

HANDBOOK FOR ELECTIONS



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Disclaimer

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You are the boss, you decide!

This guide is as a result of the project “Awareness of youth on the system of elections: education of young voters”. The project aims to support the education of young voters as a pre-condition for sustainable democracy. The purpose of this guide is to inform young citizens about the election process, and to explain the reasons why their vote is important.

The governance of a country is shaped by many actors, including its citizens. This inclusion enables the fair distribution of resources and better management. Citizens exert pressure and offer alternatives to existing ideas through different mechanisms, whereby the most important mechanism is the right to vote.

In order to achieve greater inclusion, the partners of this project aim to increase the participation of more citizens in elections.

The guide is an output of the first phase project activity, which will be followed by a range of other activities, such as: debates, television campaigns, surveys and reports. The project activities will take place in different municipalities of Kosovo, while particular attention will be dedicated to the young voters in the diaspora.

The project's slogan is “You are the boss, you decide!”. The idea behind the slogan is to remind the young population that they constitute the majority of voters in the country and as such the decision power lies with them (telling people that

interest groups approve of stuff, especially interest groups from outside the country, doesn't sound very democratic.)

Why is youth our project target group?

According to the Statistical Agency of Kosovo, the number of youth with the right to vote is around 254 000 persons¹. According to CEC², around 800 000 persons have used the right of voting. As indicated, the number of the youth voters is crucial which potentially have an impact on elections results.

Surveys also show that citizens who vote when they are young are more likely to remain democratically diligent as they age³. Another important element is the entrance into politics as one of the latest social networks trends. Young people, through social networks, can mobilize voters to join their goals or concepts in favour of a better life for all Kosovar citizens.

¹ Statistical Agency of Kosovo, demographic data by municipality, 2011, page 23. According to the Agency data entering, age groups are youth 15-27 years. This report excludes ages 15-17 as not entitled to vote.

² <http://www.kqz-ks.org/sq/zgjedhjet-e-pergjithshme>

³ SEI, Young Adults and Electoral Turnout, Dec 2006

Social networks can also increase awareness of the masses for political ideas that are represented by politicians, the usefulness of such ideas, and the general interests of youth. In order to promote positive developments in the political scene, youth as an age group is very valuable and this is the main reason why they are targeted in many countries of the world.

Why is it important to vote?

Your vote helps determine the people and ideas that may advance our future using better education, work opportunities, and the preservation and manifestation of culture. As youth, the application for

Elections empower a man who has talent and virtue
(Th. Jefferson).

attendance are delicate situation. We are supposed to determine our career: which profession to choose and where to study since our profession paves our success in the coming years. By not voting, we leave these important decisions to the traditional political parties, who may have other interests than those of the general public. Greater participation of voters abolishes narrow interests.

Our vote is not just an act of electing a candidate to govern. It is much more than that: voting shows who we are in the society, what we stand for, and how much we want to build the future.

USA has around 46 millions of youngsters under the age of 30 who have the right to vote.

17 million of them are between the age of 18 and 21.

Who are we within our society? According to a survey for youth and the voting in Great Britain⁴, the turnout in the elections is affected by the position of social class, cognitive mobilization, and models of voting encouragement. In choosing a career, a profession, or where to study, we may affect our success in the coming years. As adolescents, the application for attendance are delicate situation. We should set our career, what profession we have, where we can have qualitative studies, the profession can choose how to succeed in the coming years.

Johan Schumpeter, a theoretician of minimalist concept of democracy, saw the elections as a mechanism for authority filtering. Through elections, party members choose people to whom to give authority. People with authority are not

⁴ SEI, Young Adults and Electoral Turnout, Dec 2006.

necessarily those who hold Harvard diplomas, but those who wish the good of the community where they live because they have acquiring principles. Passing through this filtering process creates the most real opportunity for democracy. Elections empower the man who has talent and virtue (Th. Jefferson). Ignoring the Schumpeterian concept allows people with manipulative abilities to rise in the parties and then in power. Non-fair elections enable less persons to rise higher (F. Hayek). Neglecting the election process as a filtering process from the youth has an effect on social and institutional life. It is transferred to state institutions where these politicians have not adopted the institution of elections as a value, but merely recognize it. This cultivates the feeling of being an eternal leader and to use any means to achieve this aim. All these elements influence these leaders to recognize the values of democracy and the rule of law, but not to adopt them. Well, we are not part of their policy actions. This allows them to take the power and overrule the law, but not be ruled by law. Consequently, institutions are injected with authoritarianism, but not with authority because we do not understand our role as the 'employer' of the elected. As a result, while institutions are filled with authoritarianism, they do not hold real authority, and we as the citizens do not carry out our role as the 'employer' of the non-fairly elected officials. In order to prevent this we have to consider voting as a filter of authority and ideas. This conclusion creates greater opportunity to realize our dreams.

