



JOINT PUBLIC DECLARATION

The Women's Economic Forum urges all political parties to incorporate economic and social reforms into their electoral agendas.

PRISHTINA, Kosova — The Women's Economic Forum (WEF) issues this open letter to all political parties participating in the extraordinary parliamentary elections on 7 June 2026, urging them to integrate specific pledges for women's economic empowerment and gender equality into their political agendas. We implore all stakeholders to dedicate themselves to the ensuing priorities:

1. Adopt a New Labour Law

The current Labour Law, which has been under review for more than eight years, [continues to contribute to discrimination against women in employment](#). In order to mitigate the structural disparities that women encounter in the labor market, a comprehensive reform is required. Aligning parental leave provisions with the EU Work-Life Balance Directive (2019/1158) is a critical priority. Not only would the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of Kosovo be substantially increased, but household incomes would also be enhanced and social sustainability would be enhanced by [the increased participation of women in the labor force](#). In addition, the law should implement more robust and efficient mechanisms to safeguard women from workplace discrimination, dismissal during pregnancy, and other forms of employment insecurity.¹

2. Invest in Care Services

The absence of affordable and accessible childcare, eldercare, disability assistance, and care services for individuals with illnesses continues to be a significant obstacle to women's workforce participation. [Investing in a national care infrastructure](#) and subsidising early childhood education and care services could create more than [22,000 formal jobs](#). Such investments would increase women's labour market participation, reduce the burden of unpaid care work, and help formalise employment.

3. Establish Gender-Responsive Budgeting as a Standard Practice

Despite the Government's dedication to Gender-Responsive Budgeting (GRB), [the execution has been postponed](#). We urge the Government to formalize Gender Responsive Budgeting by amending the Law on Public Financial Management and the Law on Public Procurement, together with other pertinent legislation, and to consistently create and disseminate GRB annexes as mandated by budget circulars.

4. Create a Specific Fund for Social Services

¹ The "Expanding Choices" project, supported by UNFPA, has contributed to raising public awareness through reports and policy analyses related to the EU Work-Life Balance Directive (2019/1158).

Social services in Kosovo persistently encounter insufficient and demand-driven financial obstacles. We urge the Government to guarantee the comprehensive execution of the Law on Social and Family Services and to create a specific grant program for funding social services and Social Work Centers. This would assist in guaranteeing high-quality services for women facing violence, children in distress, single moms, individuals with impairments, and other recipients of social services. Monetary assistance for these organizations ought to be allocated in alignment with gender-responsive budgeting tenets.

5. Increase financial support for enterprises and organizations spearheaded by women that advocate for economic parity.

This dedication ought to be manifested by tangible policies that enhance women's access to financial resources, property rights, digital opportunities, company development assistance, training initiatives, compliance with standards, and product accreditation. These initiatives would immediately enhance competitiveness, broaden market access, and ensure equitable involvement of women in Kosovo's economic progress. [Studies continuously highlight](#) the significance of tackling the obstacles that persistently hinder women entrepreneurs, such as inequitable access to capital, real estate, grants, and economic growth prospects.

Simultaneously, amidst a worldwide funding crisis impacting women's rights programs, we urge political parties to exhibit a tangible commitment to gender equality in the forthcoming Government and Assembly by designating [specific financial resources for organizations operating in this domain](#) via the Agency for Gender Equality. [Research](#) indicates that such financing ought to be enduring (minimum of two years) and adequate to facilitate sustainable, significant transformation. Funding methods ought to be developed in collaboration with civil society and managed through an autonomous system to minimize politicization and guarantee openness, efficacy, adherence to the Gender Equality Programme, and the avoidance of project redundancy.

Without women's empowerment, there cannot be any development.

We remain ready to engage with all political parties and relevant institutions to advance these priorities. Let us work together—policymakers and civil society alike—to deliver solutions that ensure quality care services and equal access to labour market opportunities for women and men across Kosovo.

The Women's Economic Forum (WEF) is a coalition of civil society organisations composed of:

Riinvest Institute;

Kosovo Women's Network (103 member organisations)

Democracy for Development Institute (D4D);

Kosovo Gender Studies Center (KGSC);

Network of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian Women's Organisations;

Kosovo Women 4 Women;

GAP Institute

Kosovo Stability Initiative (IKS);

Center for Information, Critique and Action (QIKA)