



# 2023 REPORT ON THE OPEN BUSINESSES

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# Report from the Open Data Business: what can the data on this platform tell us?

## I. Context and Overview of the Platform

Closed business information creates space for money laundering, corruption, misuse and organized crime. These problems prevent local and global economic development. In order to assist with more open, and transparent business data, the platform Open Data Businesses (alb. Bizneset e Hapura) was developed by Open Data Kosovo (hereafter ODK) back in 2017.

The data provided in this platform was extracted (web-scraped) from the Kosovo Business Registration Agency (KBRA).

The idea which led to the creation of the platform by ODK was not only to make it easier to find data on the businesses registered in Kosovo, but to further explore the dynamics of Kosovo's business landscape, including the business sectors in expansion and those in decline, their geographical distribution, and other interesting data.

The first version of the platform provided visualizations that illustrated insights into the most significant trends and developments of the previous years (earlier than 2017).

As part of the granted supported from the Institutional Grant - EJA Program (2022-2023), ODK was able to update the platform by adding some new features, giving a new look regarding the design of the platform, the visualization of the data, as well as enabling the content of the platform to be available in three languages (Albanian, English, and Serbian).

The updated data on the existing version of the platform represent the business data until 06 June, 2023.

## II. Features of the platform

Open Data Kosovo believes that data disclosure is essential in establishing a good, transparent and accountable governance (among others). As such, open data is a fundamental way of citizen participation in decision making. Therefore, data provided by government institutions should be public, easily accessible, as well as in open formats.

The Open Businesses platform is designed to be user-friendly, so the data is easily accessible for all and simply displayed.

In order to display the scraped data in a user friendly way, the platform consists of the following pages:

- **Homepage:**

This is the landing page of the website. Apart from the navigation menu, at the center of the home page is the Search Bar, in which the user can search for businesses by name.

The search bar also contains filters by which the user can specify the type of businesses they are looking for, and in which municipality. This makes it easier for the user to find general data about a business/municipality.

For someone who is not looking for a specific type of business, or for someone who wants a general view of what the website has to offer, in the Home Page there are also:

- Top numbers from the main list of data:
  - Total number of businesses;
  - Total number of active and inactive businesses;
- Top activities which define the categories of the data, and the number of businesses for each.
- The latest registered/added businesses with general information about them and the option to read more.

## • **About Open Businesses**

Open Data Kosovo believes that data disclosure is essential in establishing a good, transparent and accountable governance (among others). As such, open data is a fundamental way of citizen participation in decision making. Therefore, data provided by government institutions should be public, easily accessible, as well as in open formats. The Open Businesses platform is designed to be user-friendly, so the data is easily accessible for all and simply displayed. In order to display the scraped data in a user friendly way, the platform consists of the following pages:

### • **Search Businesses**

As indicated by the name, this page provides the option of searching about businesses, by using specific filters. You can use one of these filters or combine them for a more accurate result. The filters include:

- Business Name;
- Owner Name;
- Status;
- Activities;
- Municipalities;

The results are displayed in an organized manner and general information about each business is shown. Once you find the one you are looking for, you can click the “read more” button, which takes you to a more detailed page about the business.

### • **Data Vizualisation**

To make the data more presentable and simple for the users to understand and use, there is the Data Visualization page. In this page users can visualize data based on several filters:

- Status;
- Municipality;
- Gender;

This page also has the “select a report” option. This option provides ready to use reports on Kosovo’s registered businesses. Among others, you can visualize by year, activities, employment, find out which are the top 10 activities sponsored by businesses etc. It’s important to note the usefulness of this part of the website, as it can be used by researchers, students and others who are interested in finding credible and available data to support their claims.

- **Language**

The content of the platform is provided in the three languages: Albanian, English, and Serbian. This ensures accessibility and inclusivity for a diverse audience and facilitates seamless navigation and understanding for users from different linguistic backgrounds.