result, while institutions are filled with authoritarianism, they do not hold real authority, as we the citizens do not carry out our role as 'employer' of the non-fairly elected officials.

The right to vote according to the Constitution and Law

VOTING ACCORDING TO THE LAW

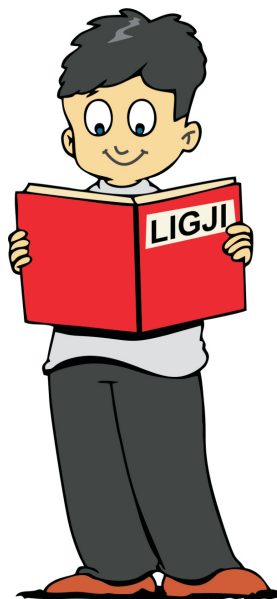
Every person is entitled to vote in accordance with the Electoral Law, if he/she is full eighteen (18) years old on the day of election, and registered as a citizen in the Central Registry Office of Kosovo.

Each person with right to vote is entitled to vote on the election day in the zone where he/she is registered, provided that he/she is registered in the Central Registry Office or he/she has been registered by a certain date from the CEC as citizen of Kosovo

Constitution and the right to elect

(Neni 45 Freedom of Election and Participation)

1. Every citizen of the Republic of Kosovo who has reached the age of eighteen, even if on the day of elections, has the right to elect and be elected, unless this right is limited by a court decision.
2. The vote is personal, equal, free and secret
3. State institutions support the possibility of every person to participate in public activities and everyone's right to democratically influence decisions of public bodies.



voting criteria

- a) he or she is registered as a citizen of Kosovo in the Central Civil Registry;
- b) he or she is residing outside of Kosovo and left Kosovo on or after 1 January 1998, provided that he or she meets the criteria in applicable legislation for being a citizen of Kosovo; or
- c) he or she obtained that status of a refugee, as defined in the Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees of 28 July 1951 and its Protocol of 16 December 1966, on or after 1 January 1995, and is eligible to be registered in the Central Civil Registry as a habitual resident of Kosovo;

Importance of all communities in the elections

The Kosovar society consists of many cultures and ethnicities. The new Republic has given space to all these communities to participate in governance. For this, our Republic is promoted on the basis of and at the same time by providing representation to all communities that enjoy a significant number of Assembly seats and ministerial posts.

By having a high level of accountability, the filtering of elected persons has to be applied also

to the representatives of different communities. Voters in their communities must prevent the promotion of their interests.

Communities (excluding the Albanians) have 20 allocated seats with the purpose that the interests of these communities to be protected and promoted in the highest institutions. This representation offers greater opportunities for the integration of all communities within Kosovar society.

You are the boss, so you decide! Not only for the representatives of your community, but also for the other ones. You are the boss, so you decide!

Women and their role in voting

Women constitute half of the population. According to the 2011 census, there are in Kosovo 875, 900 men and 863, 935 women. The modernization of states has impacted also the advancement of women's position. Since the Athen's democracy, women were not allowed to vote and the freedom and political rights were denied to them until the last century.

Kosovo being a new Republic has enabled supportiv legal grounds for the encouragement of

New Zealand was the first country to give the right to vote to women, in 1893.

women's participation in politics. According to the law for elections, 30% of Members of

Parliament are required to be women. However as in many countries of the world, the position of women in our society is still marginalized.

