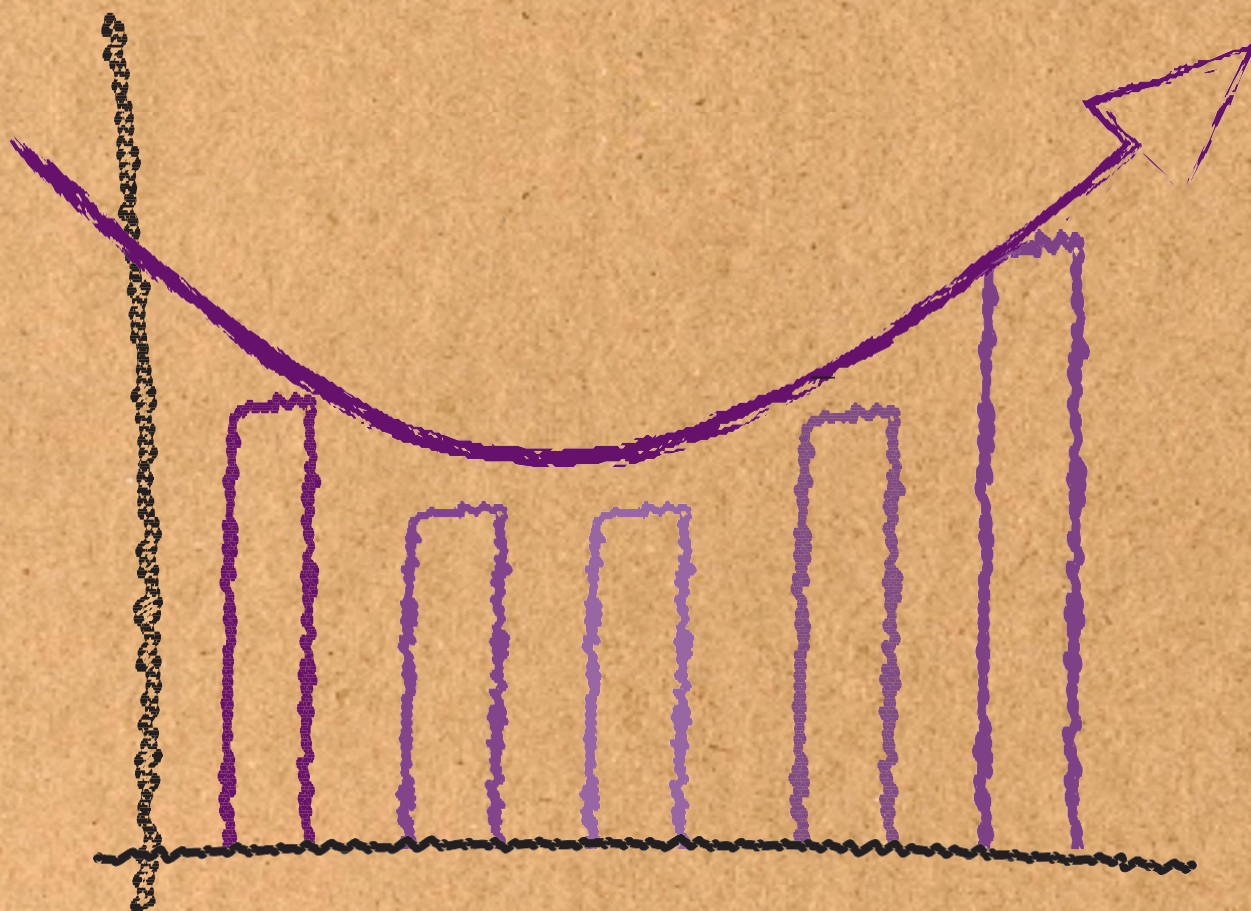


WOMEN'S RIGHTS CENTER
CENTAR ZA ŽENSKA PRAVA

Where's the Money for Women's Rights?

Funding Trends in the Western Balkans



Supported by



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ACRONYMS

ADA	Austrian Development Agency
AWC	Autonomous Women's Centre
AWEN	Albanian Women Empowerment Network
AWID	Association for Women's Rights in Development
BiH	Bosnia and Herzegovina
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women
CIR	European Parliament and Council Common Implementing Regulation (for external financing)
CSO	Civil society organisation
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
EC	European Commission
ESCRs	Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights
EIDHR	European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights
EP	European Parliament
EU	European Union
EUD	EU Delegation
EUO	EU Office
FBiH	Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina
FEMM	European Parliament Committee for Women's Rights and Gender Equality
FIGAP	Financial Mechanism for the Implementation of the Gender Action Plan of Bosnia and Herzegovina
FOSM	Foundation for Open Society in Macedonia
GAP	EU Gender Action Plan
GIZ	<i>Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit</i>
GONGO	Government-oriented "non-governmental" organisations
IAMANEH	International Association for Maternal and Neonatal Health
ICT	Internet Communications and Technology
INGO	International non-governmental organisation
IOM	International Office for Migration
IPA	EU Instrument for Pre-Accession
KFOS	Kosovo Foundation for Open Society
KWN	Kosovo Women's Network
KWF	Kosovo Women's Fund
MFF	EU Multiannual Financial Framework
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MLSW	Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare
LGBTQIA+	Lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, queer/questioning, intersex, asexual and other identities
MS	EU Member State
NA	Not applicable
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OSCE	Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe
PRAG	European Commission Practical Guide
RWF	Reconstruction Women's Fund
Sida	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency

SDC	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
SWD	Staff Working Document
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNMIK	United Nations Mission in Kosovo
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
UNOPS	United Nations Office for Project Services
UN OHCHR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
UNSCR	United Nations Security Council Resolution
US	United States
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VAT	Value Added Tax
WB	Western Balkan
WCSO	Women's rights civil society organisation

GLOSSARY

This glossary explains key terms used in this publication.

Bilateral organisations or “bilaterals”: Generally, the term includes non-profit organisations and government agencies that obtain funding from their home country for use in another country. The United States Agency for International Development, the Austrian Development Agency, and embassies are all examples of bilateral funders. In this publication, the term refers only to government-affiliated funders and not to international non-profit organisations, included in the category of international non-governmental organisations (INGOs).

Core support: Refers to unrestricted, flexible funding that organisations can use as they see fit related to their mission and towards achieving their vision. Organisations may use it to cover administrative costs, infrastructure, programmes, everyday activities, or essential staff.

Direct award: The European Commission uses this term to refer to funding distributed without an open call for proposals or competitive process.¹

Feminist: This term refers to efforts in support of feminism. While conscious of the richness of this word, including the variety of definitions and understandings of feminism, this publication uses the term to refer to diverse actions towards the achievement of social, political, economic, and personal equality and equity among all genders.

Funders: In this publication, this term includes any public or private body or person that provides funding, including but not limited to individuals (e.g., an organisation’s own members or members of the general public, such as through crowd-sourcing), governments, religious groups, corporations, foundations, women’s funds, bilaterals, multilaterals, and INGOs.

Funds: Herein, this term refers to all types of financial support that WCSOs may receive, including grants, contracts, and individual donations, among others.

INGO: International non-governmental organisations are organisations that operate across borders. Examples of INGOs include Save the Children and Olof Palme. In this report, the term INGOs does not refer to multilateral organisations, such as United Nations agencies.

Local organisation: In this publication, the term usually refers to organisations *based in* a given Western Balkan country but that may operate at any geographic level (e.g., village, town, city, municipal, cantonal, regional, national, and/or international). The term “local” tends to be used in contrast to the term “international”, such as in referring to INGOs. Referring to a given organisation as a “local organisation” does not imply that the organisation *only* works within the country where it is based. Indeed, some “local” organisations involved in this research may identify as INGOs, given that they operate across borders. When referring to organisations working only at the local level within a country, such as within a village, town, or city, the authors sought to make the differentiation clear in the context of the discussion.

¹ European Commission, [Practical Guide](#), 15 July 2019.

Multilateral organisations or “multilaterals”: This term refers to international organisations composed of three or more nations working together towards a common goal.² Examples of multilateral organisations include the United Nations and the European Union.

Movement: While acknowledging that they are not necessarily the same thing, this research used the terms women’s movement and feminist movement rather interchangeably to refer to a sustained series of joint efforts by multiple, often diverse actors, particularly women’s rights activists and organisations, towards shared feminist aims of social, political, economic, and personal equality and equity among all genders.