- **Open Data**

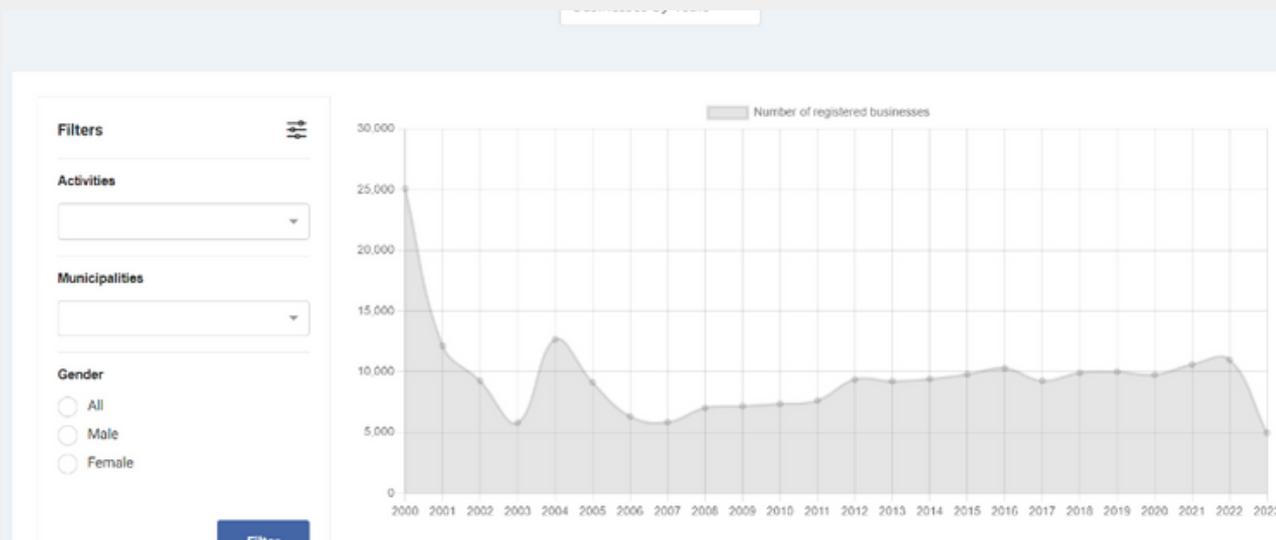
Web scraping has allowed us to collect information from KBRA's official website and make it publicly available. In the "Open Data" page, users can access large amounts of data regarding businesses, by selecting the year and type of file they want to download. This accessibility not only enhances the usability of the platform but also serves as a catalyst for informed decision-making and research endeavors across various sectors.

### III. Main findings from the data sets

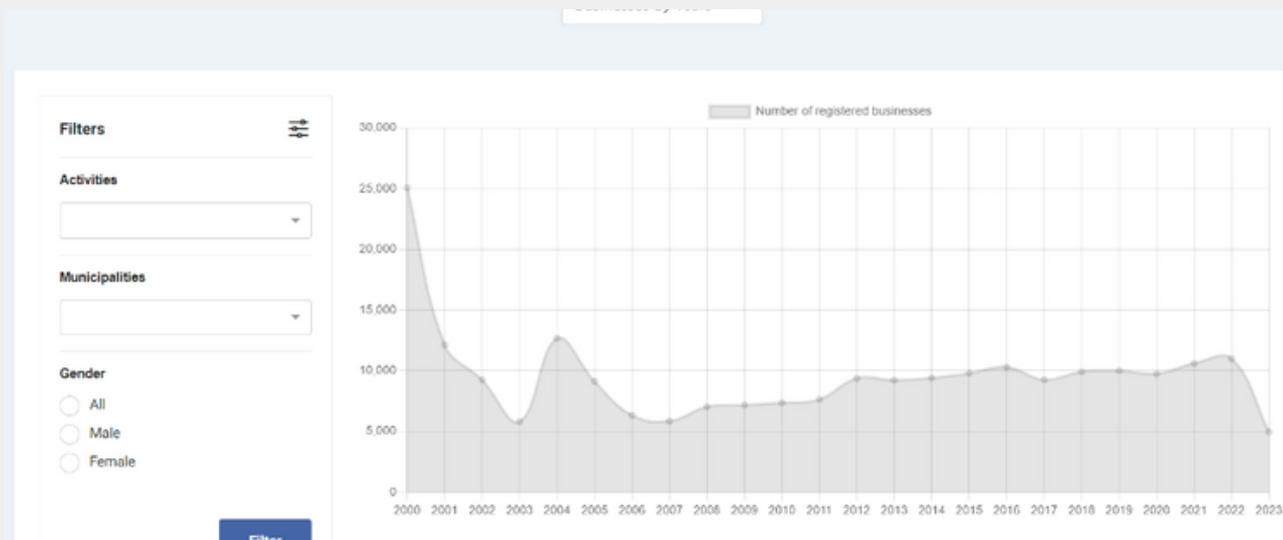
As mentioned already in the first part of this report, the platform showcases the data on the registered businesses in Kosovo. In total, until the recorded day when the data was scraped to the platform, there are **229052** registered businesses in Kosovo.

