

NEWSLETTER

ANTI-CORRUPTION

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WELCOME TO THE ANTI-CORRUPTION NEWSLETTER

Corruption is a pervasive problem that affects countries, institutions, and individuals across the globe. It undermines trust in government, distorts markets, and hinders economic development. Anti-corruption efforts are crucial for promoting transparency, accountability, and the rule of law. In this newsletter, we will explore the latest developments in the fight against corruption, including legislative and policy updates, investigative reports, and case studies of successful anti-corruption initiatives. We hope to inspire and inform our readers on the importance of anti-corruption measures and the impact they can have on building more equitable and just societies.

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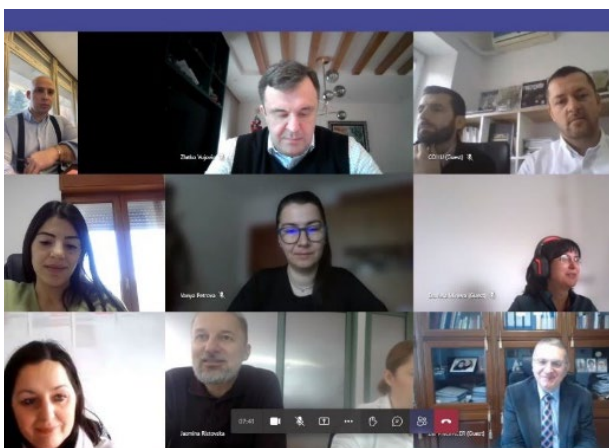
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KNOWLEDGE AND OUTREACH

Center for the Study of Democracy | www.csd.bg

NEWS BY SELDI MEMBERS

WORKING TOGETHER IS A SUCCESS



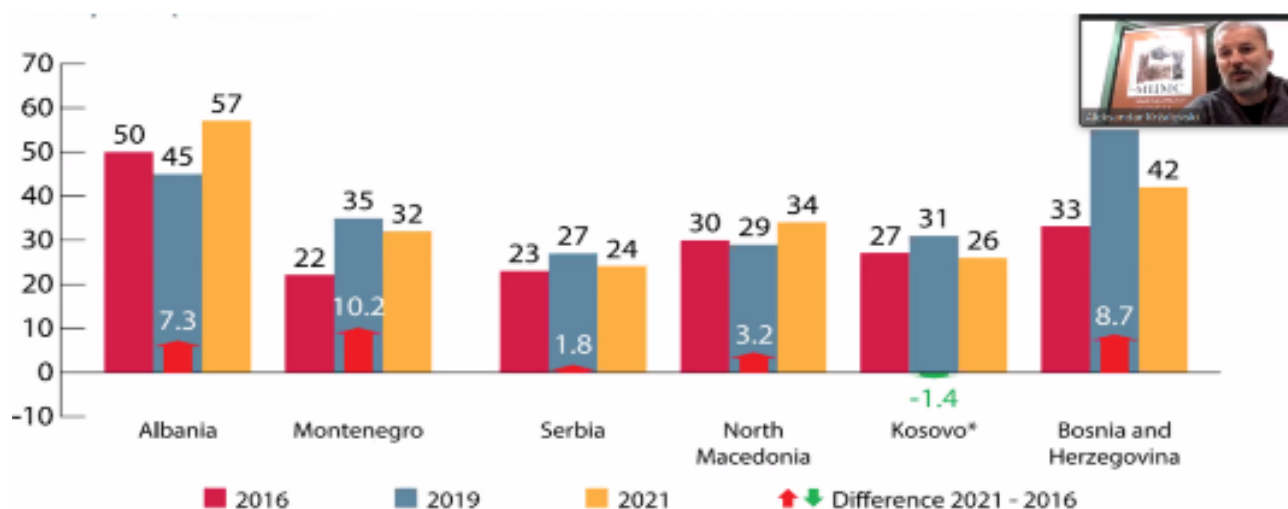
On January 12, 2023, the first coordination meeting and the first meeting of the new EU –funded project by SELDI was held online. “With the project, we will strive to improve participatory democracy and the process of EU accession by consolidating and strengthening the influence of civil society in policy-making and reform processes in the Western Balkans region in the areas of anti-corruption, rule of law, and good governance,” said Aleksandar Krzhalovski, director of MCIC, adding that this is the third in a series of projects for SELDI financed by the European Union. Jasmina Ristovska, the project coordinator, presented the work plan: “During the upcoming period, a call for small grants will be prepared for grassroots and small organizations working in the field of anti-corruption; preparations will be made for the implementation of the corruption monitoring system; a short policy paper will be prepared, and preparatory activities will be carried out to implement a methodology that will diagnose the phenomenon of the captured state.” **MCIC, 13 January 2023**

