

GBWN in partnership with national
parliaments advancing GRB debates
in budget adoption for 2022:
different approaches – same goal



in the framework of the Gender Budget Watchdog
Network in Western Balkans and Republic of Moldova*

*GBWN is a network of CSOs that use gender budget watchdog reports and appraise gender budget initiatives in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro, Moldova and Serbia



GENDER BUDGET BRIEF

Impressum

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Foreword

As everyone else the Gender budget watchdog network also made its new year's resolution -CSO's to provide policy and budget recommendations based on analysis and evidence, including from monitoring budget directly contributing towards improving gender equality! GRB hubs in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia, Montenegro, Moldova, Kosovo and Serbia have been true to this commitment and have carefully watched the budget making and adoption for 2022.

We have determined how much the 2022 budgets in all countries of the region has allocated specifically for gender equality, whether this information was presented in a way that ordinary citizen can understand how the 2022 budget benefits women and men and gender equality; as well as analysed the budget proposals using gender lenses, as to determine how the 2022 budgets will impact gender equality.

In different countries we applied different approach. In some, GBWN provided recommendations and sent it in form of policy paper to the Ministries of finance and the Parliaments, in order to inform budget adoption debates. In other countries GBWN members in partnership with the Parliament's committees for gender equality and / or finance and budget organized thematic debates focusing on gender responsiveness of the 2022 budget. The third approach applied was to mobilize wider civil society and together to advocate for more gender responsive budget.

In this respect GBWN applied several techniques – parliamentary hearings with physical presence as in the old good days, online debates via its royal highness ZOOM by bringing together at one virtual place all relevant actors, but also sending public letters, writing position papers, publishing policy papers/briefs. We must praise some tangible achievements with the budgets for 2022, especially the higher allocations for the social care and the commitments for gender audits, but still we can conclude that we lack better structured budget documents with visible gender component and gender disaggregated data that will enable us to perform gender impact analysis of the 2022 budget.

The following newsletter takes account of the approaches used, and techniques applied by gender budget watchdog network and the Parliaments in Albania, Macedonia, Montenegro, Moldova, Kosovo and Serbia. Do not forget to follow us on www.gbwn.net, Facebook and Instagram for many exciting activities scheduled in January, 2022.

Yours,

Marija Risteska on behalf of the Gender Budget Watchdog Network



Macedonia

The budget watch

Once the Draft Budget was published by the government, the GRB hub in Macedonia - @CRPM conducted rapid analysis from gender perspective of the proposed 2022 budget based on which CRPM noted:

- The 2022 Macedonian budget increased budget allocations compared to last year for health, social protection, environmental protection and education - sectors where women are most affected, especially in Covid-19 crisis times.
- Commendable gender equality specific priorities/goals are included among the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy; the Agency for Youth and Sports as well as the Secretariat for Legislation priorities and goals for 2022.

However, GBWN also criticized that the:

- Program for gender equality and non-discrimination within the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy has 6 times less funds planned as compared to 2020;
- Significant increases in the defense and general services of the government such as purchase of furniture and vehicles is inconsistent with the goal of the draft budget to fiscally consolidate public finances and decrease unproductive expenditures;
- The Draft Budget failed to offer a comprehensive assessment of the impact on gender equality, as well as presentation of the public finance allocations for gender equality, thus prevents the citizens and civil society organizations from knowing and monitoring which gender goals the budget will achieve and which indicators can be used for monitoring.

Parliamentary GRB specific debate on 2022 budget

Considering the Covid-19 protocols in the Macedonian Sobranie, CRPM organized ZOOM online event together with the Committee on Finance and Budget, and the Committee on Equal opportunities. MPs from women's parliamentary club, Committee on Health and the Legislative Committee attended the debate that took place on 30th of November 2021. Some main takeaways from discussion:



Marija Risteska, *CRPM Executive Director*

Instead of transformative renewal with a special focus on those who have been mostly affected from the Covid-19 crisis, the draft budget misses the chance and has no ambition in providing response to their needs. One example is the 5% increase in salaries in healthcare after the two-year fight against the virus, while the same draft budget envisages 15% increase for the judiciary.