In order to analyze the trends among this data, such as the demographic, economic, and geographical, the platform includes filters, as well as visual representation of the data.

In terms of the visualization (Data Visualization page), there are the general reports which you can choose from, but you can also add filters to these reports to tailor them to your preferences. Let's take a look at what the platform has to offer - below is a graph of the registered businesses throughout the years:



## II. Main findings from the data sets (continued)



What we may notice from this first look, is the decrease in numbers from the year 2000 to 2003. In 2000, there were **25077** registered businesses, and in 2003 there's a sharp decrease to **5814** registered businesses.

From the year 2003 we notice an increase, with **12668** registered businesses in 2004.

This number gradually decreased again, until 2007 with **5854** registered businesses. In 2012, there's an increase, with **9376** businesses registered.

Apart from this, from 2012 to 2022, we see a steady flow of the data, meaning the number of registered businesses was similar to the year prior.

If we want to consider the COVID-19 period, there's a slight continuous increase on the number of the data noted from the year 2020, to 2021, and to 2022. This is a positive trend on this period regarding the registered businesses.

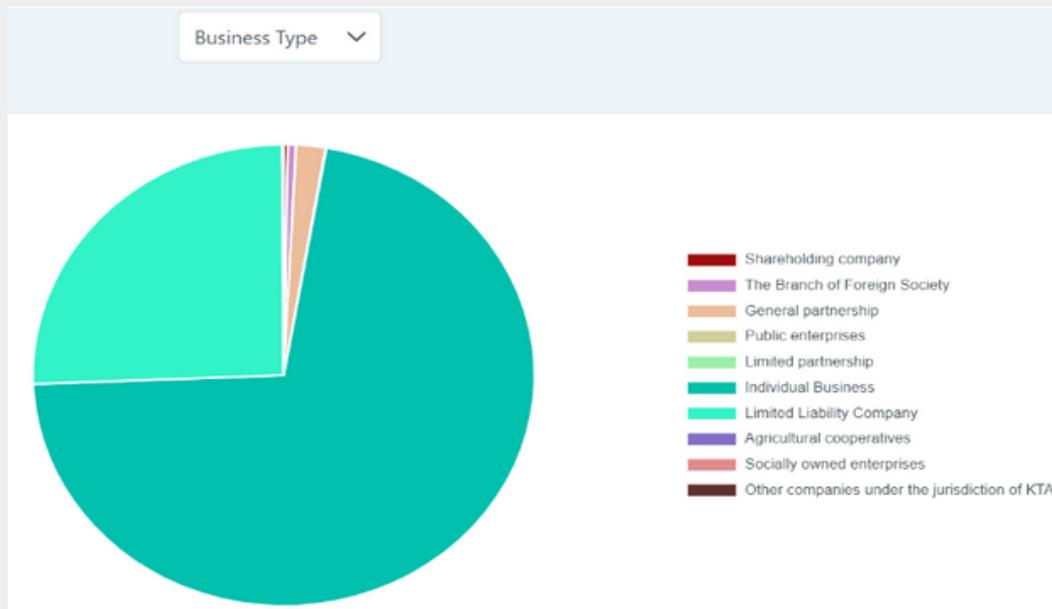
It is important to note that not all businesses registered in 2023 are on the platform yet, thus there is a drastic decrease in this year's registered businesses.

Apart from this general overview, we can get more specific with our requirements, noted in the next sections.