CIVIL SOCIETY PLAYS A KEY ROLE IN FIGHT AGAINST CORRUPTION



The countries of Southeastern Europe (SEE) have come a long way in their anti-corruption development in the past two decades, building a lot of the formal institutions necessary for ensuring democratic checks and balances. Yet, state capture practices continue to plague the region. The convergence of business and politics, the use of public institutions as repression tools, and the accumulation of vast illicit wealth of politically exposed persons result in long-term risks to democratic resilience. The policy forum held on 25 January 2023 in Belgrade discussed how the anti-corruption resolve in SEE could be restored, how public-private partnerships could support legal and procedural reforms, and what are the lessons learnt for the EU member states and EU candidates. Among the keynote speakers and panelists were Viola von Cramon-Taubadel, Member of the European Parliament, Group of the Greens/European Free Alliance; Krum Zarkov, Minister of Justice of Bulgaria, Daniel Freund, Member of the European Parliament, Group of the Greens/Europe Free Alliance, Ambassador Jørn Eugene Gjelstad, Royal Norwegian Embassy in Belgrade, Ambassador Christopher R. Hill, United States Embassy in Belgrade, and Tanja Mišćević, Ministry of European Integration of the Republic of Serbia. **SELDI, 25 January 2023**

PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP IN THE FIGHT AGAINST CORRUPTION



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MEETING WITH THE NEWLY ELECTED PRIME MINISTER OF THE ZENICA-DOBOJ CANTON

CCI representatives held a meeting with the newly elected Prime Minister of the Government of Zenica-Doboj Canton. The meeting was held in order to show the new government representatives how important it is to monitor the audit findings and introduce adequate supervision over the implementation of audit recommendations. The goal is to ensure responsible and efficient spending of public money by the citizens of the Zenica-Doboj Canton, which was not the case before. The Prime Minister recognized the importance that the audit can have in the prevention and fight against corruption, and an agreement was reached that the Government would introduce stricter supervision over the findings of the audit of the institutions of the Zenica-Doboj Canton from 2023. **CCI, 8.02. 2023**

CIVIL SOCIETY PLAYS A KEY ROLE IN FIGHT AGAINST CORRUPTION

In November and December 2022, the Coalition for Free and Fair Elections “Pod Lupom” sent to the Central Election Commission of BiH initiatives for the initiation of proceedings against persons engaged in the election administration and political entities for violating the provisions of the Election Law of BiH, i.e. falsely representation or abuse of the legal right to participate in the work of the electoral committee in 43 cases from 25 municipalities/cities. **CCI, 18.01.2023**

TOWARDS SHOWING RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE HEALTH OF FBH CITIZENS

The CCI gathered civil society organizations to mark the beginning of a joint statement underlining the multi-year problem of ignoring the legal obligations of the Government of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina regarding the financing of the Solidarity Fund of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. **CCI, 15.02.2023**

DISCUSSION ON CURRENT AND FUTURE ANTI-CORRUPTION CHALLENGES

The Institute for Democracy organized the round table titled "Anti-corruption 2030: Current and future anti-corruption challenges". The purpose of the conference was the presentation of a foresight analysis of the possible scenarios in which corruption and the fight against corruption will develop until 2030 and how the institutions will cope with future challenges. At the event, the participants were also addressed by the Representatives of the Government, the Parliament, the Inspection Council, the State Audit Office, the Commission for the Protection of Competition, the State Commission for the Prevention of Corruption, the Energy Regulatory Commission, the Customs Administration, the Financial Police Administration, and the Public Revenue Administration. **IDSCS 23 February 2023**

THE STATE PROSECUTOR INITIATES A CASE AGAINST AKAN ISMAILI FOR NOT DECLARING AROUND 4 MILLION SWISS FRANCS

ÇOHU has carried out two investigations related to the flow of information and data from the Credit Suisse bank, in which data, Preportr has provided evidence on the hiding of money by two protagonists of the political powers in Kosovo*, where one is a former adviser to the former prime minister, while the flagrant case is related to the former ambassador of Kosovo to the USA, Mr. Akan Ismaili. On the basis of Çohu's article, the Special Prosecutor's Office of the Republic of Kosovo has started investigations related to this case. **ÇOHU, 16.01.2023**

* The designation "Kosovo" is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244/1999 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.