Normative funding: In this report, the term refers to funding provided by the central, cantonal, local, or other level of a country’s government. It refers to specific cost-recovery schemes enshrined in law, such as a permanent budget line for public benefit services. Thus, funding is not subject to an annual government decision. For example, a service provider can apply for a normative unit cost per person assisted with a given service, proving that the service was utilised. The service provided can be funded with a unit price, such as a standard cost recovery “per bed” in a shelter. Meanwhile, such policies must consider the fact that shelters must remain open and cannot close when persons do not seek their services.

Shrinking space: The term refers to state or non-state restrictions on freedom of expression, freedom of association, and freedom of assembly.³ This includes situations where the work of WCSOs is increasingly criminalised and/or bureaucratised. It also can refer to contexts that provide an enabling environment for attacks on women human rights defenders.

Women: Throughout this research, the team and authors considered that women are not homogeneous, but diverse. Multiple, intersecting and sometimes interrelated factors shape each woman’s identity, position and opportunities in life.⁴ This includes her physical ability, age, ethnicity, sexual orientation, education, and class. Existing discriminatory power structures can interact, affecting each woman’s access to opportunities differently. The research sought to use an intersectional perspective, examining and analysing access to resources for diverse women’s groups and the diverse women that they serve.

Women’s Funds: In this research, this term refers to funding bodies whose main purpose is to provide funding to organisations focused on furthering women’s rights, particularly but perhaps not only women-led organisations. While often a type of foundation, women’s funds tend to differ from other foundations due to their explicit focus on funding efforts to further women’s rights. This publication includes some discussion of women’s funds within the section on foundations. Additionally, given the focus of this report and prior findings suggesting that women’s funds tend to perform particularly well at reaching and addressing the often-unique needs of women’s rights organisations,⁵ this research also discusses women’s funds separately, as a unique type of funder.

Women’s Rights Civil Society Organisations (WCSO): In this research, this term refers to groups that work towards furthering women’s rights, including formal and informal, registered and unregistered groups. The publication uses the abbreviated acronym WCSO to refer to women’s rights-focused civil society organisations.

² Borgen Project, “[What is a Multilateral Organization?](#)”, Borgen Project website, accessed 18 May 2020.

³ This definition draws from Wassholm, C., [Suffocating the Movement: Shrinking Space for Women’s Rights](#), Kvinna till Kvinna Foundation, 2018.

⁴ This definition borrows from The Kvinna till Kvinna Foundation’s position on the category of “women”.

⁵ Association for Women’s Rights Development (AWID), [Watering the Leaves, Starving the Roots: The Status of Financing for Women’s Rights Organizing and Gender Equality](#), p. 90, 2013.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

At the forefront in addressing the widespread gender inequalities that exist in Western Balkan (WB) countries are women's rights organisations (hereafter referred to as "WCSOs"). They are change-makers, advocates, service providers, researchers, teachers, and experts who have contributed significantly to several social, political, legal, economic, and individual-level changes within their countries and beyond. WCSOs remain well-positioned to continue addressing pervasive gender inequalities in the WB and more broadly. For this work, WCSOs require resources. This report examines the funding available for their work.

The European Commission (EC), European External Action Service, and European Union (EU) Member States (MSs) have committed to furthering gender equality in their external action through the second EU Gender Action Plan ("GAP II"), among other policies and commitments. The EU is well-positioned to further gender equality in the WB, where governments have pledged to follow the EU's policy agenda and the EU makes significant financial contributions. Several other funders also have committed to furthering gender equality through their external funding.

Despite these commitments, **minimal information exists regarding actual expenditures on gender equality, women's rights, and WCSOs**. Such information is important for evaluating the implementation of GAP II and informing preparation of the new EU Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF), Instrument for Pre-Accession (IPA) III and GAP III. It also can inform EU MSs and other funders regarding funding needs towards furthering gender equality in the WB.

This research aimed to provide information about funding trends related to gender equality and in support of WCSOs in the WB from 2014 through mid-2019; and to better understand WCSOs' funding needs. Conducted in 2019 in all six WB countries, the mixed methodology involved desk research, data requests, and interviews with **71 funders** and **241 diverse WCSOs**. The research revealed that funders tend to **lack systems for tracking expenditures** on women and girls, women's rights, gender equality, and WCSOs, respectively. The proclaimed use of gender mainstreaming, albeit without gender-responsive budgeting, hindered accurate tracking of such expenditures. Therefore, apart from a few case studies on specific funders, findings draw primarily from WCSOs' reported income.

A review of the contexts in which WCSOs work suggests that nationalism, populism, conservatism, and accompanying anti-gender movements contribute to **shrinking space** for women's rights activists and WCSOs. WB countries **lack comprehensive regulatory enabling environments** for WCSOs' fundraising from individuals and businesses; individual giving remains minimal. While some, **erratic government grant schemes** exist, states have not established sustainable funding for CSOs. For example, sufficient, sustained normative funding does not exist for public benefit social services provided by experienced WCSOs, such as shelter for persons suffering violence. Nor has sufficient discussion surrounded how states can establish such funding while averting corruption, nepotism, and politicisation, thereby preserving WCSOs' role as independent watchdogs. Given the political and financial context, WCSOs unsurprisingly still rely heavily on foreign funding.

Overall, funding to WCSOs in the WB seems to have **decreased from 2014 to 2016**, but increased thereafter. WCSOs had an **average annual income of €55,773** for the period of 2014 to 2018. However, this was skewed by eight organisations that had annual incomes of more than €500,000. The **median annual income** was only **€6,000**. Most WCSOs have experienced periods in which they **did not have enough resources (82%)**, and **35% did not meet their planned budget in 2018**. Fewer than half of the WCSOs interviewed had

contingency plans for if they lost funding. Funding shortages have led WCSOs to delay payments, have staff work without pay, cut programmes, and even close their doors.

The funding environment in the WB remains **fragmented** with a plethora of funders engaged and seldom well-coordinated. Most funding that WCSOs received from 2014 to mid-2019 **originated from multilaterals (>21%) and bilaterals (>24%)**, often distributed through other multilaterals, women's funds, or organisations. Women's funds (11%) and international non-governmental organisations (INGOs) (8%) also provided substantial resources to WCSOs. Governments (5%), foundations other than women's funds (5%), and local NGOs (1%) provided comparatively less support. The **average grant or contract size was €32,786**, though substantial differences existed among organisations. Funding from individuals and WCSOs' members comprised less than 0.3% of their funding, and from the for-profit sector less than 0.2%. Funders tended not to have clear plans for future funding. Aside from women's funds, few funders earmarked funding for gender equality or WCSOs.

Among the thematic areas funded, **addressing gender-based violence received the most funds**, accounting for at least 27% of WCSOs reported funding, followed by funding for human rights (14%), general organisational support (5%), economic empowerment (5%), peace, security, and reconciliation (5%), addressing the needs of survivors of sexual violence (4%), democracy and governance (3%), children's rights (3%), and health (3%), among other areas receiving less funding. **No areas seemed to have sufficient funding.** Underfunded areas that WCSOs identified included: women's economic empowerment; addressing gender-based violence; women's leadership, empowerment, and political participation; access to education; health; disability rights; peace-building; labour and workers' rights; human trafficking; the arts; land, property, and housing rights; democracy and governance; humanitarian and emergency work; migration; environmental rights and justice; lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, queer/questioning, intersex, asexual and other identities (LGBTQIA+) rights; Internet Communications and Technology (ICT); sexual rights and health; and women in media. WCSOs tended to prioritise as **key strategies advocacy and service provision**, particularly assisting persons suffering violence. WCSOs lacked funding for service provision, advocacy, research, legal services, and psychotherapy.

Minimal evidence exists regarding which funding modalities work best for supporting WCSOs. **"A cocktail of modalities" that includes core support, project grants, and sub-granting** for smaller WCSOs may work best in addressing the needs of diverse WCSOs. **Multiyear funding and core support can contribute to more strategic long-term actions**, flexibility amid difficult political situations, enhanced capacities, organisational sustainability, and the achievement of positive changes that require long-term engagement. The use of contracts, rather than grants, can lead to the instrumentalization of WCSOs for donor interests and breed competition rather than cooperation towards social change. Stringent funder limitations on human resource costs can undermine WCSOs' effectiveness, capacity development, and efficiency. WCSOs struggled to secure required cost-shares given that few funders provide such support and WCSOs seldom have enough of their own resources available for this purpose.

Several reasons exist for financing WCSOs. In the present political context, WCSOs are among the leading voices demanding good governance and promoting human rights. Gender inequalities remain widespread in the WB and WCSOs are well-placed to address these, including through evidence-based research, advocacy, policy proposals, government monitoring, and public benefit service provision. Evidence shows that WCSOs have contributed to several social changes, suggesting that **supporting WCSOs means investing in social change**. Evidence also exists of WCSOs' relevance and efficiency. While they have been effective and impactful in bringing about change, the political situation, patriarchal backlash, poor access to resources, and activist burnout may impinge on their lasting effectiveness, impact, and sustainability.