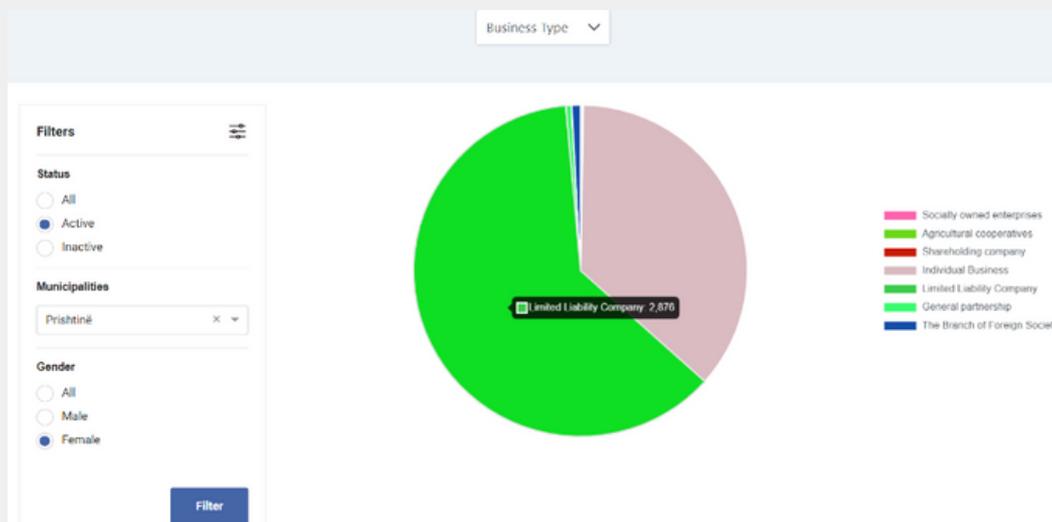
## • Business Type

As illustrated in the platform, the following list identifies registered businesses in terms of the category Business Types (Shareholding company, The Branch of Foreign Society, General Partnership, Public Enterprises, Limited Partnerships, Individual Businesses, Limited Liability Company, Agricultural Cooperatives, Socially owned enterprises, Other companies under the jurisdiction of KTA)

Based on this, we can see that Individual Businesses have the highest number according to business type, with **164166** individual businesses.



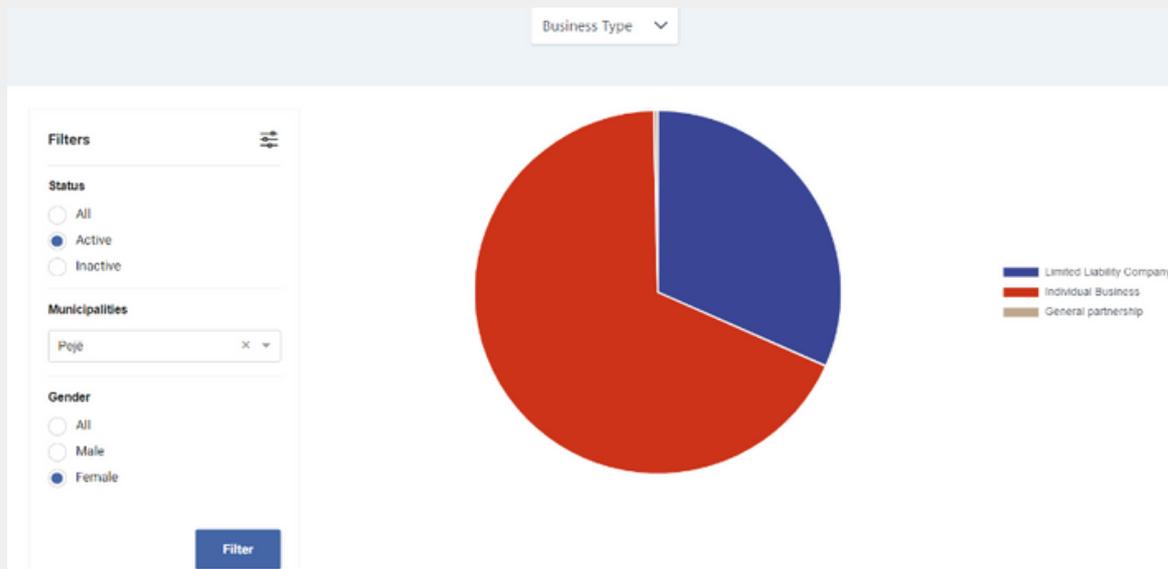
For the purpose of demonstrating, we can add filters to modify our search. Let's say we want to separate businesses by type which are female owned, in one of the selected municipalities (example: Prishtina).