Ljupco Prendzov, *Acting chairman of the Committee on Finance and Budget*

Careful monitoring of what is promised is paramount, but also to be careful in the eventual rebalance not to reallocate funds for the implementation of measures and projects aimed at achieving gender equality;



Marija Petrushevska, *Vice-President, Committee on Finance and Budget*

Despite the fact that the energy, economic and health crisis are likely to be felt mostly by the vulnerable groups the Commission for Protection against Discrimination has received three times less funds than in 2020.



Gordana Siljanovska Davkova, *chairwoman of the Committee on Equal Opportunities*

The way the budget is reviewed must be changed, the rules of procedure of the Parliament must include compulsory debate of the proposed budget in front of the Commission for Equal Opportunities. There is still no system for monitoring budget expenditures and how much they contribute to achieving of gender equality.



Lolita Ristova, *President of the Club of Women MPs*

The main reason for the insufficient gender component is in the delay of adoption of the new Draft Law on Budgets draft, which would regulate not only the way the budget is prepared, but will also provide space for transparent and accountable spending as well as monitoring of the trajectory of public money.



Maja Morachanin, *MP, Lobby group for non-discrimination and LGBTQI+ rights*

The draft budget as a document must be simpler and more understandable, both for MPs and citizens, but clear indicators should be provided also that will measure the success and performance of the budget execution.



Conclusion

The event was concluded with a unanimous decision for an oversight hearing to be held once the Government submits the Annual account on the Budget 2021 in order to evaluate its impact on gender equality.

However,

When the Minister of Finance's gave his budget speech on 10th of December, 2021 elaborating the final version of the Budget 2022 in front of the members of Parliament, he missed to mention gender equality commitments of the 2022 budget and its impact on the improved status of women and men.

The GRB hub in Kosovo – the Kosovo women's network (KWN) also performed a rapid analysis of Draft Law on Budget

Appropriations budget for 2022. The budget projected 2 billion and 748 million € - an 8.7% increase compared to the 2021

- For the first time, the 2022 budget includes performance indicators for all sectors. However, no performance indicators relate to gender equality;
- The Order, Law, and Public Security sector does contain the objectives of “Preventing and combating domestic violence, violence against women and Gender Based violence”;
- Following KWN's advocacy, together with other actors, for the first time, the Government has established a new budget line entitled “Basic Expenditures for Shelters”, to which it has allocated 1,000,000 €.
- One of the main objectives for the Social Protection sector for 2021 remains “Increasing social welfare through expansion and quality improvement, service delivery social and family, with a special focus on groups in need and gender equality”, among others.

On the other hand, the following shortcomings for this draft budget have been identified:

- Once again it is difficult to quantify the percentage of Kosovo's budget allocated for furthering gender equality due to line budgeting practice rather than programmatic budgeting;
- Several sectors in the budget law document lack a gender perspective, such as in Education, Recreation, Culture and Religion, Health, Housing, Community Issues, or other sectors.
- No intersectionality analysis has been included in the budget document regarding the potentially differing needs of diverse women and men. Intersectionality has not been considered even though men and women of different age groups, ethnicities, disabilities geographical location, and etc;
- No specific budget line or sub-line addresses the special needs of people with disabilities;

Public letter to Members of Parliament

On 8th of November 2021, KWN together with UN Women Kosovo, sent a public letter to all Kosovo MPs providing set of recommendations for the Draft Budget 2022, elaborating their vital importance in furthering the institutionalization of GRB in Kosovo. The recommendations are based on the analysis of the draft budget approved by the Government, as well as on various gender research and analysis by KWN and UN Women. Below listed recommendations can surely serve the Government to meet its obligations towards gender-responsive budgeting, as per the Law No. 05/L-020 on Gender Equality that makes gender-responsive budgeting mandatory for public institutions in Kosovo, including municipalities, ministries, and other budget organizations.

