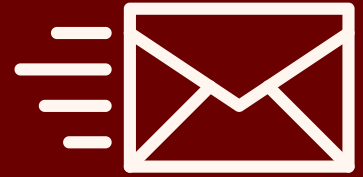


# NEWSLETTER



APRIL 2024



## Meeting on the challenges of the judiciary in the north of Kosovo after the departure of Serbian judges and other workers

The departure of Kosovo/Serbian judges, prosecutors, and administrative staff has left a noticeable gap in the judicial system in northern Kosovo, raising concerns about the continuity and effectiveness of legal processes. In light of these challenges, the NGO ACDC organized a meeting aimed at assessing the extent to which staff reductions affect the overall functionality of judicial institutions in northern Kosovo, exploring ways to support and strengthen integrated judiciary, and discussing the future of these institutions.

The panelists at the meeting were Bislim Gashi from the Kosovo Judicial Council, Bekim Veliqi, acting president of the Basic Court in Mitrovica, and Dušan Radaković, executive director of the NGO ACDC.

During the event, the panelists emphasized the importance of ensuring access to justice for all citizens in northern Kosovo and finding sustainable solutions to the challenges facing the judicial system in the region.

The meeting was supported by UNMIK.



## Conference on Hate Speech in Kosovo

On April 25, in Pristina, NGO Advocacy Center for Democratic Culture (ACDC) hosted a public conference titled "Hate Speech in Northern Kosovo." At the event, the findings of ACDC's research on the perception of hate speech among citizens in northern Kosovo were presented, followed by discussions on the roles of key institutions such as the Council of Europe, the Ombudsperson Institution in Kosovo, and the Office for Good Governance, along with civil society organizations, in responding to hate speech. Prominent panelists included Ms. Mary Ann Hennessey, Head of the Council of Europe Office in Pristina; Ms. Majlindë Sinani Lulaj, Deputy Ombudsperson in Kosovo; Mr. Habit Hajredini, Director of the Office for Good Governance; and Mr. Dušan Radaković, Executive Director of ACDC. The conference highlighted the urgent need for collective action to combat hate speech and underscored the importance of fostering dialogue and understanding to build a more inclusive and tolerant society in Kosovo.



During the event, NGO ACDC Executive Director, Dušan Radaković presented ACDC's research on hate speech, which aimed to examine residents' perceptions of the prevalence and impact of hate speech in various aspects of daily life and provide a detailed analysis of hate speech in northern Kosovo.

The key findings indicate that hate speech is widespread, particularly online, with a significant percentage of respondents reporting personal encounters with hate speech content. The research findings are available on ACDC's website in all three languages.



## The Ombudsperson met the representatives of NGOs in Gjilan/Gnjilane



The NGO ACDC facilitated another meeting between Ombudsperson Mr. Naim Qelaj and local NGOs, representatives of local authorities, and activists to discuss human rights issues.

Meeting in Gjilan/Gnjilane focused on issues within the Ombudsman's jurisdiction, aiming to gather insights from the community's perspective and enhance collaboration between the Ombudsperson's Office and civil society activities.

This initiative is part of a project funded by UNMIK, aimed at increasing awareness of the Ombudsman's role and responsibilities, improving collaboration between the Ombudsman's Office and NGOs, and providing a platform for joint planning and advocacy on key human rights issues.

## Kosovo Police and PIK Meet with citizens for dialogue and Transparency

On April 26th, a close-door discussion was held at the ACDC premises, that gathered representatives of the Kosovo Police and the The Police Inspectorate of Kosovo, citizens, and representatives of non-governmental organizations. The goal was to inform residents of the northern municipalities about the role, mission, and activities of these institutions, as well as to provide them with the opportunity to ask questions and express their concerns.





# Inter-ethnic cooperation of young people in Kosovo



NGO REC & NGO ACDC hosted the public conference as part of the initiative to promote dialogue and cooperation between students from majority and non-majority communities. The findings from the research analysis on "Inter-ethnic cooperation of young people in Kosovo - Challenges, perspectives, and recommendations for improvement" were also shared at the conference. You can access the report on our website.



[SRB](#)



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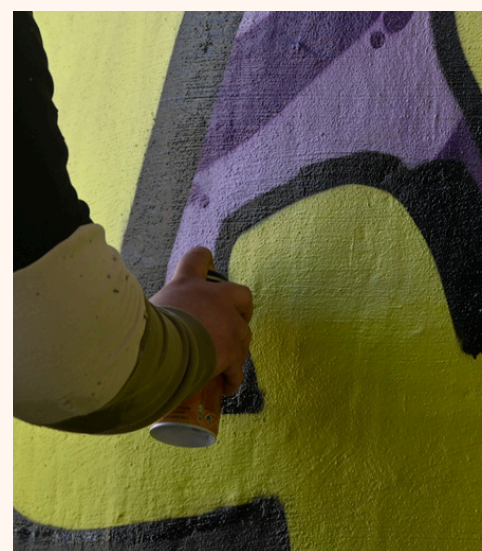


[ALB](#)

## Building Bridges for Inter-ethnic Understanding



To foster inter-ethnic cooperation among youth in Kosovo, NGO ACDC organized a camp titled "Building Bridges for Inter-ethnic Understanding and Collaboration". This camp aimed to reinforce interethnic understanding and collaboration among youth from the Mitrovica region and provided an opportunity for participants to deepen their understanding of each other's cultural backgrounds, histories, and perspectives.