In the case of Prishtina, in terms of category and female owned businesses, we can see that the category Limited Liability Companies (LLC) is higher in number than Individual Businesses (IB), with **2876** LLCs, compared to **1689** IBs.

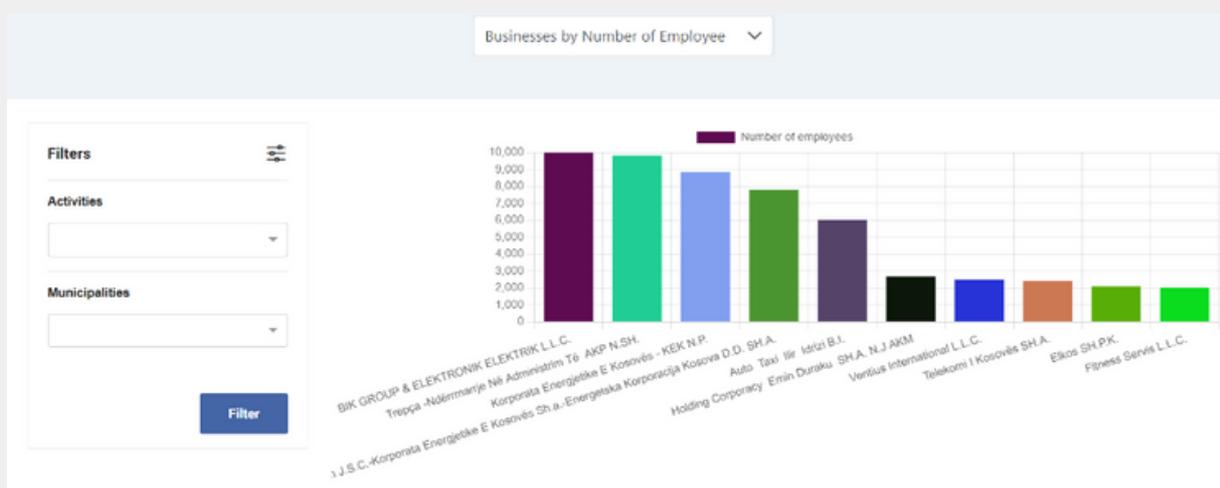
This chart is different if we select another municipality. For instance, in the municipality of Peja, the number for female owned businesses is higher in IBs compared to LLCs.

There are **604** female-owned individual businesses, and **281** female-owned limited liability companies in Peje.



## • Businesses by Number of Employee:

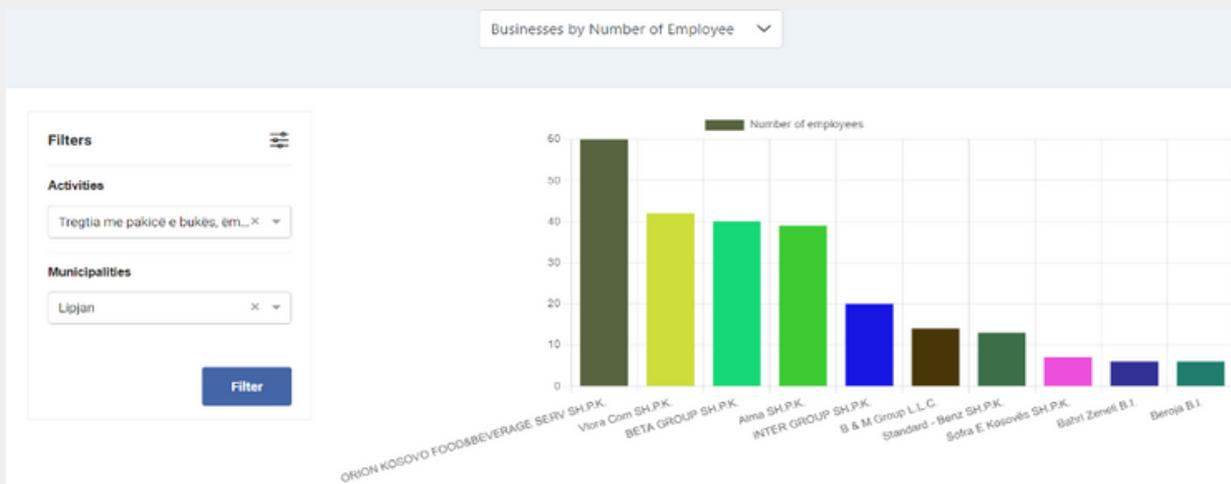
If we want to see which companies in Kosovo have the highest number of employees, we can choose the “Business by Number of Employee” report. Here we can see the companies with the highest number of employees, in order.