#	Recommendation
1	Insist on receiving and reviewing a thorough Gender Impact Assessment of the Law on Budget Appropriations for 2022, in line with Kosovo Gender Impact Assessment standards as required as part of the Regulatory Impact Assessment;
2	Request expertise and invite the Agency for Gender Equality and independent gender experts including women's rights organizations (WCSOs) with expertise in gender-responsive budgeting, including KWN, to participate in the Parliamentary Committee on Budget and Transfers, and Committee for Human Rights, Gender Equality, Missing Persons and Petitions hearings on the draft Law on Budget Appropriations for 2022 in order to provide insight from a gender perspective prior to adoption;
3	Ensure and monitor investment in the care economy;
	Creating new childcare options as well as ensuring sufficient funds to expand availability of preschool education and childcare, including rehabilitation of infrastructure and employment of teachers;
4	Allocate resources for implementing the Istanbul Convention, including hiring more social workers in order to better handle heavy caseloads (including of persons suffering violence); for vehicles and other resources to carry out their work, as well as establishing emergency services for cases of sexual violence;
5	Ensure the establishment of a permanent budget line for shelters for addressing gender-based violence (including sexual violence), including sufficient resources for rehabilitation and reintegration services in accordance with the Istanbul Convention commitments'
6	Allocate resources for hiring more labor inspectors (women and men), as well as for adequate capacity development in identifying and addressing gender-based discrimination at work as spelled out in the Kosovo Program for Gender Equality.
7	Include a budget sub-line under the budget for the Ministry of Education, Science, and Technology to establish a center for individuals with disabilities at the University of Prishtina, as well as to digitalize literature and print texts in Braille;
8	Ensure government expenditures related to addressing COVID-19 are based on sufficient gender impact analysis, towards addressing the needs of diverse women and men;

Meanwhile....

KWN remains active and persistent in requesting regular session of the Parliamentary Committee on budget, Labor and Transfers that will specifically focus on discussing the gender perspective of the 2022 Kosovo Budget.

The budget watch

Going through the Draft Budget for 2022, Women's Action, the Montenegrin GRB hub, noticed several improvements, as well as challenges for GRB. Women's Action noted that the 2022 budget has:

- Incorporated program budgeting method for the first time which provides easy to monitor and track activities and allocation for the purpose of enhancing gender equality;
- Increased total amount on gender equality related activities compared to last year, estimated on

76.063.735€ of the total budget sum. They are distributed among the below listed budget users, mainly for gender equality related activities in the sphere of protection of human rights, culture heritage, antidiscrimination, capacity building for state servants, parliamentary democracy, statistics, improving educational system, culture and etc.:

Institution	Program / sub-programs	Allocation for 2022
Cabinet of President	Political system and governance (11)	863456,16€
Ministry of Justice, Human and Minority Rights	Judiciary and human rights protections (12) and Culture (20)	1.495.651,91€
Ministry of Finance and Social Welfare	Political system and governance (11)	5.550.283,99€
Statistical Office of Montenegro	Public finances (14)	4.927.602,26€
Directorate for Cooperation with Diaspora and Emigrants	Political system and governance (11)	465.229,46
Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sports	Education, science and sport (19) and Culture (20)	46.874.832.08€
Bureau for educational services	Education, science and sport (19)	683.375,96€
Center for professional education	Education, science and sport (19)	660.283,15€
Sports and Youth Administration	Education, science and sport (19)	500.003€
Ministry of Economic Development	Economy and tourism (15)	6.151.376,10€
Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management	Agriculture, forestry and water management (16)	1.140.000€
Directorate on water	Agriculture, forestry and water management (16)	8.305,94€
Institute of Hydrometeorology and Seismology	Spatial planning and environmental protections (18)	171.712,01€
Ministry of Public Administration, Digital Society and Media	Political system and governance (11)	1.440.920,61€
Montenegrin Academy of Sciences and Arts	Education, science and sport (19)	901.255€
Red Cross of Montenegro	Health (21)	275.000€
Audit Authority of Montenegro	Public finances (14)	14.884,13€
Agency for Prevention of Corruption.	Political system and governance (11)	1.019.563,03€
Health Insurance Fund of Montenegro	Health (21)	200.000€
Employment Agency of Montenegro	Economy and tourism (15)	2.720.001€
Total:		76.063.735,77 €

