

Analysis of Open Governance in the Assembly of the Republic of Kosovo (2023)

Proposals for improvements to the current situation

ANALYSIS OF OPEN GOVERNANCE IN THE ASSEMBLY OF THE REPUBLIC OF KOSOVO (2023)

ABOUT THE PUBLICATION

This document was drafted within the framework of the "**Boost Good Governance 5.0 & 6.0**" project, supported by **the National Endowment for Democracy (NED)** and implemented by **Open Data Kosovo (ODK)**.

AUTHORS

Dafina Olluri dhe Anita Selita

LANGUAGE VERSIONS

SHQ, ANG, SER

COMPLETED IN APRIL, 2025 © ODK

The views expressed in this document are the sole responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official position of NED. Reproduction and translation for non-commercial purposes are permitted, provided the source is acknowledged, the publisher is notified in advance, and a copy is sent.

ANALYSIS OF OPEN GOVERNANCE IN THE ASSEMBLY OF THE REPUBLIC OF KOSOVO (2023)

CONTENT

Introduction	1
Research Methodology	2
ACCESSIBILITY	4
AWARNESS	5
INTEGRITY....	6
TRANSPARENCY	7
CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT IN THE ACTIVITIES OF THE KOSOVO ASSEMBLY	7
REKOMANDIMET	8

INTRODUCTION

In the context of recent political and institutional developments in Kosovo, transparency and openness of the Assembly remain essential for strengthening democracy and the active involvement of citizens in decision-making processes. During the period 2023-2024, the Kosovo Assembly took several important steps to improve its functioning, including the implementation of an advanced electronic voting system, which aims to increase institutional efficiency and accountability. However, challenges in building political consensus and effective oversight of the government continue to affect the Assembly's performance in this regard.

This document analyzes efforts to increase the transparency and openness of the Assembly of Kosovo during 2023-2024, assessing their impact on democratic processes and public trust. In a period characterized by political polarization and challenges in the dialogue with Serbia, strengthening democratic institutions and increasing civic engagement are more important than ever.

This analysis has been developed as a follow-up to previous reports produced under the NED 5.0 and NED 6.0 projects. By comparing this year's findings with those of previous years, this document allows us to more clearly assess progress or regression in institutional transparency from year to year. This comparison reinforces the objectivity of the analysis and provides a consistent picture of institutional development trends.

To provide the most comprehensive overview, ODK, in collaboration with UBO Consulting, conducted a survey with citizens, collecting their opinions and perceptions on the work and transparency of the Kosovo Assembly.

Based on recent data, as well as analyses by local institutions, this document aims to provide an assessment of the current state of transparency in the Kosovo Assembly and to propose concrete recommendations for further improvements in terms of transparency.

Research Methodology

This research is based on the final 2024 data from the Regional Institutional Index, which measures the level of transparency and access to information in the Kosovo Assembly. The analysis focuses on key aspects such as the publication of official documents, financial transparency, decision-making processes and the ability of citizens to easily access relevant information related to the work of the Assembly.

The data for this analysis were collected from index reports, documents published by the Assembly and responses to questionnaires officially addressed to institutions within the Assembly. This paper assessed four fundamental principles: transparency, access to information, institutional integrity and citizen awareness. The assessment was carried out by analysing factors such as the ease of access to official documents through the Assembly website, the quality of the legal framework on transparency, additional sources of information provided and the way the Assembly responds to requests for information.

The research focuses on the period 2023-2024, taking into account the progress made compared to the findings of previous reports developed within the framework of the analyses by NED 1.0, 2.0, 3.0 and 4.0. The comparison of data has helped to identify the progress achieved, as well as the challenges that still remain, while the recommendations are built on the latest analyses and assessments.

Openness of the Assembly in 2021

In 2021, the Assembly achieved an overall score of 86%. This improvement was achieved with the publication of official data and documents, making them easier to find and use by citizens.

Openness of the Assembly in 2022

In 2022, the Assembly reflected an overall score of 88% in openness and transparency.