KEY FINDINGS

- 9% of the WCSOs interviewed never had received funding (22); they worked on a voluntary basis.
- The average annual income was €55,773, whereas the median annual income was €6,000.
- Rural WCSOs and those serving women with different abilities had annual average incomes that were approximately seven times lower than the incomes of other WCSOs.
- 46% of WCSOs never had multiyear funding, and only one-third had multiyear funding in 2018.
- Most WCSOs (82%) have experienced periods in which they did not have enough resources, and 35% did not meet their planned budgets in 2018.
- Since 2014, 28% have lost support from a funder that historically supported them.
- Funding shortages have led WCSOs to delay payments, have staff work without pay, cut programmes, and close their doors.
- 31% have been in danger of closing their organisations due to lack of funds.
- Funders' data management systems tend not to contain variables for accurately measuring expenditures on gender equality, women's rights, and WCSOs, respectively.
- Efforts towards gender mainstreaming tend to obscure actual expenditures.
- Of 240 EU IPA II action documents for the WB, 56% did not have a gender marker assigned. Of those that did, only 47% were marked correctly. This suggests that the gender marker does not provide accurate information about funding towards gender equality in the WB. A corrective marking illustrated that only 3.7% of action documents had a gender marker 1 or 2; notably, the GAP II target for 2020 is 85%.
- Most funding WCSOs reported receiving originated from multilaterals (>21%) and bilaterals (>24%), often distributed through other multilaterals, women's funds, or organisations.
- Women's funds (11%) and INGOs (8%) also provided substantial resources.
- Governments (5%), foundations (5%), and local organisations (1%) provided comparatively less support. Funding to gender equality and WCSOs seems to comprise a very small proportion of government funding provided to civil society in WB countries.
- WB states have not established sustainable funding for civil society, including for public benefit services provided by experienced WCSOs like shelter for persons suffering violence.
- Concerns exist over government corruption and nepotism in the distribution of funds to civil society, as well as related to ensuring WCSOs' autonomy and safeguarding their advocacy abilities when they receive state funding.
- Funders tend not to have clear plans for future funding.
- Individuals and members provided less than 0.3% of WCSO funds, whereas the for-profit sector provided less than 0.2%.
- Addressing gender-based violence received the most funds (27%), but it and several other areas remain underfunded.
- 29% of WCSOs felt that the funding available did not address their priorities.
- Minimal evidence exists as to which funding modalities work best for supporting WCSOs.
- "A cocktail of modalities" that includes core support, project grants, and sub-granting for smaller WCSOs perhaps can contribute to meeting the needs of diverse WCSOs.
- Multiyear funding and core support contribute to more strategic, long-term actions, flexibility amid difficult political situations, enhanced capacities, organisational sustainability, and the achievement of positive changes requiring long-term engagement.
- Independently verifiable evidence exists of WCSOs' relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact, and the sustainability of several aspects of their work.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

For WCSOs

- **Share power. Share resources.** Actively support and advocate for funding that promotes solidarity, rather than competition.
- **Advocate jointly for improved resourcing**, including for self-care for women's rights activists and WCSOs, towards sustaining the movement.
- As relevant, **improve transparency** regarding expenditures and better document impact.

For Funders

- Support the development of a comprehensive, dynamic "**funding ecosystem**" that meets the needs of diverse WCSOs. Investing in such an ecosystem could significantly increase WCSOs' political and social influence and counteract the current climate of shrinking space.
- **Collaborate more with women's funds** to distribute grants to smaller WCSOs.
- Foster **deeper dialogue** with WCSOs about their funding needs, ways to address their needs, and best methods for furthering gender equality.
- **Earmark future funds** specifically for furthering gender equality, and, where possible, explicitly for WCSOs, prioritising funds to address significant inequalities identified through gender analyses.
- Continue funding WCSOs, particularly through **multiyear support, core funding**, grants, and more **flexible funding**. Allocate financing for supporting WCSOs with **cost-shares**. Allow well-documented in-kind contributions to contribute to cost-shares.
- **Improve donor coordination** and joint strategizing to further gender equality.
- Where possible, **use pooled funding** and **joint reporting** with other funders, towards minimising administrative burdens.
- Require obligatory **ex ante gender analysis** and the appropriate gender mainstreaming of all programmes.
- **Improve systems for tracking spending** on gender equality, women's rights, women and girls, and direct support to WCSOs, respectively. Using best practices in gender-responsive budgeting, improve measures of funds allocated and spent, including when using gender mainstreaming.
- **Require beneficiary governments to incorporate a gender perspective** in programmes funded through external financing, as part of funding agreements.

For the EU

- As recommended by the European Institute for Gender Equality, introduce "an obligation for **spending on gender equality, capacity-building** among relevant officials for **mainstreaming gender in the MFF** and the budgetary processes and conducting **gender budget analysis** of all funding programmes to analyse their impact on gender equality".
- Establish **stronger, binding requirements for furthering gender equality via external funding** by ensuring that both the IPA III and the Neighbourhood, Development, and International Cooperation Instrument regulations are gender mainstreamed. Within these regulations:
 - Require **ex ante gender impact assessments** for all actions; and that these analyses inform clear objectives, indicators, and targets towards gender equality;
 - **Earmark funding for gender equality** like that set aside for the environment;
 - Make **gender-responsive budgeting** obligatory;

- Require that **all evaluations examine effects on gender equality**; and
- Require **regular tracking and reporting on actual expenditures** on gender equality, women and girls, and WCSOs, respectively.
- Towards effectively and sustainably building the capacities of (W)CSOs within IPA beneficiary countries, include **conditionalities in the eligibility criteria of all EU Civil Society Facility** support, ensuring that these funds only support local organisations registered in beneficiary countries with established experience working in these countries.
- **Earmark annual programming for furthering gender equality** in sectors identified through gender analyses.
- Towards ensuring gender mainstreaming of all programming in accordance with GAP II (and potentially GAP III), establish more standardised procedures and processes of **gender equality quality review of all programmes** at the EUD and EC levels, requiring that certain standards be met and data relevant to gender equality in programming is entered in EU data management systems.
- As part of **direct budget support to beneficiary governments, always require at least one indicator related to furthering gender equality**.
- Through political dialogue related to the EU Accession process, **encourage government action to improve gender equality**, including through the appropriate allocation of resources for this purpose.
- As part of sector development of social welfare services, support states to establish more **sustainable normative funding for service providers** assisting persons who have suffered violence, such as cost-recovery schemes. In designing such programmes, ensure participation and recognition of the expertise of WCSOs experienced in providing such services.

For Governments

- **Implement commitments to gender mainstreaming** laws, policies, programmes, and budgets, including appropriate use of gender-responsive budgeting. In doing so, **engage WCSOs**, providing them with sufficient funding and compensation for their expertise.
- **Improve legal frameworks and enabling environments for CSOs to fundraise** from individuals and businesses, as well as to be paid for their expertise.
- **Establish sustained funding**, such as normative funding, through a permanent budget line to support cost recovery for public benefit services provided. Allocate resources for autonomous WCSOs, particularly public benefit service providers with expertise related to addressing gender-based violence, towards ensuring sustained resources for these essential services foreseen by the Istanbul Convention.
- **Allocate funding** for research including *ex ante* gender analysis, gender expertise, independent monitoring, and evaluation by (W)CSOs.
- Ensure **transparent and fair provision of funds**. Establish safeguards to mitigate risks of misuse, such as open calls with clear selection criteria, the engagement of independent evaluators, and assurance of functioning complaint mechanisms.
- Make data regarding **expenditures provided to civil society publicly accessible**.

For Coordination

- Initiate a coordinated effort **to hold all funders more accountable** to collaborating in joint planning of support to furthering gender equality. Seek to **reduce duplication and improve the efficient, effective and impactful** use of limited resources.
- Identify opportunities for improved use of **pooled funding and joint reporting**, towards more efficient use of human resources for funders and WCSOs alike.



Photo: Marija Jankovic

Feminist Natalija Laptosevic loudly advocates for women's rights during the International Women's Day march on 8 March 2018 in Belgrade.