On the negative side, Women's Action points out on the fact that:

Nearly 80% of the overall budget users in their budget statements have stated that projected activities are gender neutral.

Ex-ante Parliamentary debate to inform 2022 budget making

The Committee on gender equality within the Montenegrin Parliament prior to the adoption of the budget organized series of debates (in the course of October and November 2021) to inform the budget making for 2022 with ex-ante analysis of the situation of women and men in the country and create pressure on the Government to define gender equality commitments. Besides the regular MPs members of this committee, in the discussion participated also the Minister of economic Development, Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management, as well as representatives (mostly in capacity of state secretaries) from the ministries of health, finance and education, alongside representative from the state audit office and CSO activists, including GBWN sub-grantees.

The following are the key takeaways:



Božena Jelušić, MP and chairwoman of the Committee on gender equality

In order to enhance the GRB, we need gender knowledge, budget development capacities and specific knowledge for different aspects. Women are significantly discriminated in terms of financing and the budget is an instrument for improving this situation and achieving gender equality.



Anđela Radovanović, Association of youth with disabilities of Montenegro

The GRB analysis we performed for the period 2018-2020 shows that women with disabilities are not recognized with the budget as a specific target group. For instance, from the list of the budget supported CSOs in the period 2018-2020, only 4 projects have been targeting this category out of 324. We also need to focus on the employability of these women having in mind that from the total number of registered unemployed disabled persons, more than 60% are females.



Jakov Milatović, Minister for economic development

The next Strategy for developing women's entrepreneurship as well as the Credit Guarantee Fund will recognize the most critical challenges of women in business. Considering that only 5% of women have property on their names, 60% of inactive citizen on labour market are women who are burdened with unpaid care work in their households as 50% of women spend time for child care, care for elderly or persons with disabilities as compared to 25% of men who do this.



Marko Begović, Director of the Directorate for Sports and Youth of Montenegro

The research conducted in 2010-2014 shows that there are 30% of females in the sport system, 5,9% in decision making positions, 8,8% trainers and one third as medical staff. With the new Law on Sports as well as the new Rulebook on sub-financing new sports club a quota system will be introduced that will result in more women on decision making positions within the sports organizations.

Conclusion

The session was concluded with a pledge from the State Audit Office to include an audit within the Action Plan for Audits in 2022, preferably aimed at assessing the effects of gender budgeting, as well as continuous monitoring the budget spending through gender-defined indicators to identify programs that have had positive effects on the life and development of women and girls, as well as to identify further necessary activities.

Albania

The GRB hub in Albania – Gender alliance for development center - GADC

performed an analysis of the Draft Budget Law 2022 and followed the high-level discussion on this budget in the Parliament of Albania and in the Presidency. As always, the draft budget caused political disturbances which triggered high media and CSO attention. Namely, according to the Minister of Finance Mrs. Delina Ibrahimaj the budget allocations enable for meeting two major objectives - sustainable economic development; and support for the left behind groups. However, the draft budget was not approved by the President of Albania, emphasizing that this budget is an antisocial financial plan due to lack of real support for the sectors of the economy and especially for agriculture, insufficient budget support for those in need of COVID-19 treatment (at home and in the hospital system) and inadequate social care funding.