Openness of the Assembly in 2023

In 2023, the overall performance of the Kosovo Assembly remained the same as in the previous year – 88%, although improvements were noted in the publication and access to documents such as draft laws, budgets and work reports. After the challenges caused by the pandemic, this represents a positive stability compared to previous years.

Through the Open Assembly Action Plan 2023–2026, the Assembly has increased the involvement of citizens and civil society organizations in the legislative processes, in line with the standards of the Open Government Partnership (OGP). One of the main achievements is the launch of the E-Participation platform, which allows citizens to comment and provide suggestions on draft laws.

The Assembly has also started publishing parliamentary documents in open formats and has improved procedures for access to public documents, further strengthening transparency and accountability. Through the Assembly Days programme, interaction between MPs and citizens across Kosovo has increased.

However, certain challenges remain, such as establishing a regular calendar of debates with citizens and ensuring equal access for people with disabilities.

Overall, the year 2024 marks a major step towards a more open, transparent, and inclusive Assembly for the citizens of Kosovo.

Accessibility

The principle of accessibility measures the level of involvement of citizens, civil society organizations (CSOs) and other stakeholders in the activities of the Kosovo Assembly, including aspects such as the Law on Freedom of Information and relevant regulations. In the 2023-2024 assessment, the Kosovo Assembly achieved a significant result in fulfilling the requirements for transparency and citizen participation. During the period 2023-2024, the Assembly received 33 requests for access to public documents and fully granted all of them, demonstrating a high commitment to fulfilling the right to information.

During the period 2023–2026, the Assembly approved and launched the implementation of the Open Assembly Action Plan 2023–2026, with the aim of increasing transparency and citizen involvement in parliamentary processes. This plan has significantly influenced the advancement of institutional openness throughout 2024. In this context, the Assembly has continued the regular publication of parliamentary documents, plenary session agendas and work reports on the official website of the institution.

One of the most important achievements of this year is the functionalization and promotion of the "E-Participation" platform, which allows citizens to provide comments and suggestions on draft laws under consideration. This platform marks an essential step towards the digitalization of citizen participation and increased transparency in legislative processes.

To further facilitate access to information, the Parliament has taken concrete steps to publish documents in open and editable formats, as well as organized trainings for officials in the field of access to public documents and open data. These measures aim to ensure easier access to and use of information by the public.

As part of efforts to strengthen interaction between members of parliament and citizens, the Assembly has continued to organize the “**Assembly Days**” programme, holding debates and meetings in various cities in Kosovo. The “**Open Assembly Week**” has also been organized, which has served as a platform for discussions and cooperation between the Assembly and citizens. However, certain challenges remain which the Assembly still needs to work on. According to the updated information in 2024, the Assembly has not adopted a Code of Conduct for members of parliament yet, as required by the new Rules of Procedure of the Assembly, affecting the level of accountability and transparency. Furthermore, the Kosovo Law Institute report for 2023 notes that the lack of an electronic voting system continues to limit citizens’ access to information on their representation.

Overall, the Kosovo Assembly has achieved significant improvement over the past few years, taking an important step towards building a more transparent, inclusive and open Assembly for the citizens of Kosovo, strengthening the foundations of democracy and encouraging active participation in decision-making processes.

In addition to these improvements in accessibility, the Kosovo Assembly still needs some specific changes remaining to be implemented.

- The Assembly has yet to established a regular calendar for public debates with citizens, and there is a lack of appropriate access for persons with disabilities, including a lack of documents in Braille.
- It is necessary to complete the review and approval of the Code of Ethics for MPs to strengthen public credibility and accountability.
- In addition, an electronic voting system should be implemented to ensure transparency and fair representation.
- The Assembly should continue to improve accessibility for persons with disabilities, by providing documents in accessible formats and infrastructural facilities.
- Finally, the development of a regular calendar for public debates would help in the active involvement of citizens in legislative processes.

AWARNESS

In the Constitutionality category, the Kosovo Assembly achieved a score of 90%, showing a steady improvement over the years. This aspect concerns the oversight and evaluation of policies implemented in the Assembly. The importance of impact assessment lies in its ability to highlight cases of ineffective policies and legislation.

