LAW No. 05/L -020

ON GENDER EQUALITY

The Assembly of the Republic of Kosovo;

Based on Article 65 (1) of the Constitution of the Republic of Kosovo,

 Approves:

LAW ON GENDER EQUALITY

CHAPTER I

GENERAL PROVISIONS

Article 1

Purpose

1. This Law shall guarantee, protect and promote equality between genders as a basic value of democratic development of society.

2. This Law determines the general and specific measures to ensure and protect the equal rights of men and women, and defines the Institutions responsible and their competencies.


Article 2

Scope

1. This Law applies to men, women and persons who have a protected characteristic of gender identity or sex determination, and guarantees equal opportunity and treatment in public and private areas of social life, including political and public life, employment, education, health, economy, social benefits, sport and culture and other areas set out by the present or other law.
2. The prohibition of discrimination based on gender and sex and obligations to promote equality of men and women in this Law shall mean the inclusion of equality and non-discrimination on the protected characteristic of gender identity.

3. This Law ensures the institutional framework necessary for implementation.

4. Nothing in this Law shall be construed so as to restrict or diminish any existing rights provided for in other laws, or applicable international agreements and instruments.

**Article 3**
**Definitions**

1. Terms used in this Law shall have the following meaning:

   1.1. **Gender Equality** - shall be the entire and equal exercise of women and men, of their human rights. It is the non-presence of gender based discrimination, in opportunities, sharing of resources or benefits, as well as access to services;

   1.2. **Woman** - includes any person that considers itself as such, regardless of age or marital status;

   1.3. **Man** - includes any person that considers itself as such, regardless of age or marital status;

   1.4. **Equal treatment** - equal treatment with no direct or indirect discrimination based on gender and promotion of gender equality;

   1.5. **Direct gender discrimination** - shall be considered when an individual is treated less favourably on grounds of gender, is treated, has been treated or would be treated an individual of the other gender in comparable situation;

   1.6. **Indirect gender discrimination** - shall be considered when, a provision, criterion or impartial practice shall, have or will put person of other gender at an unequal position unless that such provision, criterion or practice is objectively justified by a legitimate aim, and the means of achieving that aim are appropriate and necessary;

   1.7. **Sex** - refers to the biological and physiological characteristics that define men and women;

   1.8. **Gender** - is socially-constructed roles assigned to women and men, which is an acquired identity that is learned, changed over time, and varies widely within and across cultures;

   1.9. **Gender identity** - this protected characteristic covers the gender-related identity, appearance or other gender-related characteristics of a person (whether by way of medical intervention or not), with or without regard to the person’s designated sex at birth;

   1.10. **Equal opportunity** - ensuring full participation and equal to men and women in all areas of political, social, cultural, educational, economic and other areas established by the present or any other law;
1.11. **Harassment** - harassment is a situation where an unwanted conduct related to the gender, sex and gender identity, with the purpose or effect of violating the dignity of a person, and of creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment;

1.12. **Sexual harassment** - shall mean any form of unwanted verbal, non-verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature occurs, with the purpose or effect of violating the dignity of a person, in particular when creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment;

1.13. **General measures** - are measures of a normative nature, with which it is achieved, protected gender equality and prevented gender discrimination by laws, which regulate specific areas, conducts in certain circumstances or the right approach for ensuring equal gender treatment;

1.14. **Special measures** - are temporary measures which aim to guarantee equal rights and promote gender equality in specific areas of social life;

1.15. **Unequal representation** - is when the participation or representation of one gender is less than fifty percent (50%) at any level of decision-making body in political and public life;

1.16. **Gender mainstreaming** - is the inclusion of a gender perspective into every stage of the process, planning, approval, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of legislation, policies or programs and budgets, in all political, economic and social areas, considering the promotion and advancement of equal opportunities between men and women;

1.17. **Gender responsive Budgeting** - is the implementation of Gender Mainstreaming in the budgetary process. This means the valorisation of budgets from the viewpoint of gender, in which case the gender question is taken into account at all levels of the budgetary process, and restructuring incomes and expenditures with the aim of promoting the equality of women and men;

1.18. **Violence on the grounds of gender** - shall mean all acts of violence that result in, or are likely to result in, physical, sexual, psychological, social or economic harm or suffering on the grounds of gender, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life;