INTRODUCTION

Women's rights organisations (hereafter referred to as "WCSOs") are at the forefront of addressing widespread gender inequalities in the WB.¹ WCSOs are among the leading voices demanding human rights and good governance. They are change-makers, public benefit service providers, researchers, teachers, and experts. Given their expertise and decades of experience, they are well-positioned to continue addressing existing gender inequalities in the region. However, their important work requires resources. This report examines the resourcing available. This chapter introduces the report, presenting existing commitments to financing gender equality and WCSOs, reasons for conducting this research, and the methodology used. It contains an overview of the chapters that follow.

¹ For further details and evidence of their contributions, see the chapter [Why Support WCSOs?](#). Readers should note that purple text throughout this report has electronic hyperlinks to the source or section referenced. The full text of the hyperlinks is in the [Works Cited](#) section.

Commitments to Financing Gender Equality and WCSOs

Several international commitments exist related to the resourcing of WCSOs, networks, and movements. In 1995, the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action called for governments to create a supportive funding environment for WCSOs, women's networks, and feminist groups.² It suggested that achieving gender equality worldwide is contingent on the availability of resources from governments, multilateral and bilateral funding mechanisms.³ Several governments worldwide, including in all WB countries, have ratified or committed to implementing the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW).⁴ According to CEDAW General Recommendation 28, states must encourage and financially support WCSOs.⁵ United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 2493 recognises the contribution of WCSOs towards Women, Peace, and Security.⁶ The Resolution calls for an increase in funding for women, peace, and security, including support for WCSOs.⁷ Gender equality is a stand-alone goal among the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) to be achieved by 2030 and is mainstreamed in all other goals.⁸ Some UN agencies have gender equality strategies and action plans.⁹

All WB governments also have committed to or ratified the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence, known as the Istanbul Convention.¹⁰ It calls for state parties to finance WCSOs, as they are experienced, gender sensitive service providers supporting women and children who have suffered violence. It also encourages state parties to allocate both human and financial resources for the implementation of different policies, including WCSOs' activities.¹¹

The EU and its MSs recognise gender equality as a fundamental value.¹² This is particularly relevant to the WB, given WB countries' expressed interests in joining the EU. The Council of the European Union has concluded that women's and girls' rights, gender equality, and the empowerment of women and girls must be at the core of the post-2015 agenda.¹³ It has emphasised that gender equality is both a goal in itself and a means to achieve sustainable development. As a policy priority for external action and development cooperation, the EU

² *Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action*, 1995, Art. 350.

³ *Ibid.* Art. 36.

⁴ OSCE, *OSCE-led Survey on Violence Against Women: Main Report*, OSCE, 2019, p. 14. While Kosovo cannot ratify CEDAW, given its political status, it has incorporated CEDAW in its Constitution and committed to implementing it (*Constitution of the Republic of Kosovo*, 2008, Art. 22). In BiH, CEDAW is part of Annex 1 of the Constitution of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Montenegro has the Law on the Ratification of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (1981); as a successor to the previous states, it became a member of the Convention in 2006, after reclaiming independence (Ministry for Human and Minority Rights, *Report on implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women*, February 2010, p. 2. Similarly, Serbia, *became a member of the Convention in 2001*.

⁵ CEDAW General Recommendation 28.

⁶ UNSCR 2493, *on Women, Peace and Security*, 2019.

⁷ *Ibid.*, Art. 5.

⁸ The United Nations, *The Sustainable Development Goals Report, 2019*.

⁹ See UNDP, *UNDP Gender Equality Strategy 2018-2021*, and UNICEF, *Gender Action Plan 2018-2021*.

¹⁰ Council of Europe, Treaty Series - *No. 210, Istanbul, 2011*. All governments except Kosovo have ratified the Istanbul Convention. Kosovo cannot ratify it because of its political status, but it has committed to implementing the Convention through the *National Strategy of the Republic of Kosovo on Protection from Domestic Violence and Action Plan 2016-2020*, developed based on Istanbul Convention requirements. See also: Gavric, S. for European Women's Lobby, "Mapping of Policies and Legislation on Violence Against Women and the Istanbul Convention in Kosovo," p. 3.

¹¹ *Art. 8*.

¹² Article 1 of the Treaty of Lisbon, *Amending the Treaty on European Union and the Treaty Establishing the European Community*, 2007.

¹³ Council of the European Union, *Council Conclusions on Gender in Development*, 2019, p. 3.

also has sought to align its work towards gender equality and women's empowerment with the UN Financing for Development process.¹⁴

The EU has understood that, despite progress, several inequalities among diverse women and men persist. For example, women and girls constitute the majority of the world's poor, face gender-based violence, and remain underrepresented in governments and decision-making.¹⁵ To address inequalities, the EU has committed to furthering gender equality through political dialogue and financial expenditures, as stated in the second Gender Action Plan (GAP II),¹⁶ EU Comprehensive Approach to the EU Implementation of the United Nations Security Council Resolutions 1325 and 1820 on Women, Peace and Security (hereafter "Comprehensive Approach"),¹⁷ the new EU Strategic Approach to Women, Peace, and Security (hereafter "Strategic Approach"), and accompanying Action Plan.¹⁸ The European Parliament (EP) Committee for Women's Rights and Gender Equality (FEMM Committee) also has called for the use of gender-specific indicators and gender-disaggregated data in all EU spending.¹⁹ In the recent EU Gender Equality Strategy, the EC proposed that the Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) ensure the integration of a gender dimension throughout the MFF and more specifically in various EU funding and budgetary guarantee instruments.²⁰

Meanwhile, the EU has acknowledged the important role that WCSOs play in furthering gender equality. GAP II foresees that the EU and MSs will empower "girls' and women's organisations and human rights defenders" through "support [to] the participation of women's organisations as accountability agents in budgetary, legislative, and policy making processes at all levels".²¹ The EU has committed to "ensure minimal administrative constraints for access to funding by local civil society organisations, within the limits of the EU Financial Regulation."²² Further, it has acknowledged that "direct, reliable, and predictable funding delivered through flexible grants or long-term financing can make a difference in creating the conditions for grassroots movements and civil society organisations" to implement the Women, Peace, and Security Agenda.²³ Thus, the EU aims to use a needs-based approach and prioritise direct action grants for gender equality projects run by local CSOs, particularly women's organisations.²⁴ All countries aspiring to become EU MSs, including all six WB

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ International Development, *Implementing the European Union Gender Action Plan: Challenges and Opportunities*, European Union, 2019.

¹⁶ EC, High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Joint Staff Working Document (SWD), *Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment: Transforming the Lives of Girls and Women through EU External Relations 2016-2020*, SWD (2015) 182 final, 2015, including Objective 18. See also, Council of the European Union, *Gender Action Plan 2016-2020 - Council conclusions*, paragraph 10.

¹⁷ Council of the European Union, Brussels, 1 December 2008.

¹⁸ Council of the European Union, Council Conclusions on Women, Peace and Security, Brussels, 10 December 2018, Annex 1, *EU Strategic Approach to Women, Peace and Security*, p. 50. The EU, MSs, and contractors funded by the EU must implement the Strategic Approach, which calls for gender analysis, gender mainstreaming of programs and gender sensitive evaluation in EU external action financing. To complement the EU Strategic Approach, the EU adopted an *Action Plan on Women, Peace, and Security* in 2019.

¹⁹ *Report on EU Funds for Gender Equality*, 2016/2144(INI), 2017. More specifically, they called for: "gender-specific indicators to be applied in the project selection, monitoring and evaluation phases of all actions that receive funding from the EU budget" and "mandatory gender impact assessment as part of general ex-ante conditionality, and for the collection of gender-disaggregated data on beneficiaries and participants".

²⁰ *A Union of Equality: Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025*. Similar commitments were raised in the EP Resolution of 19 November 2013, as cited in European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE), *Gender Budgeting: Mainstreaming Gender into EU Budget and Macroeconomic Policy Framework*, Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union, 2018, p. 21.

²¹ EC, *GAP II*, p. 11 and Objective 18.

²² Council of the European Union, *Council Conclusions on Women, Peace and Security*, p. 50.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Ibid.

countries, also should seek to comply with the EU Post-2020 Regional Development and Cohesion Policy.²⁵

In the WB, the EU and its MSs have unique influence in furthering gender equality, given WB countries' commitments to join the EU and the significant EU investments in the WB through the Instrument for Pre-Accession (IPA) portfolio, among other funding modalities like the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR) and the Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace. As this is EU funding, the EU can require that all such expenditures are informed by obligatory *ex ante* gender impact assessments and that they include gender mainstreaming.²⁶ Several EU MSs also have made commitments to furthering gender equality through bilateral financial support.²⁷

Why This Research?