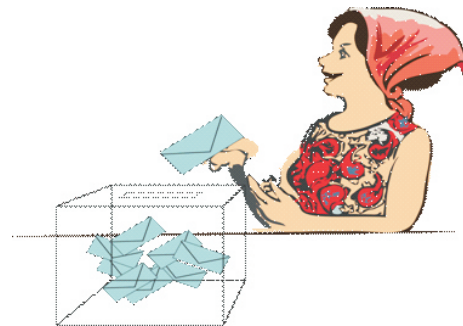
Provision of representation quotas in Parliament does not necessarily imply improvement of the

46 states in the whole world, are states who give the right to vote in local elections also to the residents who do not have the statehood of these countries.

women's position. For example, there might be representatives who do not strive the advancement of women's status. In order to change this situation, you have to vote.

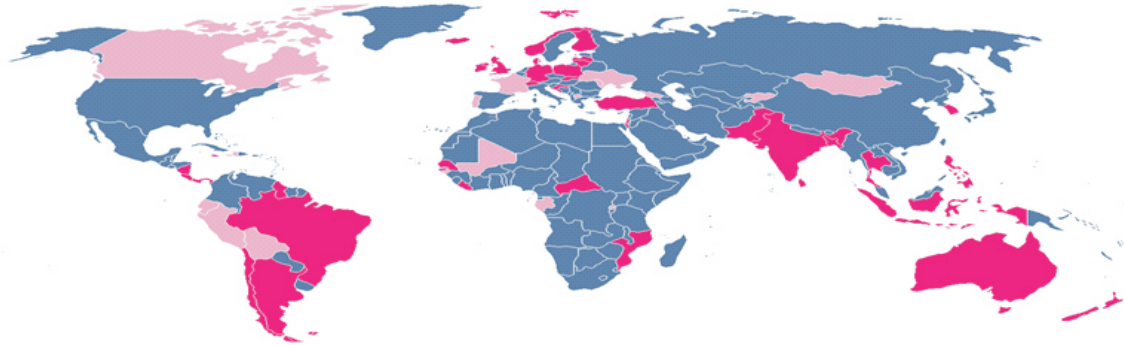
The change of position in society can be achieved through creation of clear policies for rights and equal chances for the both genders. Increasing the number of female voters will encourage politicians to put women's interests on their agenda.

Election quotas for genders are used in almost half of the countries of the world but, women still hold only 19% of parliament seats.



Women who changed the history

Sükhbaataryn Yanjmaa from Mongolia (1953-1954)	First woman acting President
Sirimavo Bandaranaike from Sri Lanka (1960-1965)	First woman acting Prime Minister
Isabel Peron from Argentina (1974-1976)	First woman President
Vigdís Finnbogadóttir from Iceland (1980-1996)	First elected woman President and first woman in the world whose father or husband was not a state leader.
Mary McAleese from Ireland (1997-)	First time that a woman president continues directly from another women president



Light pink color: women in the duty of head of government/state.

Pink color: Places where women are head of government/state.

(Table 1.1. and map are taken from Virna Manasieva, political trainer, Macedonia)

Registration of new voters

Every youngster who has reached the age of 18 and wants to vote has firstly to be registered.

The registrant authority is the Central Election Commission (CEC) that has the responsibility to maintain and update the voters' list. Everyone who reaches the age of 18, based on the Civil Registry, enters into the CEC list of voters.

First elections with the online system of voting (Electronic voting) were realized in Estonia.

However, youngsters who want to vote have to check at their Municipal Election Commissions whether they have been included in the list. Thus, they will be able to confirm their right to vote, define their most suitable polling station or acquire other service according to their needs.

Project online services

There is a project webpage available at www.tivendos.com. All our publications and information about the elections are to be found on the website.

How can youngsters contribute via the website?

Young people will have the opportunity to find surveys and different questionnaires online, which will be used during our entire project. They can contribute through answering the questionnaires, which we will use to complete the statistics of young voters and use them for our reports, and especially in the final report that will be published. Another resource will be comments, suggestions and criticism shared online by young voters.

How can we help youngsters through online services?

As part of our web-page there is a corner of discussion (blogging). Youngsters will have the opportunity to ask for help, share their concerns and complains that might be published in this corner.

Answers to questions and their discussions will be

provided by project officials of the project who have knowledge on the election system and voting procedures, whereas requests/complaints will be forwarded in forms of reporting to the competent officials of CEC.

Links to different reports and competent institutions will be posted on this web site as well. Participants will have the opportunity to answer each other's questions, but project officials remain responsible for the shared information accuracy in the corner lies within



Diaspora votings

First voting abroad was made in ancient Rome as an invention of August emperor. Members of local senates in 28 colonies voted for candidates who aimed the offices of city of Rome and sent their vote through sealed envelopes. This kind of voting was a result of political aims and not of democracy

Who can vote?