NGO ACDC also organized cultural visits to Decani and Prizren to deepen participants' understanding of Serbian and Albanian cultural heritage, fostering empathy, and a sense of unity among youth from diverse backgrounds. One of the project's initiatives was also the creation of a graffiti piece near the main bridge in Mitrovica, to beautify the area and promote artistic expression among local residents.

This initiatives were organized within a project implemented by the NGO ACDC, through the International Organization for Migration (IOM) Programme, funded by the European Union.

## Contracts signed with interns

NGO ACDC has signed internship contracts with selected young lawyers. Over the next three months, the program will provide interns with opportunities to advance and expand their knowledge and skills. The internship program is part of the project "Enhancing Transparency and Rule of Law in Kosovo-Serb Majority Communities in Kosovo", funded by INL Kosovo, implemented by NGO ACDC in partnership with AKTIV.



## PODCAST

We have released a new podcast on the topic of using police body cameras! The goal is to make the police force more professional in maintaining law and order, and the cameras are used to store recordings and improve transparency. Listen to the podcast on our YouTube channel and learn more about this important topic.

## Publication of OP-EDs



In April, we published 8 texts with the aim to promote understanding, appreciation, and inclusivity through various forms of cultural and artistic expression. These articles covered a range of topics, including the power of reading, cultural diversity, the significance of language in shaping identity, a local cultural event promoting artistic expression, the role of art in fostering social cohesion, and the history and evolution of graffiti as an art form. The texts are available on our website.

## Initiatives for inter-ethnic dialogue in local self-government

Within the project "Promoting Interethnic Dialogue in Local Government," funded by the NED, NGO ACDC implemented four initiatives in the municipalities of Zvečan and North Mitrovica. Through joint initiatives, such as cleaning actions and cultural events, communities demonstrated their ability to overcome differences and work together to build a better future for all. The brochure on these initiatives is available on our website in all three languages.





## MEETINGS

Dusan Radakovic, NGO ACDC's Executive Director, participated in Lord Peach's (the Special Envoy of the United Kingdom for the Western Balkans) meeting with Kosovo-Serb NGOs to hear their views on the current political and security situation, including some of the challenges they are currently facing.



Aleksandar Rapajic, Program Director of NGO ACDC, participated in a meeting with Foreign Affairs Committee MPs, Lia Quartapelle and Emanuele Loperfido, who were meeting with civil society representatives from Kosovo during their stay in Kosovo.



Aleksandar Rapajic also participated in a meeting with the Ambassador of the United Kingdom, Jonathan Hargreaves and NGO representatives. This was the ambassador's first visit to North Mitrovica, aimed at engaging with Kosovo-Serbs.



NGO ACDC's Executive Director, Dušan Radaković met with The Commissioner for Information and Privacy, Krenare Sogojeva Dërmaku, and the General Director of the Information and Privacy Agency, Lumnije Demi to discuss cooperation in promoting the Agency's mandate, particularly in protecting citizens' personal data and ensuring access to public documents,



At the Women, Peace and Security Forum, NGO ACDC participated in a pitch session as a qualified CSOs to present project idea submitted for the CSO support scheme supported by GIZ. A special corner was dedicated to qualified CSOs, providing a space for the promotion of participating organization.

## Info Session by the Kosovo Specialist Chambers

The Kosovo Specialist Chambers (KSC), in cooperation with the NGO ACDC, held an info session in April. During the event, representatives from the KSC delivered a comprehensive presentation highlighting the Chambers' mission and operations, focusing on legal proceedings regarding crimes against humanity, war crimes, and other criminal offenses.



## ACDC Monitors Referendum in Northern Municipalities

NGO ACDC, as a member of Democracy in Action, a coalition of CSOs engaged in election monitoring activities, observed the voting process regarding the dismissal of the mayors of four northern municipalities across all polling stations. After the election process, Democracy in Action issued a press release stating that the voting process was marked by a lack of citizen participation and that technical conditions in some polling stations did not meet the standards required for the voting process. Read the full statement on our website.



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NGO ACDC's Executive Director, Dusan Radakovic, Program Director, Aleksandar Rapajić, and Program Manager, Slobodan Stosic were actively engaged before and after the referendum, sharing their insights with various media outlets.

### ACDC in Media

Dusan Radakovic for RTK2 on the referendum



Dusan Radakovic for Kossev on the referendum



Aleksandar Rapajić for Kosovo Online on the referendum



Slobodan Stosic for Kosovo Online on putting cameras on the referendum



Slobodan Stosic in RTK2 on the referendum



Slobodan Stosic for Kosovo Online on the cancellation of visas for Serbs from Kosovo



Dusan Radakovic for Kossev on the referendum