Considering the commitments outlined in the prior section, information on EU funding patterns in the WB is important for evaluating GAP II implementation, as well as for informing the MFF, GAP III, and IPA III with gender analysis.²⁸ The research sought to provide timely information and recommendations to inform these policies. Additionally, the EU, MSs, and other funders have expressed their interest in learning more about the funding situation and needs related to gender equality and WCSOs in the WB.²⁹ Such information can support improved planning among funders to better coordinate resources towards achieving their gender equality commitments and aims. It can inform the preparation of new strategies for the WB.

Currently no obligation or agreed method seems to exist for tracking gender equality related expenditures. The EU Common Implementing Regulation related to external financing has required monitoring related to the environment, but has much weaker requirements for gender equality.³⁰ The rather gender-blind regulation neither requires gender impact analysis to inform expenditures as part of a general ex-ante conditionality,³¹ nor calls for gender impact assessments in all evaluations. While a target has been proposed to direct 25% of EU expenditures in the forthcoming MFF (2021-2027) towards climate objectives, gender equality

²⁵ EC, *Regional Development and Cohesion Policy Beyond 2020: The New Framework at a Glance*, 2018. The Post-2020 agenda includes enabling conditions towards gender equality, which apply to the European Social Fund+, European Regional Development Fund, and the Cohesion Fund (EC, "[Annexes to the Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council laying down common provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund Plus, the Cohesion Fund, and the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund and financial rules for those and for the Asylum and Migration Fund, the Internal Security Fund and the Border Management and Visa Instrument](#)", 2018, p. 25). While this can serve as an entry point for gender mainstreaming the Post-2020 funding agenda, EIGE has warned that the focus on work-life balance and gender equality in employment may undermine gender mainstreaming in other sectors (*Gender Budgeting: Mainstreaming Gender into the EU Budget and Macroeconomic Policy Framework*, 2018).

²⁶ This is encouraged by [GAP II](#), as well as the EP FEMM Committee ([Report on EU Funds for Gender Equality, 2016/2144\(INI\)](#), 2017).

²⁷ Interviews with funders in Kosovo, Serbia, Albania, and the region, 2019. For further information, see: [Who Funds WCSOs? Bilaterals](#).

²⁸ [GAP II](#), 4.1 requires and the EP FEMM Committee has recommended that all funding undergo "mandatory gender impact assessment as part of general ex-ante conditionality".

²⁹ Comments made by MSs and funders during launching events in the WB in 2018 of Farnsworth, N. and Banjska, I. for KWN, *Mind the GAP: An Independent Evaluation of the Implementation of the EU Gender Action Plan II in Western Balkan Countries*, 2018.

³⁰ [Common Implementing Regulation \(CIR\) No. 236/2014 of the European Parliament](#) and of the Council "laying down common rules and procedures for the implementation of the Union's instruments for financing external action", 2014.

³¹ This was recommended by the EP FEMM Committee ([2016/2144\(INI\)](#), 2017). Gender analysis also is required to assign the appropriate OECD gender marker.

has comparatively weaker commitments.³² The EC's initial proposal for the new MFF involved even lower commitments than the estimated 1% already set aside for gender equality by EU Structural and Investment Funds.³³

Given the weak regulatory framework, monitoring expenditures on gender equality and WCSOs has proven challenging. Initial independent monitoring of GAP II implementation in 2017 found that minimal data existed for tracking progress on GAP II indicators related to funding.³⁴ Moreover, the Midterm Review of IPA II did not contain any gender analysis, even though GAP II had planned that it would, towards informing indicators on "dedicated funding to improving results for girls and women".³⁵ The only indicator that the EC presently uses to monitor budget allocations towards gender equality is the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Gender Marker (see Box 1).³⁶

However, a review of all 240 publicly available IPA II action documents for the WB found that 56% of these actions were not gender marked at all.³⁷ Of those that were marked, only 47% were marked correctly. Thus, the Gender Marker does not provide accurate information about funding towards gender equality.³⁸ Moreover, EU systems only use the marker to measure allocations, which can differ from expenditures. Thus, the EU lacks accurate information on expenditures on gender equality and WCSOs, which could inform forthcoming policies and programmes.

Box 1. The OECD Gender Marker

The OECD Gender Marker is a tool used to evaluate the extent to which programmes and projects target gender equality. The marker uses a three-point scale to assess whether projects target gender equality as a primary objective (gender marker 2), secondary objective (gender marker 1), or not at all (gender marker 0). Gender analysis is required to mark actions appropriately.

Of the 71 funders interviewed for this research, 23 stated that they always use the OECD Gender Marker while six sometimes use it. Meanwhile, 25 said they do not use the marker. Among those not using the marker, there was a recurring trend: they tended to say that it was unnecessary because projects are gender mainstreamed. This suggests weak understanding of the purpose of the gender marker, which should be used in all instances.

Several challenges have been identified with using the Gender Marker. First, its users do not all understand it and therefore mismark projects, contributing to inaccurate data. Projects marked with a Gender Marker 0 often are not justified, though they should be in accordance with GAP II. Additionally, it only recognises objectives and does not account for activities or immediate results towards gender equality, which can make it difficult to apply in EU programming where only one or two objectives are preferred.

³² European Parliament, *Long-term EU budget: MEPs Lay Down Funding Priorities for Post-2020 Budget*, 2018, and EIGE, *Gender Equality Deserves More than 1%*, 2019.

³³ EIGE, *Gender Equality Deserves More than 1%*, 2019.

³⁴ Farnsworth and Banjska, *Mind the GAP*.

³⁵ This is GAP II indicator 3.1.1. Regarding the Midterm Review, see KWN's *A Gendered Reading of the 'External Evaluation of the Instrument for the Pre-Accession Assistance'*, 2017.

³⁶ Information in the box draws from interviews (2019).

³⁷ KWN, Policy Brief (untitled), forthcoming 2020. Based on assessment of all country and regional action documents for 2014-2020, at: European Commission, website, European Neighbourhood Policy And Enlargement Negotiations, "*Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance*", accessed April 2020.

³⁸ Beyond the WB. Global research indicates that few projects fulfil minimum OECD criteria for Gender Marker 1 and 2. A vast gap exists between self-reported funding towards gender equality among donors and actual figures (Grabowski, A. and Essick, P., *Are they really gender equality projects? An examination of donors' gender-mainstreamed and gender-equality focused projects to assess the quality of gender-marked projects*, 2020).

In 2011, the Association for Women's Rights in Development (AWID) conducted a Global Survey to determine the funding needs of women's organisations worldwide, entitled "Where's the Money for Women's Rights?".³⁹ Few WCSOs in the WB participated because few knew about the survey or had access to it in their language. Therefore, in 2013, with support from AWID and The Kvinna till Kvinna Foundation, the Kosovo Women's Network (KWN) and Alterhabitus administered the AWID survey through nearly 130 face-to-face interviews in Kosovo, as a case study, to better understand the needs of organisations left out of the online Global Survey. The research showed that WCSOs not participating in the AWID survey often had more dire needs than those that had participated. Rural organisations in particular faced limitations in responding to needs assessments, as well as accessing funding due to insufficient internet access and weak English language skills.⁴⁰ The AWID study is now outdated and no other known research comprehensively examines the situation of diverse WCSOs in the WB.

Given the dearth of information available on funding trends towards gender equality and for WCSOs in the WB, this research aimed to provide such information. It sought to propose evidence-based policy recommendations for improving access to funding for diverse WCSOs.

Methodology

This research utilised a methodology similar to the one employed by AWID, adapted to the WB context and aims of this research. The research involved a holistic approach to understanding various factors potentially affecting WCSOs' access to funding. The main research questions included:

- What contextual issues, including laws, policies, and/or operating environments support or hinder the work of WCSOs?
- How and why do different funders support WCSOs and movements or not?
- What funding has been available for the period of 2014 to 2019 for WCSOs, women and girls, and gender equality, respectively?
- What is the importance of supporting WCSOs and movements, if any? How relevant, efficient, effective, sustainable, and impactful do funders believe WCSOs are?

Regarding the third question, the team differentiated between four types of funding. Funding for **gender equality** does not necessarily fund women and girls or women's rights directly. For example, it may fund efforts to change social norms among boys. Funding for **women's rights** would seek to contribute directly to furthering women's rights. Funding for **women and girls** would include all funding benefitting women and girls. It may or may not contribute to women's rights or gender equality, depending on the aims of the funding provided. For example, women may benefit from humanitarian aid, but this does not necessarily contribute to furthering gender equality within their community by changing social norms or to furthering their rights more broadly. In other words, benefiting from support does not necessarily equate to changing gender norms or furthering women's rights. Funding for **WCSOs** may contribute to gender equality, further women's rights, and/or support women and girls. However, funding for each of these need not necessarily be distributed through WCSOs; it may be distributed through other actors, as well. Tracking all four types of funding can provide useful information, including related to the aforementioned policy commitments.