All the voters with the right of vote outside of Kosovo who have successfully applied for voting out of Kosovo can vote in parliamentary elections of Kosovo.

The right to vote has:

- he or she is registered as a citizen of Kosovo in the central civil registry;
- he or she is residing outside of Kosovo and left Kosovo on or after 1 January 1998, provided that he or she meets the criteria in applicable legislation for being a citizen of Kosovo; or
- he or she obtained that status of a refugee, as defined in the convention relating to the status of refugees of 28 July 1951 and its protocol of 16 December 1951, on or after 1 January 1995, and is eligible to be registered in the central

- registry as a habitual resident of Kosovo;
- if for previous elections in Kosovo are registered as voters for voting out of Kosovo and had offered documents that prove your right to vote.

How do i register?

You can register for voting by submitting:

- Fill the form for application/registration for voting outside of Kosovo,
- Offer the documented proof of identity and that meets the legal criteria for the right to vote
- attach the fotocopied documents (example: valid passport, valid travel document, valid driving licence, valid document of displacements, valid document of refugees etc.)
- Send them by post in the cec adress
- This form is sent by post in cec or through cec fax, in the given number at the end of the form for registration/application
- This form must be sent from 100 to 70 days before the elections

For more information please contact the person in charge:

<http://www.kqz-ks.org/sq/regjistrohu-per-te-votuar>

I do not know how to vote?!

After the application, you receive the ballot at the address you had declared. Alternatively, you may download the ballots from CECs website.

After filling the ballot, the voter must place the ballot in an unmarked and sealed envelope that used for postage. In the delivering envelope the voter also includes a photocopy of his/her valid document and a note that contains his/her personal data (at least: name, surname, father's name and date of birth).

After filling the ballot for voters living abroad (outside of Kosovo) the latter sends it via post to CEC before the officially announced deadline.



What if I need additional information?!

The Central Election Commission offers information services for all interested citizens. You can contact them at this address:

Aha, why should I vote although I do not live in Kosovo?

Address:
Rr.Migjeni p.nr. 10000 Prishtinë, Republika e Kosovës
Tel:
+381 (0) 38 2111 337

The right to vote applies to everybody who is registered in the Civil Registry. This makes you a permanent resident of Kosovo. Consequently, the state has obligations towards you and vice versa.. In order to create a better place for your relatives, to enjoy your time-by-time, maintain aspirations to come back and live in a better environment (e.g. better job opportunities), including as well as other services (example: fair and fast documentation equipment) you have to vote.

The Diaspora contribution to Kosovo has always been existant in forms of financial support, but also citizens contributed for the country's development. Through voting you continue this contribution by electing candidates that have clear ideas for the socio-economical development of Kosovo.

Due to the socio-economical development, globalization and the breaking-down of the boundaries the free movement of people, is increasing, therefore it is necessary to improve services for the voters outside the country.

Even though the diaspora does not directly pay taxes, however as a result of the increased movement, they contribute through money delivery/remittances to the economy of the country. In the moral plane, this contribution gives political rights for inclusion in political processes.

- ❖ For democracies like USA this voting started after many soldiers were in service out of their country.
- ❖ Around 115 countries practice the voting abroad.

How to decide for whom to vote???

The decision on whom we should vote for is not always easy. Therefore, here are some techniques to help you decide:

- **Get to know who the candidates are.** Lists of the candidates are published by the political parties, as well as by the Central Election Commission. After this, you should listen to what they do and say about their ideas regarding the problems or different issues and this should help you to filter who is closer to your vision.

- **Define what is important for you.** As youngsters there are many things that we consider important. But, we must choose what is more significant. For example: if you plan to study abroad, then you might be interested in qualitative studies, higher education investments, i.e. candidates or political party plans in the field of studies. You compare the message of the candidates with your purposes and with those that to you consider as right and closer since this enables you to grasp potential candidates.

- **Look for political background of candidates.** Understand what policies they supported in the past and does it match with what you consider right. If they were in government, did they successfully realize the ideas in favour of public interest?

