



MAY
2023



Advocacy Center
for **Democratic Culture**

NEWSLETTER

May 2023 newsletter highlights significant activities including seminar on strategic cooperation between Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and the Ombudsperson Institution, a conference on interethnic cooperation, ongoing social media campaigns promoting labor rights and free legal aid, and active participation in environmental initiatives.



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Seminar on strategic aspects of cooperation between CSOs and the Ombudsperson Institution



From May 3rd to 5th, 2023, NGO ACDC organized a three-day seminar in Durres, Albania, with the aim of strengthening strategic cooperation between Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and the Ombudsperson Institution.

The seminar provided an opportunity for participants to engage in in-depth discussions on various crucial human rights topics. The outcomes of these discussions and activities were compiled into a comprehensive work plan, outlining the planned activities for the Forum for Dialogue of the Ombudsperson Institutions and Civil Society Organizations for the year 2023.

The seminar was organized as part of the project "Further Support to Access to Justice and Human Rights in the Mitrovica Region", funded by UNMIK.

Conference on interethnic cooperation among communities



Within the NED-funded project "Promoting Interethnic Dialogue in Local Government," ACDC hosted a conference on interethnic cooperation among communities in Zvečan/Zveçan and North Mitrovica. The conference focused on interethnic cooperation, discussing the impact of politics on daily life and the challenges faced. Panelists included Lulzim Peci from the Office for Communities in the Municipality of Zvečan/Zveçan, Ines Aljović Mihajlović from the Committee for Communities in the Municipality of Zvečan/Zveçan, and Bekim Ismaili, the Project Coordinator of CSSP, who shared valuable insights and emphasized the importance of promoting understanding, dialogue, and coexistence among communities in the region.

Riverbank cleaning in Leposavic

ACDC recently took part in a riverbank cleaning initiative in Leposavic, demonstrating our commitment to environmental protection and a greener future. This activity was carried out as part of the project "Strengthening the environmental awareness in northern Kosovo", implemented within the program "Integrated Water Resources Management in Kosovo" (IWRM-K), funded by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), and implemented by Skat Consulting Ltd. (Switzerland) in consortium with the Environment Agency Austria (EAA).



Moot Court Training Sessions started for Interns

The interns engaged in the project "Enhancing Transparency and Rule of Law in Kosovo-Serb Majority Communities in Kosovo" have begun training sessions for moot court simulations. These training sessions are designed to offer practical experience and replicate the dynamics of real courtroom proceedings. The training sessions will be facilitated by experienced legal professionals who will provide guidance and mentorship to the interns throughout the process.



SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGNS

We are currently running two social media campaigns. The first campaign focuses on the labor rights of pregnant women and young mothers, raising awareness about maternity leave and their rights at the workplace.

The second campaign aims to promote free legal aid, highlight the significance of accessible legal support for individuals in need and present the services offered by the Kosovo FLA Agency.



Series of Op-Eds on Human Rights in Kosovo

We are pleased to introduce a series of Op-Eds, focusing on crucial human rights issues in Kosovo, offering young individuals to express their opinions and actively engage in resolving social issues. Ljiljana Petronijević, a law graduate, wrote an article addressing expropriation in the north of Kosovo.



Marking International Days

Check out the statements on May Day, Europe Day, and World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development.



NGO ACDC has a new project coordinator.

Jelena Sofronijevic brings extensive experience as an activist within the civil and public sector. As an active participant in various environmental initiatives, Jelena will be leading our projects aimed at promoting environmental protection, social issues.

During May, our team members actively participated in various events.

ACDC's Program officers, Snezana Vukicevic and Lulzim Hakaj were honored to attend the Kosovo Trust-building event, hosted by UNMIK, at Klan Arena in Pristina on May 11.

The event provided a valuable opportunity to engage with attendees and showcase our work towards promoting inclusion and peacebuilding in Kosovo.



Aleksandar Rapajic, Program Director, took part in a seminar organized by NGO Aktiv in Prizren from May 19th to 21st on the topic of justice and alternative punishment measures. The seminar brought together judges, lawyers, UNMIK Justice section and civil society organizations (CSOs) from Kosovo. This seminar was organized as part of the project "Further Support to Access to Justice and Human Rights in the Mitrovica Region," supported by UNMIK and implemented by NGO ACDC and NGO Aktiv.



Slobodan Stosic, Program Manager, participated in the launching conference of the Civil Society Report on Human Rights in 2022, published by the Human Rights Network (HRN). The conference served as a platform to present and discuss the report's findings and recommendations.

Slobodan Stosic also participated in the Green Crimes and Ecojustice conference in Utrecht University, the Netherlands, on May 25 and 26, 2023. The conference provided a unique opportunity for researchers from different disciplines from around the globe to present and discuss their work.



Aleksandar Rapajic also participated in a conference organized by the Office for Community Affairs at Hotel Sirius on May 11th. The conference aimed to bring together municipal officials from the Office for Communities and Returns, as well as NGOs working with non-majority communities in Kosovo.

ACDC's team members, Snezana Vukicevic and Jelena Sofronijevec participated in the skill fair held at Europe House in Mitrovica North on May 10 and presented our work and initiatives.



New Projects

We are delighted to announce two new projects funded by the Community Development Fund (CDF). The first project, titled "Improving the capacity of the Agency for Free Legal Aid in northern Kosovo," aims to enhance cooperation between non-majority communities in northern Kosovo and the Agency for Free Legal Aid. It seeks to improve conditions for human rights defenders and enhance the quality of services provided by the Agency. This project is part of the JUST REACT program implemented by CDF and the Group for Legal and Political Studies (GLPS), funded by the European Commission.

On May 23rd, NGO ACDC attended a contract signing ceremony and kick-off meeting with the Community Development Fund (CDF) as part of the Human Rightivism project. This project, funded by the Embassy of Sweden in Pristina and implemented by CDF, aims to support ten Non-Governmental Organizations in their efforts to address diverse human rights issues, including advocacy and the protection of vulnerable groups. For NGO ACDC, the project is scheduled to begin on June 1st and will continue for a duration of six months.



Press release

The Advocacy Center for Democratic Culture strongly condemned the recent violent incursion of the Kosovo Special Police forces into the buildings of local self-government in northern Kosovo.

We expressed deep concern over the use of physical force, particularly against women, and views these actions as detrimental to the process of reconciliation and normalization of relations. In light of these developments, we urgently call upon the Government of Kosovo to cease unilateral actions and immediately withdraw the special units from municipalities in northern Kosovo

During his recent visit to Kosovo, Charles Fries, the Deputy Secretary General for Peace, Security, and Defence of the European External Action Service (EEAS), met with various NGO representatives, including ACDC, Aktiv, and NSI from North Mitrovica. The purpose of the meetings was to discuss the situation in North Kosovo.

ACDC in Media

Dusan Radakovic for RTS on newly elected mayors in the North of Kosovo



Dusan Radakovic for Kosovo Online on Kosovo's Law on Expropriation