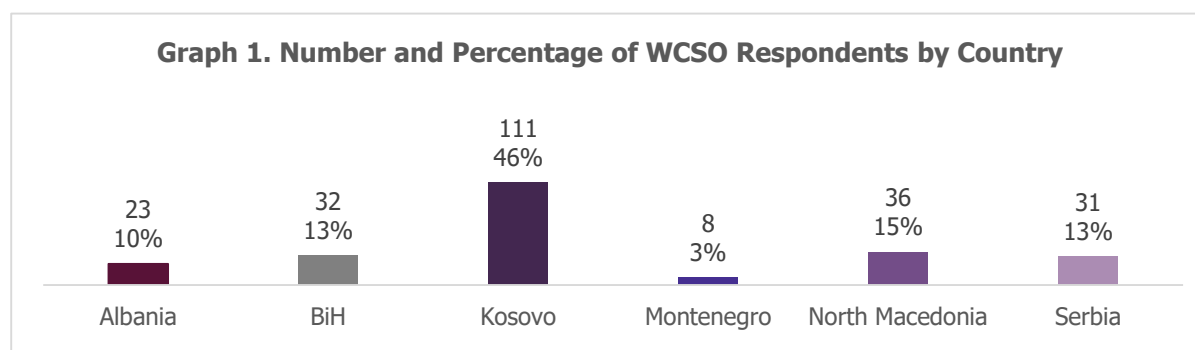
³⁹ AWID, *Watering the Leaves, Starving the Roots: The Status of Financing for Women's Rights Organizing and Gender Equality*, 2013.

⁴⁰ Farnsworth, N. and Gashi, E., *Where's the Money for Women's Rights? A Kosovo Case Study*, KWN and Alter Habitus Institute for Studies in Society and Culture, 2013.

The research focused on women's rights groups and organisations (referred to as WCSOs), which the research team hypothesized as key instigators of social change towards gender equality.⁴¹ As explained in the [Glossary](#), for this research, WCSOs were defined to include formal and informal, registered and unregistered groups whose *main aim* is furthering women's rights. Minimal information existed regarding the funding of movements in the WB, as per the research questions, so findings focus more on WCSOs.

The term "funders" was defined to include any public or private body or person providing funding, as described in the [Glossary](#). Since few funders provided data on funding and minimal data was available online, findings draw primarily from WCSOs' reported expenditures. Given the nature of the available data, as well as the aforementioned funders' commitments, the report focuses on multilateral and bilateral funding. WCSOs do have other forms of income, but they are limited. Examining philanthropic giving and alternative fundraising techniques for WCSOs and women's rights could be a study on its own and was beyond this research.

The methodology involved mixed research methods, including desk research; a review of relevant policies and legal frameworks; face-to-face interviews with WCSOs using structured and semi-structured questions, conducted in local languages; and interviews with 71 different funders selected using variation sampling in reference to the research questions.⁴² The team sought to interview the entire population of WCSOs active in all six WB countries in the last five years, regardless of whether or not they had funds. The team contacted all identifiable WCSOs. However, some did not respond or participate even after several attempts at contact. In total, the team interviewed 240 diverse WCSOs with discussions averaging 1.5 hours.⁴³ Altogether, the sample involved an estimated 69% of the entire population of WCSOs known to be active in the WB. As Graph 1 illustrates, most WCSO research participants were located in Kosovo (46%), followed by North Macedonia (15%), Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) (13%), Serbia (13%), Albania (10%), and Montenegro (3%).



Generally, the sample reflected the estimated population of WCSOs in the WB, with Kosovo having more active WCSOs than the other countries. Considering the overrepresentation of Kosovo in the sample, where relevant, findings are presented in both real numbers and percentages. The colours used in Graph 1 for each country are used throughout the report. The fact that approximately 108 WCSOs (31% of the planned sample) and 31 funders (30%) did not participate in the research could contribute to some sampling bias.

⁴¹ This hypothesis was based on personal observations, as well as Htun, M. and Weldon L., "[The Civic Origins of Progressive Policy Change: Combating Violence against Women in Global Perspective, 1975–2005](#)", *American Political Science Review*, 106, pp. 548-569, 2012.

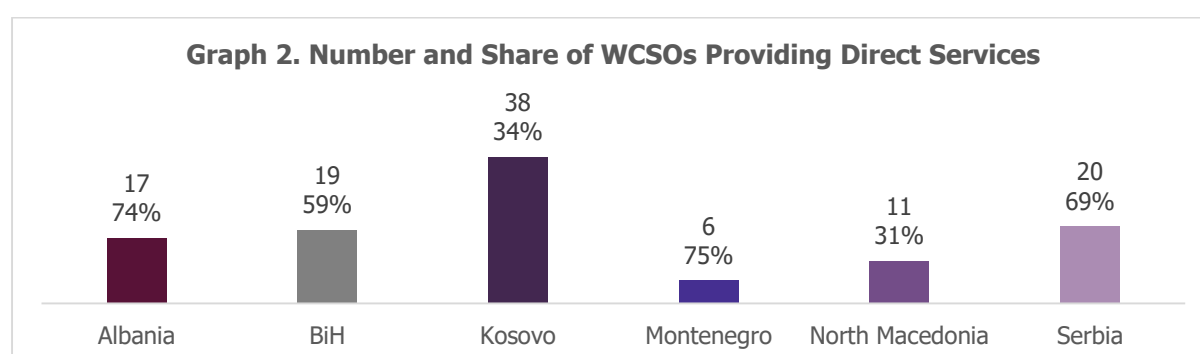
⁴² [Annex 2](#) enlists all research participants.

⁴³ For all graphs n=239 unless otherwise stated. In Graph 1, n=241 because one organisation from Serbia participated in the qualitative research but did not provide quantitative information. An additional WCSO in Serbia provided financial information but was unavailable for an interview. In total, 241 WCSOs participated.

As Table 1 illustrates, comparatively lower response rates in Albania and BiH mean that WCSOs from these countries may be slightly underrepresented, compared to other countries.

Table 1. Planned and Conducted Interviews by Country								
Country	WCSOs					Funders		
	Planned Pop.	% of Pop.	Completed Sample	% of Sample	Response Rate	Planned	Completed	Response Rate
Albania	50	14%	23	10%	46%	12	8	67%
BiH	68 ⁴⁴	20%	32	13%	47%	19	11	58%
Kosovo	140	40%	111	46%	79%	20	20	100%
Montenegro	10	3%	8	3%	80%	14	6	43%
North Macedonia	40	11%	36	15%	90%	17	7	41%
Serbia	40	11%	30	13%	75%	14	13	93%
Regional	NA		NA			6	6	100%
Total	348		240		69%	102	71	70%

Among the WCSO respondents, 46% considered service provision among their priority strategies. In Montenegro, Albania, Serbia, and BiH, most WCSOs participating in this study provided services (see Graph 2). Among the reasons for undertaking this study, WCSOs have expressed concerns that several public benefit WCSO service providers have faced significant funding challenges and even closed their doors, placing women and children at grave risk. Therefore, some findings focus on the position of WCSO service providers. Nevertheless, diverse WCSOs participated in the study and findings generally refer to all WCSOs unless otherwise specified.



Researchers used an electronic survey tool, Kobo Collect, to record quantitative data; they also took notes. The team analysed qualitative data by coding findings in a shared document, as per the research questions. KWN cleaned and analysed the quantitative data from Kobo Collect using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The team used Excel to analyse quantitative data pertaining to the funding WCSOs reported receiving. To analyse funding over time, where data was unavailable, KWN assumed, perhaps inaccurately, an even distribution of funds by year for multiyear grants. All currencies were converted to euros based on the average rate for 2014-2019. As the team completed most research by fall 2019, the report contains indicative findings for 2019, but WCSOs may have received additional funding after data collection. To remind readers that 2019 data may be incomplete,

⁴⁴ In BiH, 68 WCSOs were thought to be active at the outset of the research. As per the Women's Network Coordinator in BiH, 36 WCSOs were active as of January 2019. However, the original target number was kept based on the possibility that 68 may have been active in prior years and that some WCSOs perhaps may not be members of the women's network.

graphs contain dashed lines from 2018 to 2019. KWN drafted the final report and research team members reviewed the report.