However, despite the addressed shortcomings, during its last hearing session on December 23th, the Parliament overruled the decree. GADC analysis in particular noted that:

- 3.6% of GDP has been allocated for education in the 2022 budget, giving special attention to vocational education, with funds foreseen in about 3 billion ALL.
- In the health sector, we also have 3.6% of GDP which presents a positive record in terms of budget allocations (the average of the last 10 years has been from 2.8 to 3% of GDP). The health budget supports salary increases for doctors and nurses.
- Supporting SMEs and start-ups with a grant of ALL 250 million as well as financing for training, counseling and coaching for SMEs, with a focus on SMEs in tourism and agribusiness, to overcome the consequences of the pandemic of Covid-19;

Despite the general conclusion on the lack of gender equality perspective in the drafted document as well as no gender equality references in the discussions and reports from the Ministry of Finance and economy and the Parliament of Albania, GADC also points out that budget 2022:

- Lacks of gender sensitiveness and hidden/ not transparent data regarding gender;
- It is not clear if any investment for another shelter for victims of gender-based violence and/or for any expenses on women service centers in local level are planned;
- There is not a clear budget line for the for the promotion of women and girls in STEM;
- No special fund / allocations for Albanian women entrepreneurs;

Recommendation

- 1 The document “Gender budgeting Phase III 2020 – 2022, mid term budget”, should be used and identified easily within the State budget of 2022. This will help interested parties to monitor the implementation and the expenditures from the gender perspective.
- 2 Develop an ex-post assessment of the pretended gender responsive programmes for the period 2019-2021;
- 3 Organize a hearing session on the impact that budget implementation has had on gender equality, to improve the impact on future gender equality policy-making and budgetary processes.

To the Ministry of Health and Social Protection

- 4 Extra budget for the Gender Equality Officers (GEOs) who should take care of gender issues, throughout the policy-making process and other related issues in central and local institutions.
- 5 Ensure investments in women’s social services. Such services enable the rehabilitation and reintegration of individuals or families in need.

To the Ministry of Education and Youth

- 6 Allocate budget and funds for advancement of women and girls in STEM supporting studies, laboratories and scholarships;
- 7 Allocating a special budget for the revision of relevant curricula from the gender equality perspective;

To the Ministry of Finance and Economy

- 8 Prepare another Action Plan with budget allocation for women entrepreneurship in Albania since the actual one finished in 2020;
- 9 Assign financing for women entrepreneurs within the Budget of State format;

Conclusion

The Albanian budget does not ensure comprehensive and inclusive application of the GRB principles although the country is assessed as advanced in integrating gender in public finance management.

Meanwhile....

GADC will organize a set of meetings and workshop to discuss the 2021 budget implementation. A possible hearing session on the gender responsive budgeting will be organized within the first 6 months of the year 2022.

¹ UN Women Albania report on the Gender Brief, recognizes the need for human and technical support, as well as the necessary financial allocation, for GEOs in the ministry or municipality, to effectively exercise their mandate and take on the intended role. Albania Country Gender Equality Brief 2020, UN Women, “Central and local state institutions shall have the legal obligation to collaborate with the respective minister responsible for gender equality issues for exchanging information and facilitating the accomplishment of the minister’s function. For this reason, there shall be gender equality officers (GEO) appointed in every ministry, who deal with gender equality issues; similarly, every municipality shall appoint one or several local GEOs in their structures”

Republic of Moldova

The budget watch

The GRB hub in Moldova - Keystone Moldova analyzed the Draft Budget 2022 revealing that important measures have been proposed by the Government to address the effects of the energy crisis and the pandemic in order to reduce vulnerabilities of different population groups. Substantial allocations were approved for measures aimed at increasing salaries/wages and pensions, partial compensation for households of the costs of gas and heat bills, investing in infrastructure and increase of the National Fund for the Development of Agriculture and Rural Environment. In that direction, Key Stone Moldova highlights that:

- Transfers to designated budget users such as State Social Insurance Budget, Compulsory Health Insurance Funds and Local Budgets have a share of 50.7% in the total amount of expenditures of the state budget, which denotes its social orientation.