During 2023 and 2024, the Kosovo Assembly took clear steps to increase transparency and accountability. The Assembly Strategic Plan 2022–2026 and the Open Assembly Action Plan 2023–2026 have been the basis for recent activities. Both documents have guided efforts to further open internal processes and bring citizens closer to the institution.

During this period, the Assembly continued to broadcast all plenary sessions in real time, both in audio and video. In addition, citizens had the opportunity to use the **E-Participation** platform, where they addressed issues and recommendations. Civil society was active in the Parliamentary Transparency Forum, directly influencing the drafting of new legal initiatives.

In terms of financial oversight, the National Audit Office reported to the Assembly on government expenditures during the 2023 financial year. The General Auditor submitted the regular report, which reviewed the way public funds were managed and provided recommendations for improvements.

In 2023, the Assembly held 36 parliamentary sessions and addressed one interpellation to the government. The number of requests for access to public documents was 33, and all were fully addressed. Meanwhile, a total of 73 draft laws were proposed: 4 of them by MPs and 69 by the Government, while there was no proposal for a law from citizens. Further during this year, 18 laws were approved through the accelerated procedure, a practice used to expedite the passage of laws when there is urgency or broad political agreement.

To increase internal awareness, the Assembly has organized and participated in trainings on access to public documents and the use of open data. In 2023-2024, there were continuous efforts to build the capacities of civil servants in the field of transparency and communication with the public.

In the field of technology, the Assembly has continued to support the use of electronic identification and trusted services for the exchange of official documents. This has helped maintain security and efficiency in administrative processes.

INTEGRITY

The institutional integrity of the Kosovo Assembly for the years 2023–2024 has seen significant developments of 95%, particularly in the areas of transparency, parliamentary ethics, asset declaration and regulation of lobbying activities. These developments are the result of a combination of internal efforts of the Assembly and continuous pressure from civil society and international partners to strengthen standards of good governance.

In the area of asset declaration, MPs are required to submit their declarations of assets, income and financial liabilities to the Agency for the Prevention of Corruption (APC). During 2023, the submission of declarations was carried out in accordance with the Law on Declaration, Origin and Control of Assets, while the APC has taken steps to deepen the verification of declarations, strengthening control over the data of public officials. Access to these declarations remains possible through formal requests, in compliance with the laws on access to public documents and protection of personal data.

In terms of parliamentary ethics, the Assembly has made significant progress through the drafting of a Code of Ethics for Members of Parliament. The process of drafting the Code began in 2022 and was opened for public consultation in 2023. The Code aims to set clear standards for the conduct of Members of Parliament, including the prevention of conflict of interest, respect for the integrity of the institution and professional conduct during parliamentary work. However, this Code has not been adopted yet and its adoption is expected to be reviewed by the Committee on Legislation and Ethics in 2025.

To ensure the effective implementation of the Code of Ethics, the new Draft Regulations of the Assembly foresee the establishment of a Parliamentary Ethics Committee. This mechanism is expected to have a clear mandate to monitor the implementation of the ethics rules, review possible violations and recommend appropriate disciplinary measures. The independence and functionality of this committee will be key factors in guaranteeing the internal integrity of the Assembly.

A significant challenge remains the lack of a legal framework for regulating lobbying activities. Currently, the Kosovo Assembly does not have a specific law on lobbying, a gap also identified by reports from civil society organizations. During 2023, concerns have emerged regarding the government's lobbying arrangements abroad, many of which remain classified as confidential, thus limiting transparency and public accountability. This issue is now a priority in the Open Assembly Action Plan 2023–2026, which aims to draft and adopt a specific law on lobbying.

In order to strengthen institutional capacities, dedicated trainings were organized for civil servants of the Assembly in the areas of access to public documents, open data, public ethics and corruption prevention during 2023 and 2024. These trainings aimed to strengthen the culture of transparency and integrity in the parliamentary administration.

TRANSPARENCY

The transparency assessment of the Kosovo Assembly for the period 2023–2024 was conducted by analysing three main areas: organizational information, public procurement, and state budget management. Based on the data from the assessment document, the overall transparency of the Assembly was assessed at 91%.