ANTI-CORRUPTION NEWS FROM THE WESTERN BALKANS



CONCERNS OVER TONY AND CHERIE BLAIR'S BUSINESS TRANSPARENCY IN THE BALKANS

Cherie Blair's Law Firm has received hundreds and thousands of euros by administering the governments in Albania and Serbia, countries that have been also advised by Tony Blair. **Reporter.al**, 30.01.2023

THE SPECIAL COURT PASSES THE ELBASAN INCINERATOR AFFAIR FOR TRIAL

The Albanian Special Court of First Instance for Corruption and Organized Crime decided on Tuesday, February 21, 2023, to accept the request of the respective prosecutor's office to take the case to the courts for the Elbasan incinerator, for the criminal offenses of active and passive corruption, abuse of power, and money laundering. **Reporter.al**, 21.02.2023

SERBIA PROSECUTOR'S OFFICE DENIES POLITICALLY SACKING PROSECUTORS IN CORRUPTION CASE

The Higher Public Prosecutor's Office in Belgrade has denied claims that it removed prosecutors handling a sensitive corruption case in a state energy enterprise, EPS, for political reasons. **Balkan Insight**, 24.01.2023

THE LEGAL CHANGES GIVE MORE POWERS TO THE ASSEMBLY FOR INTEGRATION

The Albanian Special Parliamentary Commission for determining the role of the Assembly in the European integration process approved legal changes that increase parliamentary monitoring powers in the integration process, after entering in a new stage with the opening of membership negotiations. **Reporter.al**, 27.02.2023

WILL THE WORKING VERSIONS OF THE LAW ON THE PROSECUTION RESULT IN A FASTER ACCESS OF CITIZENS TO JUSTICE?

The Committee for Constitutional Affairs and Legislation in Serbia completed the procedure to amend the Constitution in January 2023. The Venice Commission had previously found that the Constitution allowed politics to influence the judiciary, leading to the need for amendments. The working versions of the Law on Public Prosecutor's Office and the Law on the High Prosecutorial Council brought extensive changes, including the election of all public prosecutors except for the Supreme Public Prosecutor, the removal of the previous monocratic system, and more freedom and responsibility for public prosecutors. **EWB**. 31.02.2023

NEW LAW ON THE DECLARATION OF ASSETS OF PUBLIC OFFICIALS IN KOSOVO*

A new law on the Declaration of Assets of Public Officials has been introduced in Kosovo*, which is considerably more comprehensive and intricate in its format and structure than its predecessor. **ÇOHU, 01.02.2023**

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT SUPPORTS EU FUTURE OF THE WESTERN BALKANS, URGES SERBIA TO ALIGN WITH CFSP

The European Parliament has adopted a resolution calling for the full alignment of Western Balkan countries with the EU's foreign and security policy, especially regarding the war in Ukraine. The resolution welcomed candidate status for Bosnia and Herzegovina, called for the intensification of the EU-led Pristina-Belgrade dialogue process, and urged investigation into whether the Commissioner for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Olivér Várhelyi is in accordance with the Code of Conduct for Commission Members and the Commissioner's obligations by the Treaty. **EWB, 18.01.2023**

OBLIGING INSTITUTIONS TO INCREASE THE AMOUNT OF INFORMATION THEY PUBLISH ON THEIR WEBSITES

The Government of the Republic of North Macedonia accepted the initiative of the Deputy Prime Minister in charge of good governance policies, Slavica Grkovska, for the institutions of the administrative sector to increase the amount of public information they publish on their websites. With that, she believes that the transparency and accountability of the institutions will be significantly improved. **Radio MOF, 24 January 2023**