1.19. **Victimization** - occur when a person suffers an adverse or negative consequences in response to a complaint (started procedures) or actions in order to apply the principle of equal treatment, as defined in Article 1 of this law, and/or when such person provides information, evidence or assistance in relation to the complaint procedure in case of discrimination;

1.20. **Pay** - the ordinary basic or minimum wage or salary and any other consideration, whether in cash or in kind, which the worker receives directly or indirectly, in respect of his/her employment from his/her employer;

1.21. **Occupational social security schemes** - on the progressive implementation of the principle of equal treatment for men and women in matters of social security whose purpose is to provide workers, whether employees or self-employed, in an undertaking or group undertakings, area of economic activity, occupational sector or group of sectors with benefits intended to supplement the benefits provided by statutory social security schemes or to replace them, whether membership of such schemes is compulsory or optional;
1.22. **Gender stereotypes** - are generalized views or preconceptions about attributes or characteristics that are ought to be possessed by, or the roles that are or should be performed by, men and women;

**Article 4**

**Prohibition of gender discrimination**

1. It is prohibited the direct or indirect gender discrimination, including less favourable treatment of women for reasons of pregnancy and maternity, marital status, nationality, race, disability, sexual orientation, social status, religion and belief, age or any other basis defined by law or agreement and international instruments into force.

2. Gender-based violence is a form of discrimination that seriously inhibits women’s and men’s ability to enjoy rights and freedoms on a basis of equality and is prohibited.

3. Harassment and sexual harassment are prohibited. Refusal or surrender of a person against such behaviour shall not be used as a basis for a decision affecting that person.

4. In order to prevent gender discrimination in legislation, policies, programs and practice, the principle of gender equality and gender integration, including benefits following pregnancy and child birth, shall be applied in all planning, budgeting and implementation of the above acts by public and private entities.

5. Instruction to direct or indirect discrimination on the grounds of sex shall be deemed to be discrimination within the meaning of this Law.

6. There will be no victimization of persons involved in filing or processing of complaints of discrimination, harassment or sexual harassment filed based on this law.

**Article 5**

**General measures to prevent gender discrimination and ensure gender equality**

1. In order to prevent and eliminate gender discrimination and achieve gender equality, Republic of Kosovo Institutions which include bodies at all levels of legislative, executive, judicial and other public institutions shall be responsible to implement legislative and other measures including:

   1.1. analysing the status of women and men in the respective organization and field;

   1.2. adoption of strategies and action plans for the promotion and establishment of gender equality in accordance with the Kosovo Program for Gender Equality;

   1.3. gender mainstreaming of all policies, documents and legislation;

   1.4. ensuring that the selection, recruitment and appointment processes, including for leading positions, are in line with the requirement for equal representation of women and men;

   1.5. inclusion of gender budgeting in all areas, as a necessary tool to guarantee that the principle of gender equality is respected in collecting, distribution and allocation of resources;
1.6. ensuring equal representation of women and men in all conferences, meetings, seminars and trainings inside and outside the country;

1.7. allocating adequate human and financial resources to programs, projects and initiatives for the achievement of gender equality and women’s empowerment.

1.8. gender division of all data and collected statistical information shall be recorded, registered, processed and shall be obliged to submit these data to the Kosovo Agency of Statistics.

1.9. taking into account gender equality while naming institutions, schools, and streets.

2. Any provision which is in contradiction to the principle of equal treatment under this Law shall be repealed.

3. Public contracts and any provisions contrary to the principle of equal treatment, which is included in contracts or in collective or individual agreements, are or may be declared non-valid or altered in accordance with the provisions of the Law on Protection against Discrimination.

Article 6
Special measures

1. Public institutions shall take temporary special measures in order to accelerate the realization of actual equality between women and men in areas where inequities exist.

2. Special measures could include:

   2.1. quotas to achieve equal representation of women and men;

   2.2. support programs to increase participation of less represented sex in decision making and public life;

   2.3. economic empowerment and steps to improve the position of women or men in the field of labour improvement of equality in education, health, culture and allocation and/or reallocation of resources;

   2.4. preferential treatment, recruitment, hiring and promotion, and other measures in each area where inequalities exist.