A research limitation was the lack of available, accurate data pertaining to funds distributed to WCSOs. Only 85% of the participating WCSOs and 31% of the interviewed funders (22) provided the data requested. Some WCSOs had poor record keeping or considered such information confidential, refusing to share it. Regarding funders' data, in BiH, none of the funders submitted such information and in Albania only one did. Several funders had weak data tracking systems, which could not disaggregate funding by gender equality focus or recipient (WCSOs). Some stated that disaggregating data would be too time consuming, which similarly suggests poor systems. Funders recurrently noted the challenge of measuring expenditures in programmes that involved gender mainstreaming, as budgets rarely are divided clearly. They thus suggested that more funding probably was given towards gender equality but they could not measure it. Given the dearth of comparable data from funders, the report only contains individual case studies about some funders.

In the analysis of WCSOs' funding, unclear data also contributed to limitations. In coding the data, the team could not attribute approximately 2.2% of reported funds to specific sectors or areas. Despite efforts to check data with respondents, non-response or unclear replies may have contributed to error in data coding. Considering these limitations, findings pertaining to expenditures are illustrative but not exhaustive. Still, they provide an interesting indication of funding trends.

Triangulation of methods, data, and researchers, as well as participant checks, sought to enhance validity and reliability. The team holds the view that all research involves some subjectivity, as it is conducted by people with particular, socialised vantage points. Therefore, researchers employed reflexivity, seeking to transparently document and report potential bias. The team acknowledges the inherent potential bias affiliated with activists conducting this research and thus used triangulation towards validating findings. [Annex 3](#) contains a full description of the methodology.

About This Report

The authors have borrowed this report's title from AWID, asking the overall research question: "Where's the Money for Women's Rights?". The report first discusses how political and social contexts affect WCSOs. Then, it examines the different funders engaged in supporting gender equality and WCSOs in the WB. The next chapter presents funding trends, including related to amounts, thematic areas, target groups, strategies, timeframes, and approaches. Finally, the report discusses reasons for supporting WCSOs, including funders' views of their relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact, and sustainability, as per the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) criteria. The report concludes with recommendations for WCSOs, funders, and improved coordination.



Photo: Marija Jankovic

Activists protest against femicide in front of the Ministry of Labour in Belgrade in 2017. Seldom do governments prioritise addressing violence against women as a serious threat to security.

THE CONTEXT

This chapter examines the broader social, political, and funding context, towards answering the research question: “What contextual issues, including laws, policies, and/or operating environments support or hinder the work of WCSOs?” First, it examines global funding trends. Then, it discusses how the political context in the WB contributes to shrinking space for WCSOs. Finally, it discusses national laws affecting WCSOs’ access to resources.

Global Funding Trends

While this research focuses on WCSOs in the WB, broader, global spending patterns can influence regional trends. Examining how funds are spent is useful for understanding the narrower scope of funding available for social change and specifically for the women’s movement. Broadly speaking, several governments have continued to prioritise military spending over social spending; it totalled \$1.8 trillion in 2018.¹ In contrast, global spending that year on health and education was \$38 billion and \$2.2 billion, respectively.² Spending focused on gender equality has been roughly estimated at \$4.6 billion in 2016-2017.³ The neoliberal understanding of security assumes military spending will prevent insecurity. However, this traditional approach to security likely diverts spending away from investments in human development and a broader notion of human security and wellbeing. A classic example is violence against women at home. Globally, an estimated one in three women have

¹ All references to United States (US) dollars. “[World Military Expenditure Grows to \\$1.8 trillion in 2018](#)”, cited in Miller, K. and Jones, R., *Toward a Feminist Funding Ecosystem*, AWID, 2019.

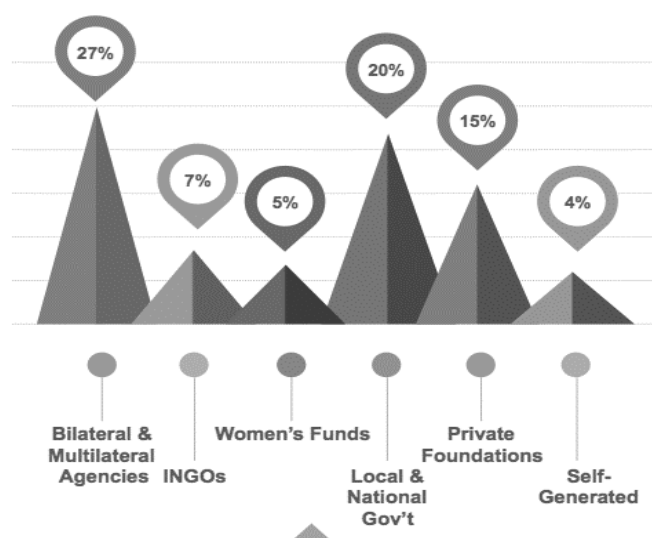
² Cited in Miller and Jones: *Financing Global Health 2018: Countries and Programs in Transition*, and UNESCO, *Migration, Displacement and Education: Building Bridges, Not Walls*.

³ OECD, *Aid in Support of Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment: Donor Charts*, 2019, p. 6. AWID only included OECD Gender Marker 2 projects with gender equality as the “principal objective”. OECD member countries reported an additional \$40 million in committed funding with gender equality as a significant objective. However, several issues exist with the OECD Gender Marker (see Box 1), so this figure is not particularly reliable.

experienced physical and/or sexual violence by a partner or sexual violence by a non-partner.⁴ Domestic violence remains widespread even in the absence of war, but states seldom prioritise funding for addressing domestic violence as a “security” issue. Globally, bilateral and multilateral funders historically have been the most reliable and significant sources of funding for gender equality and WCSOs.⁵ In 2013, AWID found that their spending accounted for 27% of funding to women’s organisations (see Graph 3).⁶ Meanwhile, local and national governments accounted for 20%, private foundations for 15%, INGOs for 7%, and women’s funds for 5%. Roughly 4% of financial support was self-generated.

Graph 3. AWID Funding Landscape, 2013

% of Income by Sector | Source: AWID 2013, p. 114 (n = 740 WROs)



The private sector seems to be a growing actor among civil society funders.⁷ Some such funders are recognising that race, gender, class, disability, and ethnicity are deeply connected. These donors are reframing the narrative to represent the lived realities of diverse women and girls.⁸ However, this coupled with the growing popularity of gender mainstreaming can present challenges in funding actually reaching girls and women or WCSOs. For example, private foundations gave \$9.4 billion towards furthering human rights between 2011 and 2015, with 23% earmarked for women and girls, but it is unclear how much of this went directly to WCSOs.⁹

AWID has concluded that CSOs operate within “funding ecosystems” that function with “different revenue-generating options matched to the diversity of needs that social change requires.”¹⁰ They have suggested that a variety of funders and their combined spending modalities help ensure efficient and sustainable work for gender equality. Then, to better understand which types of funding adequately match different contexts, it is necessary to track and evaluate how resourcing works, including in regions where it may be especially “weak, distorted and/or fragmented.”¹¹

This research aimed to answer these questions. However, the team soon discovered that very little comparable information exists in the WB related to various areas of a potential “funding ecosystem”. Taxation systems are not particularly supportive of individual or corporate giving.¹² Moreover, WB countries rank among the world’s lowest in charitable giving.

⁴ World Health Organisation, *Global and Regional Estimates of Violence Against Women: “Prevalence and Health Effects of Intimate Partner Violence and Non-Partner Sexual Violence”*.

⁵ Arutyunova, A. and Miller, K., *Count Me In! Money & Movements Convening*, 2018.

⁶ Ibid, drawing from AWID, *Watering the Leaves, Starving the Roots*, 2013, p. 114. This represents main sources of funding and thus sums to 78%. The publication did not state the other sources of funding.

⁷ Miller and Jones, *Toward a Feminist Funding Ecosystem*, AWID, 2019.

⁸ Ibid. For example, see Ford Foundation, *Challenging Inequality: Gender, Race and Ethnic Justice*, 2019.

⁹ Hagen-Dillon, A., *Where are the Gaps, Opportunities, and Challenges? Comparing Funding Trends from the Women’s Funds Community*, Human Rights Funders Network, 2018.

¹⁰ Drawing from the concept of Michael Edward, in Miller and Jones, *Toward a Feminist Funding Ecosystem*, p. 6.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² See further discussion the [National Laws](#) section.

The 2019 World Giving Index ranked Kosovo best in the region at 62nd of 126 countries ranked, followed by BiH at 91, North Macedonia at 96, Albania at 105, Montenegro at 119, and Serbia at 123.¹³ This does not bode well for raising significant funds from individuals. Minimal information exists about the conditions and enabling or disabling environment for individual or corporate giving *specifically* for WCSOs and women's rights, which may involve added obstacles. This research revealed very minimal information about social enterprises or revenue-generating services, though examples of such funding modalities do exist in the region. Thus, considering limitations, while conscious of the fact that other methods of fundraising exist, this research tends to focus on multilaterals and bilaterals, given their policy commitments and the fact that they remain among the largest funders in the WB. Other funders also are discussed.¹⁴ A key finding is that better data management practices and further research are needed to develop a funding ecosystem in the WB.