We can see that the company with the highest number of employees is for instance BIK GROUP & ELEKTRONIK ELEKTRIK L.L.C with **10000** employees. We can modify our search further by adding a filter such as the one referring to the Type of Activity (Sector). Thus, the highest number of employees is lowered to **2100**.



We can further modify our search by selecting a municipality, which allows us to target only the businesses in a specific location.

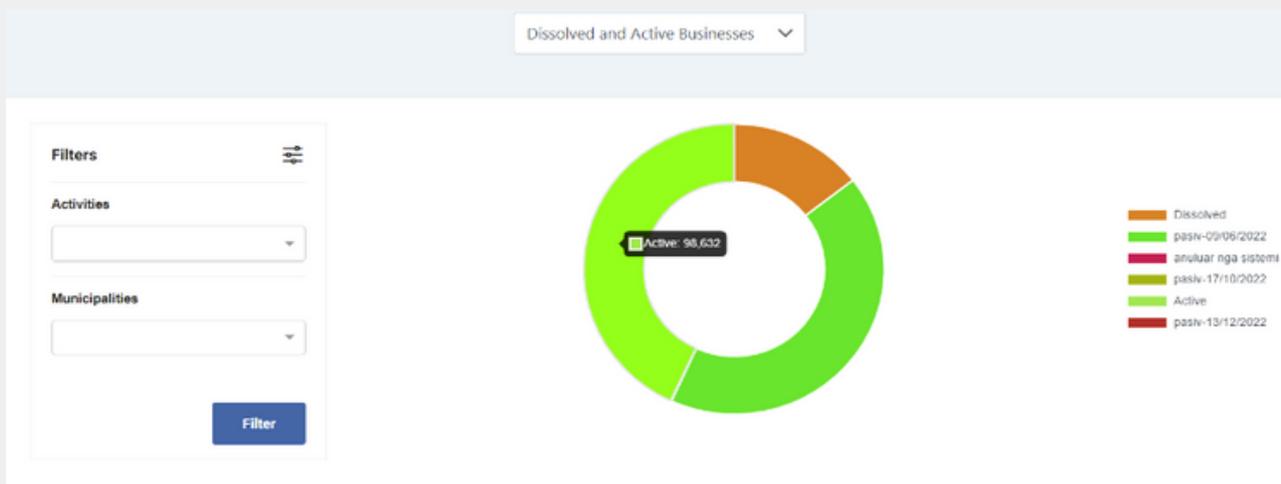


For example purposes, we can see that in Lipjan, in a specific type of business, the highest number of employees is Orion Kosovo with **60** employees.