In the area of organizational information, the Assembly has published on its official website important information such as the organizational structure, the composition of parliamentary committees, biographies of MPs and agendas of plenary sessions. This has helped citizens and interested organizations to have easier access to the work of the Assembly. However, some other documents such as the full minutes of committee meetings and detailed reports of MPs' work are often published partially or with delays, which limits the overall level of transparency.

In the area of public procurement, the Parliament has fulfilled its obligation to publish procurement plans and contracts through an electronic platform. This shows an improvement compared to the past. However, the details on how the bids were evaluated and the justifications for selecting the winners are incomplete, leaving room for uncertainty and doubt in the process.

Regarding the state budget, the Assembly has published the annual budget and financial reports, thus helping to increase fiscal transparency. However, the lack of regular reports on budget execution and the lack of in-depth analysis make it difficult to closely monitor how public funds are managed.

Overall, the Kosovo Assembly has made progress in its openness and transparency, but there are still significant challenges that need to be addressed. Fuller publication of internal documents, increased transparency in procurement processes, and improved financial reporting are needed so that the Assembly fully meets standards of accountability and public trust.

CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT IN THE ACTIVITIES OF THE KOSOVO ASSEMBLY

ODK in collaboration with UBO Consulting conducted a survey in December 2024 to understand how citizens see and experience the work of the Kosovo Assembly. In this research, 1310 citizens of different ages, genders, ethnicities and places of residence were surveyed throughout Kosovo. Citizens were asked if they believe they can influence the work of the Assembly, and only 29.2% said yes, while the majority do not feel empowered to contribute. On the other hand, when asked about their satisfaction with the work of the Assembly, 41.5% said they were "somewhat satisfied", and only 7.2% said they were "very satisfied".

These results show that many citizens feel distant from decision-making and there is a need for more spaces where they can be heard and give their opinion. The more citizens are involved, the stronger and more democratic the Assembly becomes.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations for improving transparency and participation in the Kosovo Assembly:

1. Immediate adoption of the Code of Ethics for Members of Parliament

To increase accountability and institutional integrity, the Assembly should finalize and adopt the Code of Ethics, setting clear standards for the conduct of MPs.

2. Implementation of the electronic voting system

To ensure greater transparency in decision-making and representation processes, the Assembly should implement the electronic voting system as soon as possible, so that citizens have the opportunity to see how their representatives vote.

3. Developing a regular calendar for public debates

The Assembly should create an open and predictable schedule for public debates with citizens, so that they have the opportunity to provide ideas and comments on important issues.

4. Improving access for people with disabilities

Providing documents in accessible formats (such as Braille, audio, easy-to-read documents) and improving the Assembly's infrastructure to become more inclusive.

5. Improving transparency in procurement and finances

The Assembly should publish more complete information on procurement procedures, bid evaluation and justification of decisions, as well as report more regularly on budget execution.

6. Promoting and expanding the use of the “E-Participation” platform

Undertake information campaigns to encourage citizens to use this platform to actively contribute to legislative processes.

7. Drafting and adopting a law on lobbying

The Assembly should draft and adopt a legal framework regulating lobbying activities, to ensure greater transparency and prevent conflicts of interest.

RECOMMENDATIONS

ACTION STEPS

8. Increasing the publication of documents and information in real time

The publication of full committee minutes, detailed reports of MPs' work, and all important parliamentary documents should be improved.

9. Strengthening training on transparency and access to data

Continue training for civil servants and MPs on the use of open data and access to public documents, to strengthen a new, more open and accountable institutional culture.

10. Expanding direct communication with citizens

In addition to "Assembly Days", the Assembly can also hold online consultations, "virtual hearings" and open forums on social networks to increase interaction with citizens.

OTHER SIMILAR REPORTS

OTHER REPORTS

Explore additional reports and documents similar to this one available on the Open Data Kosovo publications page.

WWW.OPENDATAKOSOVO.ORG/PUBLICATIONS

If you have additional questions, please feel free to contact:

info@opendatakosovo.org