3. The candidate of underrepresented gender must have the same qualifications against his/her candidate in terms of meeting conditions.

4. The application of each candidate shall undergo an objective assessment which must take into account all the criteria that are typical to each individual candidate;

5. Priority given to the candidate of underrepresented gender cannot be automatic and unconditional but, can be ignored if the specific reasons for an individual candidate may be in his / her favour.
6. Do not constitute gender discrimination when public institutions take special measures, including legal provisions, aimed at accelerating the deployment of actual equality between women and men. These measures should cease to exist once they achieve gender equality objectives, for which are created.

7. Legislative, executive, judicial bodies at all levels and other public institutions shall be obliged to adopt and implement special measures to increase representation of underrepresented gender, until equal representation of women and men according to this Law is achieved.

8. Equal gender representation in all legislative, executive and judiciary bodies and other public institutions is achieved when ensured a minimum representation of fifty percent (50%) for each gender, including their governing and decision-making bodies.

CHAPTER II

INSTITUTIONAL MECHANISMS FOR GENDER EQUALITY

Article 7
Agency for Gender Equality

Agency for Gender Equality is an Executive Agency (hereinafter the Agency, which acts within the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM).

Article 8
Functions and responsibilities

1. The Agency within its scope has the following responsibilities:

1.1. promotes, supports, coordinates and makes the implementation of the provisions of this law and sub-legal acts issued in accordance with this law;

1.2. proposes to the Government amendments/supplementations of laws and sub-legal acts, and the approval of other measures to implement this law, in accordance with applicable legal procedures;

1.3. identifies and/or drafts policies which promote gender equality and monitor their implementation;

1.4. participates in the preparation of laws, sub-legal acts, strategies, and programs to ensure gender mainstreaming and gender budgeting is applied.

1.5. shall lead the process and prepares reports for the implementation of the convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and contribute to reporting on the implementation of international obligations concerning gender equality;

1.6. cooperates with public institutions and relevant officials for gender equality in the ministries and municipalities to ensure implementation of the provisions of the present Law;
1.7. cooperates with civil society;

1.8. organizes training for the inclusion of gender mainstreaming and gender budgeting for institutions;

1.9. analyzes the status of gender equality in Kosovo, on the basis of reports, research and studies, and present the findings in annual reports, special reports, guidelines, codes of conduct, opinions and provides recommendations to relevant authorities and publishes these results;

1.10. shall take measures with the aim of raising awareness on gender equality;

1.11. takes adequate measures to promote equal gender treatment in cooperation with the social partners, through the development of social dialogue for employees and employers on issues of particular importance which relate to the realization of their rights arising from employment, social wellbeing and other professional issues.

1.12. Report to the Government on the implementation of the present law for the previous year, no later than the end of March, the report after approval by the Government shall be published.

**Article 9**

**Agency Organization**

1. The Agency is led by Chief Executive who is responsible for the administration, operation and management of the Agency.

2. The appointment, discharge, functions and responsibilities of the Chief Executive shall be accomplished in accordance with the relevant provisions in force the Republic of Kosovo.

3. Organization, structuring and functioning of the Agency shall be regulated by sub-legal act proposed by the Agency and approved by the Government.

**Article 10**

**Financing**

1. Funds for operation of the Agency on Gender Equality shall be provided from the budget of the Republic of Kosovo.

2. Agency on Gender Equality in order to implement its mandate that promote gender equality shall accept donations from local and international donors, if they do not affect financial independence of the Agency on Gender Equality or its rights from the Budget of the Republic of Kosovo and that are not in contradiction with the law. Donations received should be made public.
**Article 11**

*Kosovo Program for Gender Equality*

1. Agency on Gender Equality shall coordinate the preparation of the Kosovo Program on Gender Equality, monitor its implementation and report annually to the Government on its implementation.

2. Government shall review and approve the Kosovo Program on Gender Equality and should report annually to the Assembly for its implementation.

**Article 12**

*Relevant officials for Gender Equality in Ministries and Municipalities*

1. All Ministries and Municipalities shall be obliged to appoint the relevant officials for gender equality with sufficient professional capacity and allocate sufficient resources from the budget, to coordinate implementation of the provisions of this law.