## • Active, Passive, and Dissolved Businesses

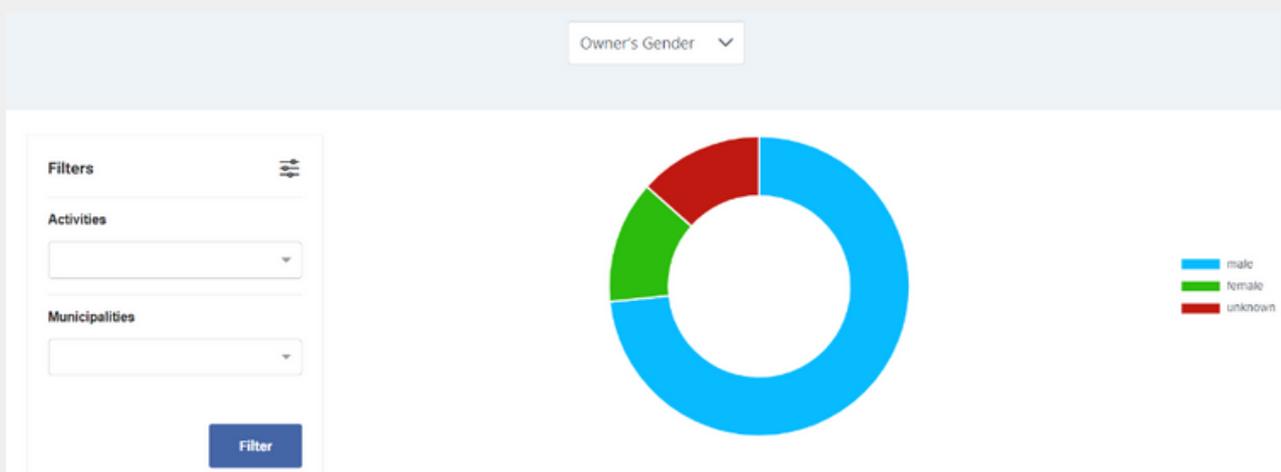
Below, we can see the chart of active, passive and dissolved businesses in Kosovo.

There are **98632** active businesses in Kosovo, **96975** passive businesses and **33251** are dissolved.

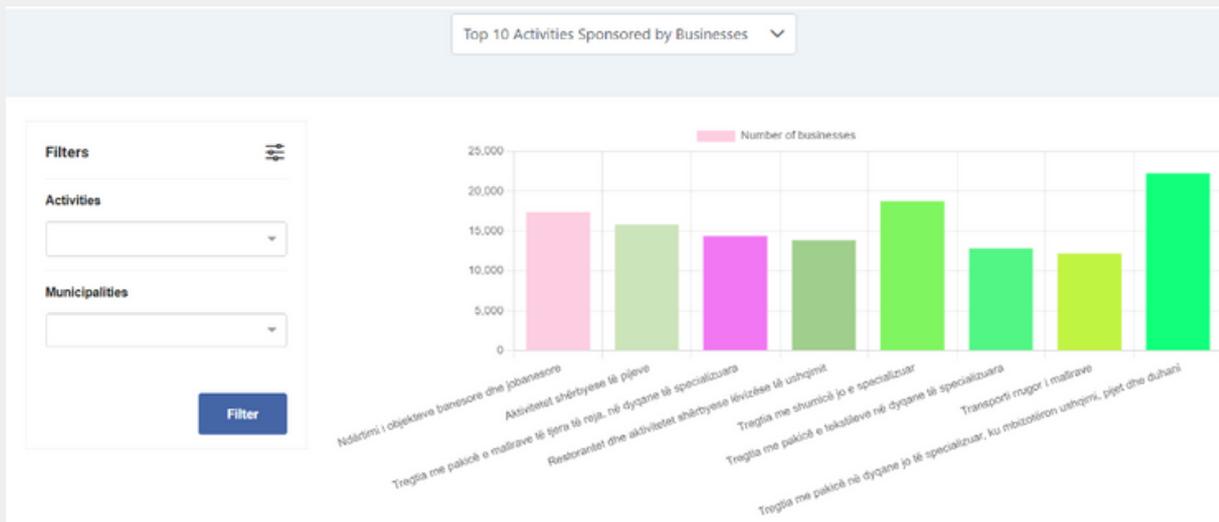


## • Businesses Owner's Gender

Based on the "Owner's Gender" report, we can see that the number of male-owned businesses in Kosovo is far greater than that of female-owned businesses. There are **165135** male-owned businesses in Kosovo, and **29766** female-owned businesses. **30243** businesses have unknown owner gender. This includes all business categories, and gender is this report's main concern, unlike above, where we only added gender as an additional filter to business type.