- **Read papers, follow debates.** In addition to information, newspapers include analyses of candidates regarding particular issues. This can help you in shaping your political opinion. Debates serve for confrontation of candidates and ideas by exposing strong and weak points of each candidate.

- **Participate in public debates.** You can ask the candidates for their opinion on particular issues you are interested.

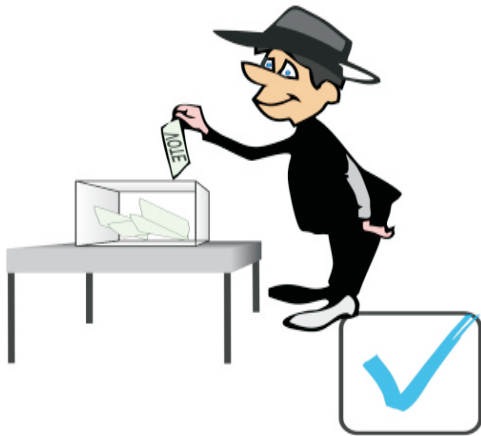
- **Create the model of politician.** Worldwide countries had successful politicians. Read about politicians that are a model of good policies. This helps in distinguishing good qualities of politicians.
- **Notice disingenuous politicians.** Not all candidates say the truth or are honest in their promises. Notice those who give extra promises or lies.
- **Decide for your vote.** Adhere to the above-mentioned steps and this will enable you to filter the candidates. Notice whose ideas are closest to yours and who shows sincerity. You are the boss, so you decide.



How to behave while voting?

During the voting process, there will be officials who will guide you on how to vote in each location. Also in all the polls, civil society or political parties monitor the voting process.

Therefore you should follow instructions, such as waiting in line to vote, and avoid manipulation which can have consequences on the validity of your vote.



Project Partners



Albanian Youth in Norway (Albansk Ungdom)

The Albanian Youth in Norway was established as a result of a great engagement of Albanian and students' community. This forum was established in 2004 and since then it has continuously expanded its network by involving new members, especially the ones having different fields of studies. As a result of this expansion the organization Albanian Youth in Norway (Albansk Ungdom in Norwegian) got established on 19th April 2006.

Albanian Youth in Norway is a meeting point for youngsters and Albanian students (all below the age of 27). The aim of the organisation's work is to contribute to the integration of young Albanians in Norway, preservation of culture, values and Albanian traditions. It is also the mission of this organization to motivate young Albanians for continuing with higher education.



JEF Kosova

(Young European Federalists) is a branch of JEF Europe with headquarters in Brussels, which is a supranational active political organization in most of the European countries, established also in Kosovo in 2003. It's a youth organization independent from the political parties or any other political views.

JEF Kosova is engaged for a just and democratic society, in which people are not only consuming decisions, but also active participants in them.

The goals of JEF Kosova are oriented in promotion of European values in Kosovo, accelerating full integration of Kosovo in the European Union, strengthening and promoting of young people in politics in Kosovo, the region and international arena, promotion of understanding between nations and creation of a active citizenship.



KAS

The Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung (KAS) is a political foundation from Germany that is committed to fostering democracy and the rule of law, to implementing social and market-economic structures and to promoting human rights. With its worldwide networks to the political and social elites and with its long-term partner structures, it participates in shaping policy in developing and emerging countries. By training and educating young professionals, the KAS promotes the developing process in social groups and political parties. The Foundation fosters decentralisation processes based on the values of freedom, solidarity and justice by facilitating projects for public institutions in order to enhance their technical and administrative performance.

The KAS works in accordance to its Christian responsibility. Its charter stipulates the task to elaborate the groundwork for the political working by means of research and consultancy. This is more than just giving advices on actual political questions. It means to research on the implications of modern democracies in nowadays

time of media which includes preparing reforms by political education and to evolve to a foresighted policy which helps avoiding crisis beforehand. Currently the KAS hosts more than 200 projects in around 100 countries on four continents with about 80 field offices.



Civita

Is an NGO established lately that works in promoting efficient policies and public representation that are grounded in citizens interests. Civita is dedicated to have a better government grounded in democratic principles, responsible and accountable insitutions, including as well decision-making with participation of active citizens.

Civita through surveys, avocation, lobbying, and community mobilization to undertake activities that will increase the public pressure towards social, economical and political processes, to push forward better alternatives and opportunities for good adressment and resolving the citizens worries and needs.

Contact:

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