnerable and marginalised groups (VMGs).

The Objectives

This project establishes and maintains an effective coalition of NGOs that aims to strengthen the capacities of participating NGOs to advocate for the promotion and protection of rights of selected VMGs: LGBT, women, youth, and minority communities. ERAC has the following particular objectives:

- To form a cooperative network of grassroots and medium-sized NGOs that provide efficient aid and support to members of VMGs with limited access to fundamental rights;
- To establish meaningful and informed participation in the government's decision and policy making processes on the promotion and protection of fundamental rights of VMGs on the basis of multi-disciplinary policy research;
- To strengthen the participating NGOs' (a) institutional capacities (communication, coordination, accountability, and transparency) and (b) interdisciplinary skills (research, monitoring, legal laid, advocacy, various fields of human rights and VMGs);
- To raise general awareness of the role of civil society in participatory democracy and in particular with regard to fundamental rights for all.



Areas of Focus

11

Six (6) Fundamental Rights are the focus of the ERAC:

Fundamental Right 1. Rights to equality before the law: Major shortcomings concern the access to justice for youth, women, and the LGBT community. The complex integration of the Serbian judiciary system within the Kosovo system, the inadequate translation of laws into Serbian, and the lack of qualified Serbian-speaking lawyers particularly affect the right to equality before the law of minority communities in Kosovo.

Fundamental Right 2. Right to liberty and security: Despite years of progress, reports show that the security of non-majority communities remains fragile. Moreover, threats and cases of hate speech targeting women and LGBT continue and are rarely investigated and preventive measures scarce. Great challenges also remain in the field of domestic violence and gender-based violence.

Fundamental Right 3. Right to freedom of expression: The institutional framework guaranteeing freedom of media and expression remains fragmentary and effective handling against threats, attacks, and hate speech against VMGs in media persist. Women are underrepresented and discriminated against in media. Furthermore, the implementation of Kosovo's language legislation remains insufficient.

ERAC Promotional Campaign

12



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Areas of Focus

13

Fundamental Right 4. Right to education: Members of non-majority communities who wish to pursue education in Serbian have no alternative but to attend the parallel Serbian system. Students from the Roma, Ashkali, and Egyptian communities have lower registration rates, higher dropout rates, and poor levels of academic performance. Women are strongly underrepresented in education staff and material.

Fundamental Right 5. Right to work and profession: Youth and women unemployment are particularly high, and women's representation remains low in senior positions in both the private and public sector. Members of non-majority communities are underrepresented in the civil service, particularly at managerial position and in publically owned enterprises.

Fundamental Right 6. Right to health and social protection: Awareness and access to health care treatment for diseases that affect women in particular remain far below the EU standards. The same applies for members of the LGBT community. Roma, Ashkali, and Egyptian communities face major challenges as a result of weak health care and access to social protection.

Establishment of 19 legal aid clinics through 17 community based paralegals.

This Coalition is establishing and maintaining an effective mechanism that will identify and receive complaints on restricted access to fundamental rights from members of VMGs and takes appropriate action to remedy these individual cases. The core of the mechanism consists of nineteen (19) clinics located in fourteen (14) municipalities which are: Goraždevac/Gorazhdec; Parteš/Partesh; Prizren, Gjakovë/Đakovica; North Mitrovicë/Mitrovica; Dragash/Dragaš; Gračanica/Graçanicë; Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje; Novo Brdo/Novobërdë; Ranillug/Ranilug; Šilovo/Shillovë; Peja/Peć; and Ferizaj/Uroševac. Seventeen (17) community-based paralegals will undergo continuous training over four (4) years of the project, work part-time in the clinics and are responsible to:

- Provide legal and general advice and support on how to handle legal or administrative problems;
- Counselling and mediation between the client and the relevant institution;
- Referral of the client to relevant governmental or non-governmental human rights structures, especially the Ombudsperson Institute of Kosovo and municipal human rights structures;
- Organise media campaigns (in cases of a non-sensitive nature and with the explicit consent of the client);
- When other methods fail and in strategic cases (that is, cases that affect not only the individual involved but also the VMG as such), litigation. In this case, the case will be taken over by a lawyer, although ERAC can continue to provide complementary support.



ERAC Activities

15





ERAC Activities

16

Overcome barriers through policy reach and strategic engagement with institutions

The direct work and the close involvement of the participating NGOs with the VMGs in question allows them to identify widespread barriers in access to fundamental human rights. Therefore, ERAC addresses these barriers through advocacy with relevant government institutions for a long-term strategic solutions, on the basis of well-informed and community-based policy research. Part of the organisation of this activity will be ECMI Kosovo, CSGD, CEL, KCGS, and YIHR KS.

ERAC conducts and publishes policy research analyses on access to fundamental rights of selected VMGs. On the basis of policy research analysis, ERAC will distil concrete recommendations which will be used as a basis for strategic engagement with public institutions of Kosovo.

Furthermore, ERAC will offer expert support to and follow-up on relevant human rights structures in the implementation of policy changes, through participation in relevant government working groups, consultation meetings between civil society and human rights structures, and lobbying. ERAC particularly provides insights on making decisions as practical and accessible as possible for VMGs and serve as a link between the government and target groups.



Main Activities

18

ERAC: a continuous learning centre

ERAC serves as a continuous learning centre, which develops the skills and capacities of the participating NGOs through multidimensional knowledge sharing. ERAC will adopt a broad definition of capacity-building, aiming at long-term, institutional objectives.

Furthermore, ERAC organises quarterly workshops for all participating NGOs, in the form of coaching and on-the-job trainings and focuses on themes such as: paralegal skills, legal framework and procedures, policy dialogue and advocacy, and monitoring and reporting. The workshops also serve as an occasion for participating NGOs to share their experiences and to provide feedback on progress, results, and challenges.

Public outreach and awareness raising for VMGs and the public

Public outreach and awareness-raising is an integral part of the activities of ERAC, targeting members of VMGs and the broader public. For the successful design, implementation and evaluation of this set of activities, ERAC relies on the expertise of its internal media partner (Kosovo 2.0) and close cooperation with the Kosovo Public Broadcaster. ERAC delivers and publishes in-depth journalistic pieces on particular strategic cases treated by the Coalition, that is, cases that can lead from the particular/individual to the community-level.

All activities of ERAC will be published in the project's website and Facebook (Equal Rights for All Coalition) in three languages Albanian, Serbian and English.



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ERAC Promotional Campaign

19

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prava za sve





Contact Information

ECMI Kosovo

Contact person: Jeta Bakija
Email: bakija@ecmikosovo.org
Tel.: +381 (0) 38 224 473

CEL

Contact person: Rajmonda Sylbije
Email: info@cel-ks.org
Tel.: +386 (0) 49 829 393

CSGD

Contact person: Agim Margilaj
Email: csgd_kos@yahoo.com
Tel.: +377 (0) 45 646 678

YIHR KS

Contact person: Teuta Hoxha
Email: teuta@yihhr.org
Tel.: +377 (0) 44 551 802

Kosovo Glocal

Contact person: Besa Luci
Email: besa@kosovotwopointzero.eu
Tel.: +386 (0) 49 149 145

CLARD

Contact person: Anton Nrecaj
Email: anton@clardkosovo.org
Tel.: +377 (0) 44 169 508

KCGS

Contact person: Luljeta Demolli
Email: luledemolli@gmail.com
Tel.: +377 (0) 44 236 022

www.equalrightsforallcoalition.com

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Equal Rights for All

Të drejtat e barabarta
për të gjithë

Jednaka prava za sve



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