We can also see the top activities sponsored by businesses in Kosovo (retail trade in non-specialized stores; transportation of goods; retail trade of textiles in specialized stores; non-specialized wholesale trade; restaurants and food service activities; retail trade of other new goods in specialized stores; beverage service activities; construction of residential and non-residential buildings), with retail trade having the highest number with **22232** registered businesses. Wholesale trade has **18745** registered businesses in total, then **17400** fall under construction of residential and non-residential buildings.



## **IV. Main Conclusion, and some noted impacts from these datasets:**

In conclusion, the transparency of this platform given the open data, contributes to an increase in trust among a variety of institutions worldwide. This platform, with its different options, will make it simpler for businesses, investors, and even researchers to get the most recent and updated data on businesses in Kosovo. This platform will lead to an increase in the amount of investments made by foreign countries, and it is a time saving website.

### **• Main Impacts**

The Open-businesses tool can make a big difference in the business environment in Kosovo. It keeps track of businesses that are growing or shrinking and is meant to make information about listed businesses easy to find. Its main contribution is to increase economic transparency which reduces corruption and makes business decision-making more informed.

This platform can be a valuable source for investors due to its transparency in terms of the business data in Kosovo. The platform sorts businesses into different categories, making it easy to find what you're looking for and how you would like to sort the data. With its easy-to-use search bar, business owners can quickly find information about other companies by name, business type, or municipality.

This search can for instance help entrepreneurs in spotting trends and gaps in the market. For instance, if someone notices a lack of certain types of businesses in a municipality, it could signal an opportunity to fill that gap. This type of data is useful for identifying the most demanded industries.

The "Open Data Business" platform is available in three languages, as was indicated in the first section: English, Serbian, and Albanian. This is an additional step in attracting as many visitors into the platform. On the other hand, this platform provides data on the number and types of businesses operating, including which are growing and which are not. Policymakers can use this data to understand economic trends, like which industries are improving or which areas need more support. Additionally, this platform allows users to view business growth by gender, which represents labor force participation of women.

## • Main Recommendations

We absolutely acknowledge that this platform is far from perfect. As such, we aim to continuously improve all digital solutions, including this platform. In terms of the data included in the Open Businesses, the KBRA (eng. ARBK) as the responsible institution should continue to monitor the regulations that apply to all the businesses in Kosovo, in terms of registration.

- The regulations in terms of the data on registered businesses should consider among other, the data privacy regulations. This point is crucial to ensure that while data is opened, important information is also kept safe. The regulatory frameworks should be updated regularly to keep up with new technology.

In technical terms, below we provide some of the key recommendations under which KBRA should work regarding the opening of the data:

- Business data, excluding sensitive personal data, should be publicly accessible free of charge.
- Business data needs to be updated and presented in real time.
- All data must be searchable. For example, not only the business name or registration number, but also the names of the owners and authorized persons.
- The names of owners and authorized persons should be listed on the open data and not be considered as personal information. This is important as it allows us to see the connection with politically exposed persons (PEPs).
- The data should enable the gender of the people who have businesses. This will allow policymakers to intervene to promote gender equality in the business and entrepreneurship development sector.
- Business published data should be up-to-date, including business dissolution date, in order to have an analysis of the period in which these businesses are dissolved.
- To be accessible from the public in the open formats: data should be published in open format, readable easily by software e.g. CSV and JSON.

## • **Main Recommendations (continued)**

- Data should be downloadable as a whole, as well as under an open license that allows use and re-use by the general public. For example, an example of an open license is: [CC0 Creative Commons](#).
- Data must be formatted, stored and made available using international data standards. In this case, it is the OpenCorporates business data standard. [OpenCorporates](#).

*Open Data Kosovo is available for cooperation in the implementation of open data principles, to help institutions achieve the highest level of transparency that contributes to the good of the whole country. We are also open to cooperating with other partners in further enhancing this project.*

# Acknowledgements

*The report is prepared by Open Data Kosovo based on the recent updates on the platform made available with the support of the EJA programme of Kosovo Civil Society Foundation (KCSF), co-financed by the Swiss Agency of Development and Cooperation (SDC), Sweden, and the Government of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg.*



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