2. Duties and responsibilities of the relevant officials for gender equality should include:

   2.1. coordination of the implementation of this law and of the Kosovo Program for Gender Equality;

   2.2. inclusion of gender mainstreaming and budgeting in drafting and implementation of policies;

   2.3. cooperation with the Agency for Gender Equality and other relevant actors in the field of gender equality;

   2.4. preparation of annual reports on implementation of the Kosovo Program for Gender Equality and other reports that are submitted to the Agency;

   2.5. implementation of other measures foreseen by this law.

3. Relevant officials for gender equality shall exercise their duties and responsibilities in accordance with provisions determined by this Law and relevant sub-legal act which shall be approved by the Government, according to the proposal of the Agency.

**Article 13**

*Ombudsperson*

Ombudsperson is an equality institution that handles cases related to gender discrimination, in accordance with procedures established by the Law on Ombudsperson.

**Article 14**

*Political parties*

Political parties with their acts are obliged to implement measures to promote equal participation of men and women at authorities and bodies of the parties in accordance with provisions of Article 6 of this Law.
CHAPTER III

EQUAL PROTECTION AND TREATMENT, ON THE BASIS OF GENDER AFFILIATION, IN EMPLOYMENT RELATIONSHIPS

Article 15

Prohibition of gender discrimination in employment relationships

1. It is prohibited the direct or indirect discrimination on grounds of sex, marital or family status, pregnancy, birth, parenting and each custody form in the public or private sectors, in relation to:

1.1. conditions for access to employment, to self-employment or to occupation, including selection criteria and recruitment conditions, whatever the branch of activity and at all levels of the professional hierarchy, including advancement;

1.2. access to all types and levels of vocational guidance, vocational training and advanced and recualification, including practical work experience;

1.3. employment and working conditions, including dismissals, as well as pay;

1.4. membership of, and involvement in, an organisation of workers or employers, or any organisation whose members carry on a particular profession, including the benefits provided for by such organisations.

1.5. Access to employment including the training leading thereto, a difference of treatment which is based on a characteristic related to gender shall not constitute discrimination where, by reason of the nature of the particular occupational activities or conditions in which they are carried out, such a characteristic constitutes a genuine and determining occupational requirement, provided that its objective is legitimate and the requirement is proportionate.

Article 16

The prohibition of gender discrimination in social security schemes at work

1. There shall be no direct or indirect discrimination on grounds of sex in all occupational social security schemes, in particular as regards:

1.1. the scope of such schemes and the conditions of access to them;

1.2. the obligation to contribute and the calculation of contributions;

1.3. the calculation of benefits, including supplementary benefits due in respect of a spouse or dependants, and the conditions governing the duration and retention of entitlement to benefits.

2. Provisions contrary to the principle of equal treatment shall include those based on sex, either directly or indirectly, for:

2.1. determining the persons who may participate in an occupational social security scheme;
2.2. fixing the compulsory or optional nature of participation in an occupational social security scheme;

2.3. laying down different rules as regards the age of entry into the scheme or the minimum period of employment or membership of the scheme required to obtain the benefits thereof;

2.4. laying down different rules, except as provided for in sub-paragraphs 2.8 and 2.10 of this Article, for the reimbursement of contributions when a worker leaves a scheme without having fulfilled the conditions guaranteeing a deferred right to long-term benefits;

2.5. setting different conditions for the granting of benefits or restricting such benefits to workers of one or other of the sexes;

2.6. fixing different retirement ages;

2.7. suspending the retention or acquisition of rights during periods of maternity leave or leave for family reasons which are granted by law or agreement and are paid by the employer;

2.8. setting different levels of benefit, except in so far as may be necessary to take into account the actuarial calculation factors which differ according to sex in the case of defined contribution schemes; in the case of funded defined-benefit schemes, certain elements may be unequal where the inequality of the amounts results from the effects of the use of actuarial factors differing according to sex at the time when the funding of this program is implemented;

2.9. setting different levels for workers’ contributions;

2.10. setting different levels for employers’ contributions, except:

2.10.1. in the case of defined-contribution schemes if the aim is to equalize the amount of the final benefits or to make them more nearly equal for both sexes;

2.10.2 in the case of funded defined-benefit schemes where the employer’s contributions are intended to ensure the adequacy of the funds necessary to cover the cost of the benefits defined.