However, extremely short deadlines provided for the public consultation of the draft State Budget Law 2022 didn't allow for expertise and debate with civil society and other stakeholders. In regards to this years' weakness of the proposed budget, Key Stone Moldova is particularly concern about:

- Total lack of gender perspective in the State Budget Law for 2022, even if the new Budget Circular of August 28, 2021 requires the central public administration authorities to include gender goals and gender-sensitive indicators in the review process of the budgetary programs;
- The budgetary programs do not offer any information on the beneficiaries of the proposed measures disaggregated by sex and it is not possible to assess and quantify the allocations for gender equality;

The position paper

Having in mind that the draft State Budget Law for 2022 was placed on the website of the Ministry of Finance's platform www.particip.gov.md for public consultations on November 19th, 2021 and adopted by the government on the very same day, as well as the fact that at a distance of another 6 working days from the first reading, the draft law was voted in the final reading, Key Stone Moldova mobilized the national Platform for Gender Equality and its 43 members to develop a position paper. In the paper, platform's members remind the Prime minister, the President of the Parliament, the Ministry of Finance, the Minister of Labor and Social Protection as well as the Chairman of the Parliamentarian Committee on Economy, budget and Finances that the budget circular was not applied in the planning procedure and consequently the Budget Statement and its annexes lack a gender perspective. The members also point to the fact that although gender coordinating group and gender units operates within the specialized central public administration authorities, the results of their activity are not visible in the current budgetary process nor in the previous ones. In the paper, set of recommendations are presented to the recipients of the paper which direct the way to more gender sensitive budgetary processes in future:

#	Recommendation
1	<p>To develop and publish an additional Information Note to the one accompanying the State Budget Law for 2022, which should reflect:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) to what extent and how many central public administration institutions have established gender goals and gender-sensitive indicators in the budgetary programs / sub-programs they manage according to the budget circular of August 28, 2021; 2) what are the policy measures, revenues and expenditures that address gender inequalities and finance the implementation of gender equality policy based on sectoral spending strategies and the Medium Term Budget Framework 2022-2024;
2	To include sex-disaggregated data in the 2022 Citizens' Budget using the available gender statistics and ensure in the following years the collection of gender sensitive data in order to inform budget policies and assess their impact;
3	To carry out a gender impact analysis of budget revenues and expenditures and to publish the results, including the values of gender-sensitive indicators in the budget programs;
4	To classify budget programs and sub-programs into categories according to their impact and relevance for gender equality and initiate the implementation of gender-responsive budgeting procedures and tools for programs with the greatest potential for change, depending on their relevance to gender impact starting with the areas with the largest inequalities recorded
5	To request an annual gender audit of the reports on the execution of the state budget, the state social insurance budget, the compulsory health insurance funds, as well as other components of the national budget;
6	To establish an ongoing dialogue with the organizations of the Platform for Gender Equality and with gender experts throughout the budget process in order to have a gender perspective on the proposed policy measures;
7	To institutionalize gender mainstreaming in the budget process by introducing the necessary provisions in the legislation on public finances and fiscal responsibility and in the legislation on local public finances, as well as in the Methodological Guidelines on the Budget Development, Approval and Revision approved by the Ministry of Finance.

Conclusion

Key Stone Moldova is investing additional efforts for a meeting with parliament representatives as well as with the focal point on gender equity within the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection. It is signaled for such meeting around January, 2022 when the energy crisis in the country is expected to be resolved and government to put its efforts on the social aspect of the budget programs and allocations

The budget watch

The public discussion about the contribution to the budget to gender equality lacked. Based on the rapid assessment conducted by the GKH we can conclude that the budget orients towards the physical infrastructure, and a lack of investments in health and education is the gender negative overall approach. In the budget for 2022, 48 budget users at the National level are obliged to apply gender responsive budgeting. The analysis shows that 45 users fulfilled this obligation and applied GRB in more than 70 budget programs; it has been applied by the majority of ministries, but also in the budget of National assembly, Government, General Secretariat of the Government, in the media coverage of Government activities, The Office for Kosovo and Metohija.