EP RAPPORTEURS PRESENTED REPORTS FOR KOSOVO* AND SERBIA IN AFET

European Parliament rapporteurs Viola von Cramon and Vladimír Bilčík presented a draft report on Kosovo in the EP Committee on Foreign Affairs. The report calls for the full implementation of relevant agreements and expresses regret over limited initiatives to include the Serbian community in Kosovo's political, social, and economic structures **EWB, 09.02.2023**

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

**28-30
MAR**

**SUMMIT FOR
DEMOCRACY**

The third Summit for Democracy will take place at the end of March and will be consisted of Thematic, Plenary and Co-Host Event Day. **SD, March 2023**

**24-25
MAY**

**OECD GLOBAL ANTI-
CORRUPTION &
INTEGRITY FORUM**

The 2023 OECD Global Anti-Corruption & Integrity Forum focuses on policy solutions and business innovations that strengthen integrity and fight corruption. Join the Forum to provide impetus for integrity and bolster international action against corruption. **OECD, March 2023**

PUBLICATIONS

SUPPORT TO CITIZENS IN THE FIGHT AGAINST CORRUPTION

CCI published a newsletter for 4th quarter of 2022, within the project Support to Citizens in the Fight against Corruption. The newsletter, similar to the previous ones, provides an overview of the most interesting information on the fight against informal civil society groups and civil society organizations against corruption at all levels and in all parts of Bosnia and Herzegovina in the past quarter. . **CCI, 8 February 2023**

HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH: SLOW PROSECUTION OF WAR CRIMES AND WEAK MEDIA FREEDOMS IN BIH, KOSOVO* AND SERBIA

In its 33rd report, Human Rights Watch (HRW) analyzed the state of human rights in 100 countries, including Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH), Kosovo*, and Serbia. The report highlights that these countries face slow prosecution of war crimes, discrimination against minorities, women, and the LGBT community, and weak media freedoms. In BiH, the authorities have failed to prioritize human rights, leading to slow progress in the rule of law and electoral reform. Similarly, in Kosovo, there has been slow progress on accountability for wartime abuses, and journalists have continued to face attacks, harassment, and threats with a poor state response. The situation in Serbia is no different, where independent journalists have faced intimidation, threats, and violence, and war crimes prosecutions remained slow and inefficient. **EWB, 12.01.2023**

ANTI-CORRUPTION 2030: FORESIGHT ANALYSIS OF FUTURE AND PRESENT CORRUPTION CHALLENGES

Political will is demonstrated through comprehensive investment in improving the integrity of institutions. That investment implies investing in people and resources of the institutions, but at the same time in enabling management staff who will be able to run the institutions independently. The Government and the Parliament have the central responsibility for this. The government should find a way to abandon appointments based on party affiliation and enable a quality process of formulating future anti-corruption goals and policies. It is the duty of the Assembly to protect the institutions, providing them with resources and quality laws by which they should act. However, probably the most important thing in exchange for that, through supervision, is to be a constant corrective to the work of the institutions, setting clear goals and expectations for success in the fight against corruption.

This analysis is available in Macedonian and Albanian. IDSCS 20 February 2023

THE MANY CHALLENGES OF ASSET DECLARATION

ÇOHU has carried out two questionnaires related to the declaration of wealth and the conflict of interest of public officials, which, in addition to citizens as respondents, for innovation, has also included the officials themselves as respondents.

Precisely, out of a total of 306 participants in the research, 250 of them were officials and 56 citizens. The findings of the research prove that public officials are not completely sure that the current system of asset declaration is adequate, while citizens in their impressions have great doubts whether this mandatory legal norm for the declaration of assets of officials is really in function of preventing corruption and conflict of interest. From this point of view, ÇOHU considers that the continuous monitoring of wealth differences over the years of public officials is necessary to see the effectiveness of targeted problematic cases and the progress of their treatment by the competent bodies. **ÇOHU, 18.02.2023**

THE "SECURITY BAROMETER" AND THE PERCEPTION OF CORRUPTION IS PUBLISHED IN TIRANA. TI: ALBANIA IS STUCK IN THE COUNTRY IN THE FIGHT AGAINST CORRUPTION

The Center for the Study of Democracy and Governance has published the Barometer of Security and public perception towards justice and corruption. Over 40 percent of respondents claimed that the state of corruption has remained the same in the last 12 months, while over 25 percent of them stated that the situation has worsened and that there is more corruption now than before.

(31.01.2023) [LINK1](#) [LINK2](#)