2.11. laying down other standards or standards applicable only to workers of a specified gender, except as provided for in sub-paragraphs 2.8 and 2.10 of this Article, as regards the guarantee or retention of entitlement to deferred benefits when a worker leaves a scheme.

3. Where the granting of benefits within the scope of this article is left to the discretion of the scheme’s management bodies, the latter shall comply with the principle of equal treatment.

Article 17

Obligations of employer in employment relationships

1. Employers in all sectors are obligated to:
1.1. refrain from including elements of gender discrimination in vacancy announcements.

1.2. in labor relations to promote gender equality before and during employment relationship.

1.3. ensure equal opportunities for women and men to apply for vacant positions.

1.4. When in a vacant position or for a certain category of work there is no gender equality, does not present discrimination if the advertisement encourages the underrepresented gender to apply with the aim to promote gender equality.

1.5. not disfavour a jobseeker by setting rules, criteria or procedural methods which tend to be neutral but in practice are less favorable for persons of a gender constituting indirect gender discrimination.

1.6. hire a person regardless gender for different types of vacant positions, in every level of professional hierarchy.

1.7. promote equal distribution between men and women in different positions of work and within different categories of employers through training and developing of professional abilities and other temporary measures.

1.8. ensure that men and women employees have equal opportunity to attend education and professional training and attend courses that aim to improve professional skills or prepare them for other professions.

1.9. to implement equal criteria in evaluating of working performance quality.

1.10. employer can not implement one evaluating criterion, seeming neutral, but in practice is in disadvantage of persons of different sex.

1.11. in particular, where a job classification system is used for determining pay, it shall be based on the same criteria for both men and women and so drawn up as to exclude any discrimination on grounds of gender.

1.12. To offer equal payment for a work of equal value.

1.13. the employer is obliged to provide such a working environment in which none of the workers is subject to employer’s, superior’s or co-worker’s undesired treatment of sexual nature, including undesired physical, verbal or nonverbal treatment or other sexually based behaviour which creates intimidating, hostile or humiliating relationships and environment at work and offends the dignity of men and women at work.

1.14. not to put in an unfavourable position or to take disciplinary measures towards an employee who objects or complains for discrimination, sexual harassment and discomfort, as well as employee who testifies for discriminating actions, sexual harassment and discomfort, made by employee or other employee.

1.15. employers are obliged to take all necessary measures to enable women and men to correspond to both their professional and family obligations.
1.16. The time schedule, in accordance with the needs of the employer and the family needs of the employee, must be organized in such a way that male/female employers can return to their previous posts after maternity leave, parental leave, abortion leave, sick leave or after the time spent out of the place of work due to family emergencies or professional training.

2. Every person after parental leave shall be entitled, according to conditions which are no less favourable to her and to benefit from good working conditions to which she is entitled during her absence including possibilities of advancement.

**Article 18**

**Evaluation of unpaid work**

1. Unpaid work of women and men is considered as a contribution to the development of the family and the society in cases of:

   1.1. The care for family welfare;
   1.2. The care for children;
   1.3. The care for other members of the family;
   1.4. Dealing with agriculture and family economy.

2. Subjects specified in paragraph 1 of this Article shall benefit from community services, labour policies and employment, and vocational training based on the legislation in force.

**Article 19**

**Prohibition of gender discrimination in access to and supply of goods and services**

1. Discrimination based on sex in access to and supply of goods and services shall be prohibited.

2. This Law shall apply to all persons who provide goods and services, which are available to the public irrespective of the person concerned as regards both the public and private sectors, including public bodies, and which are offered outside the area of private and family life which is provided by public and private institutions.

3. This Law does not prejudice the individual’s freedom to choose a contractual partner as long as an individual’s choice of contractual partner is not based on that person’s sex.