Going through the budget programs and allocations, in terms of the positive developments GKH enlists:

- Increase of the salaries in the public sector is positive, bearing in mind that salary increase could influence public administration motivation and efficiency, and presents opportunity for reducing the gender pay gap;
- Pension fund is increased, mostly because of additional one - off support of cca. 150 € for pensioners. The female pensioners are the most vulnerable to poverty and women have significantly lower pension than men. It will also contribute to improvement of economic and social position of senior men and women, especially the poor and deprived ones;
- Measures are foreseen for women in innovations and entrepreneurship in general;
- Increased allocations on environmental protection planned for communal infrastructure such as wastewater management, remote heating systems etc.

However, the list with lowered allocations that could negatively impact the gender balance in Serbia with the Budget 2022 is equally long as the "positive" one:

- IPARD funds are increased but the subsidies for producers are decreased, which could have a negative impact on small female farmers. Also, funds for rural development have been decreased;
- The investment in infrastructure in the health sector have been decreased compared to budget 2021 mainly due to finalisation of investments in Health Center Serbia and COVID hospitals. Still, the investment in health infrastructure at the local level should be the priority for the central government, since access to health services for rural men and women remains one of the biggest challenges;
- COVID related support to the private sector in Serbia has been closed, including the tourism sector;

The advocacy and main takeaways

The public hearings, according to the rules of the procedures of the Assembly, could be organised upon the request of the parliamentary bodies and the Board for Gender Equality was not ready to organise the public hearing on GRB prior to the budget 2022 discussion. That is why, in december 2021 Gender Knowledge Hub, as a representative of GBWN initiated and held the meeting with Women's Parliamentary Network (WPN) in the National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia together with UN Women and OSCE Mission in Serbia.

From the officials side, the meeting was attended by Sandra Božić, coordinator of WPN on the behalf of the ruling party, Snežana Paunović, WPN coordinator on the behalf on Socialistic Party of Serbia and Misala Pramenkovic from the Party of Justice and Reconciliation.

Consequently, what has been agreed on the meeting is to:

- Organise exclusive session on GRB in 2022 during the WPN's National Conference that will include presentation of the GRB progress in the Republic of Serbia, importance of CSOs participation in the budget discussion and monitoring and gender related priorities in the budget document(s);
- Prepare and distribute checklist for local female parliamentary networks in order to support GRB monitoring at the local level and engagement of members of the local assemblies on strengthening the implementation of gender responsive policies. The use of the checklist could also contribute to the reporting on GRB at the local level in terms of the number of gender responsive programs and projects that contribute to gender equality.
- Organise additional capacity building for members of the local assemblies and to advocate for their cooperation with local women's CSOs;
- Scheduling official public hearing on gender responsive budgeting and identification of budget allocations that are aimed at gender equality and advancement of women's position;

Conclusion



The capital investments increased for 1.5 million € and capture 7,3% of the GDP; additionally there is a lack of cost benefit / gender analysis for these projects, and capital investments in general, which is paramount in crisis times. The Government established mechanisms for implementation of capital investments and the Regulation of Management of the Capital Investment has been adopted in 2020. The Regulation defines phases of the project management, selection criterions, required documentation etc. The gender assessment should also be the part of the selection process, so as the gender impact assessment. That is why GKH will closely monitor the spending activities and how they impact gender equality and balance.

Meanwhile....



Gender Knowledge Hub in cooperation with local CSOs will finalise the study on investments in combating gender based violence and protection of women and girls, prepare ex ante gender assessment of the budget of Ministry for Environmental Protection and organize the public event with the partners from CSOs dealing with environmental protection and green agenda.

On the other hand, The State Audit Institution planned to conduct the audit of the introduction of GRB with the purpose to improve reporting to the National Assembly and interested public on GRB introduction. The gender budget assessment is also planned to be conducted by the Fiscal Council which is a very important step towards ex ante gender budget analysis.