4. This Law shall not preclude differences in treatment, if the provision of the goods and services exclusively or primarily to members of one sex is justified by a legitimate aim and the means of achieving that aim are appropriate and necessary.
CHAPTER IV

EQUAL TREATMENT AND PROTECTION AGAINST DISCRIMINATION ON THE BASIS OF GENDER IN THE EDUCATION FIELD

Article 20

Prohibition of Gender Discrimination and Unequal Treatment

1. Discrimination on the basis of sex within educational institutions at all levels is prohibited, including access to education, admission process, access to services, facilities and benefits such as, scholarships, evaluation results, obtaining scientific degrees and titles, access to vocational training, education, sports and other fields.

2. The following actions shall constitute discrimination based on sex:

   2.1. any gender based restriction, or barriers in the creation of necessary facilities, to be educated in public or private institutions which offer education or other qualification and training services;

   2.2. different opportunities for men and women in the selection of a special study, training or graduation, and with regards to duration of classes unless justified by a legitimate aim and the means of achieving that aim are appropriate and necessary.

Article 21

Education of Gender Equality

1. In schools and other educational institutions the teaching aids used shall be based on gender equality and gender equality education should be included in school curricula at all levels.

2. Preparation, adoption and implementation of educational programs - education, drafting materials, textbooks and reviewing existing materials and textbooks should be done by including gender perspectives and eliminate negative stereotypes, prejudices, traditional practices and other practices that are contrary to the principle of gender equality.

3. Incorporation into school curricula education and training activities aimed at sensitizing young people about gender equality and preparing them for democratic citizenship.

4. There shall have equal inclusiveness of women and men in professional and non-professional education training and counselling for those professions which are traditionally considered only for women and only for men.

Article 22

Legal protection of the right to equal treatment of women and men

1. Persons who consider that the principle of equal treatment has not been implemented to them, may initiate procedures and shall submit evidences to administrative authority or to competent court in accordance with the provisions of the Law on Protection from Discrimination.
2. Violations of the provisions of this law, in cases where a criminal offense, shall be punished according to the provisions of the Criminal Code of the Republic of Kosovo.

CHAPTER V
SANCTIONS

Article 23
Punitive Provisions

1. For violation from Articles 2, 3, and 5 of this Law, the competent court shall develop a violation procedure and shall impose sanctions.

2. Fine of three hundred (300) up to five hundred (500) Euros shall be imposed for offenses to person who has committed discrimination based on gender in the public or private sector, in the field of offense under article 2, paragraph 1 of this law.

3. Fine of five hundred (500) up to seven hundred (700) Euros shall be imposed for offenses to person responsible or other person legal person, public authority or individual who according to registered profession performs certain activities, which based on gender would violate the certain person's dignity or creates certain environment, threatening, approach or practice, hostile, offensive or disturbing, Article 3, subparagraphs 1.1, 1.11, 1.12 of this Law.

4. Fine of seven hundred (700) up to nine hundred (900) Euros shall be imposed to legal entity for violation under Article 3, subparagraph 1.4 of this Law.

5. Fine of three hundred (300) to five hundred (500) Euros will be imposed for violation to the person responsible as per Article 5 subparagraph 1.8 of this Law, if not collected, recorded and processed statistical data divided by gender and do not submit to Kosovo Agency of Statistics.

6. Funds received from these fines are delivered in Kosovo Budget.

CHAPTER VI
FINAL PROVISIONS

Article 24
Issuance of sub-legal acts

For the implementation of this Law, upon the proposal of the Agency on Gender Equality, the Government shall adopt sub-legal acts within six (6) months after the entry into force of this law.

Article 25
Repeals

1. After entering into force, this law repeals:
1.1. Law no. 2004/2 on Gender Equality;

1.2. UNMIK regulation no: 2004/18 on announcement of law on gender equality in Kosovo approved by Kosovo Assembly;

1.3. UNMIK Administrative direction no.2007/03 for implementation of UNMIK regulation no: 2001/19 on executive branch of interim self-govern institutions;

1.4. Regulation no.1/2006 on establishment, competences and assignments of the interministerial council for gender equality;

1.5. Administrative Instruction MLGA No.2005/8 for determining the powers and duties of official/s job descriptions for gender equality in the municipality.

**Article 26**

**Entry into Force**

This Law shall enter into force fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette of the Republic of Kosovo.

**Law No.05/L-020**

28 May 2015

Promulgated by Decree No.DL-016-2015, dated 15.06.2015, President of the Republic of Kosovo Atifete Jahjaga.