WCSOs across the region expressed concern about funders leaving the WB. As some funders consider regional conflicts relatively concluded or normalised, some have moved funding to other regions and areas in crisis.¹⁵ WCSOs in Albania, BiH, and Kosovo observed that the presence of funding from international embassies has diminished. Across the region, especially in **Albania**, WCSOs also observed that donors tend to fund larger organisations, particularly umbrella organisations, INGOs, or UN agencies.¹⁶ Quantitative data from this research illustrate that at least 13% of identified WCSO funds, probably more, reached WCSOs through intermediaries.¹⁷ The growing use of private firms and individual consultants for gender equality work, rather than WCSOs, also draws resources away from organisations and movement-building. These trends contribute to shrinking space for WCSOs by limiting their access to resources.

Interview respondents also observed weaknesses in funder coordination, contributing to inefficient use of limited resources. In their 2018 report "Civil Society: Lost in Translation", Balkan Civil Society Development Network research found that the CSO funding landscape in the WB is oversaturated with funders that offer small and declining amounts of money.¹⁸ As a result, there is a clustering of funder initiatives around certain issues with a general lack of cooperation around avoiding duplication and improving coordination.¹⁹



We have seen a pattern of phasing-out of donors from our country and re-allocation of funding to other topics is a pattern.

WCSO, BiH



Most funders do not allocate money directly to CSOs but to local intermediaries, UN agencies, that further distribute the funds with their own criteria.

WCSO, BiH



It is necessary to find a way to work together in order to prevent overlap in activities and the wasting of money.

WCSO, North Macedonia

¹³ Charities Aid Foundation, *World Giving Index: Ten Years of Giving Trends*, October 2019.

¹⁴ For further information on the composition of funding from different funders, see [Who Funds Women's Rights?](#)

¹⁵ Interview, WCSO, North Macedonia, 2019.

¹⁶ For further information and discussion, see: [A Delicate Balance: Financing WCSOs, INGOs and Multilaterals](#).

¹⁷ More funds reached WCSOs through intermediaries in North Macedonia (18% of funds in the country), BiH (15%) and Serbia (14%) than in Albania (12%), Kosovo (10%), and Montenegro (6%).

¹⁸ Haynes, R., Ireland, V., Duke, J., *Funding Civil Society Organisations & Networks: Promising Approaches to Financing Development in the 21st Century*, Forus International, 2019.

¹⁹ Ibid.



It is harder to get funds due to shrinking space. Women's rights are not donors' priority, especially due to shifting focus to other priorities, and rerouting support to international organisations. More and more professionals, consultants and consulting firms are appearing, applying for funds and including women's rights in their programmes in order to get funds.

WCSO, BiH



Photo: Marija Jankovic

Activists protest against femicide in front of the Ministry of Labour in Belgrade in 2017.

The Political Context: Insecurities and Shrinking Space

All WB countries have made clear their intentions to join the EU. Yet, regional tensions persist. Though the Prespa Agreement signalled progress for **North Macedonia** and Greece,²⁰ tensions between **Serbia** and **Kosovo** remain. **BiH** is locked in a stalemate amid surmounting ethnic discord. In **Montenegro**, a new law proposed by the Government, designed to regulate religious freedoms, has ignited tensions between the Government and the Serbian Orthodox Church, straining relations between **Serbia** and **Montenegro**.²¹ **Albanian** WCSOs said aggressive politics aggravate existing tensions among Albanian citizens and contribute to violence. Meanwhile, the generally unstable political situation in the WB hinders foreign investments and economic growth.

²⁰ The Prespa Agreement was signed in June 2018 under UN auspices by Prime Ministers, Zoran Zaev and Alexis Tsipras, of North Macedonia and Greece, respectively. Under the agreement, Macedonia became known as the Republic of North Macedonia, a change that Greece stipulated must be reflected in Macedonia's constitution. In January 2019, more than two-thirds of the Macedonian parliament approved the change. The Greek Parliament formally adopted the change on 25 January 2019 (Britannica, *Prespa Agreement: Balkan History*, 2019).

²¹ Maksimovic, S., *Montenegrin Law on Religious Freedom: Polarization that Benefits the Government(s)?*, Portal European Western Balkans, 13.01.2020.

Political developments such as nationalism and populism affect and often jeopardise the work of civil society.²² WCSOs across the region, but particularly in **BiH, North Macedonia, and Serbia**, said that conservative views are becoming increasingly mainstream. WCSOs observed regression to traditional agendas that negatively impact women's fundamental rights and liberties. "Increasing fundamentalism, conservatism, and traditional values [are] suffocating the women's movement", a WCSO said. "Conservative views have become mainstream and this is creating [...] grounds for the social degradation of women," another said.²³ Nationalistic and anti-gender movements place women's rights and women's rights activists at risk.²⁴ Activists have been physically prevented from moving freely, threatened, and/or harassed in all WB countries.²⁵

In 2017, the Kvinna till Kvinna Foundation conducted an online survey asking women human rights defenders in 32 countries how they have been affected by changing civic space.²⁶ More than 60% of respondents indicated that "their space to act as an activist has shrunk". The reduction in political space and accompanying resources for action has been referred to as "shrinking space". Shrinking space worried WCSOs across the WB, particularly in **BiH and Serbia**.

An accompanying "lack of political will" to support WCSOs and women's rights politically and financially was a recurring theme across the region. WCSOs tended to feel that governments were unsupportive of civil society. They observed an absence of political support in the poor implementation of laws and policies, particularly those relating to human rights and women's empowerment. Politicians did not consider furthering gender equality and women's rights among their priorities, which WCSOs believed would become more problematic with time, given the broader, afore-mentioned political trends.



There is a strengthening of conservatism at a global level, which makes it difficult for WCSOs to compromise and combat restrictive funding trends and institutional corruption.

WCSO, Serbia



Trends that hinder the work of WCSOs include re-traditionalization, the rise of fascism, the strengthening of patriarchy, conservative social groups, as well as the strengthening of clerical fascist groups.

WCSO, Serbia



Ethnonationalism is where all other problems come from. It involves returning to traditional regressive values: "getting the woman back in the house".

WCSO, BiH



There is no political will. Just total disinterest.

WCSO, Montenegro

²² More-Hollerweger et al., ERSTE Stiftung Studies, *Civil Society in Central and Eastern Europa: Monitoring 2019*, 2019, p. 7. The allocation and use of public funds were considered problematic in Serbia, BiH, and Romania, with some, albeit fewer, issues reported in Montenegro, North Macedonia, and Kosovo.

²³ Interview, WCSO, BiH, 2019.

²⁴ Interviews, activists, 2019. See also, [Wassholm, C.](#), pp. 29, 33.

²⁵ [Wassholm, C.](#), p. 33; and Kvinna till Kvinna, *Women's Rights in the Western Balkans*, 2019.

²⁶ [Wassholm, C.](#) For example, an organisation from BiH, said it is "impossible to organise events at the main square due to [the] restrictive application of the Law on Public Assemblies" (interview, 2019). A WCSO from North Macedonia shared information about shrinking space for LGBTQIA+ groups (interview, 2019).

Generally, weak rule of law, power relations based on family ties, and undemocratic party structures hinder positive social development.²⁷ WCSOs said corruption, nepotism, and a lack of recognition or understanding of the role of civil society all contribute to limiting the government funding available for initiatives towards women's rights.²⁸ WCSOs also reported the allocation of public funds to government-oriented organisations (GONGOs).²⁹ For example, political parties in **BiH** reportedly are creating their own organisations, diverting funds from WCSOs.³⁰ Similarly, in **Kosovo** concerns exist over corruption; due to nepotism and political influence, "only those with connections get grants", a WCSO observed.³¹ Given the precariousness of government support, a decrease in foreign funds may place WCSOs at risk.

WCSOs felt politicians fear the implications of empowering women and/or do not understand gender equality and the demands of WCSOs. Therefore, politicians are reluctant to direct financial support towards WCSOs.³² Deeply entrenched patriarchal traditions,³³ fear of "feminism" as a radical approach, and government-promoted negative stereotypes undermine WCSOs' work.³⁴ For example, a smear campaign by the former government in **North Macedonia** portrayed CSOs as "foreign mercenaries", "funded by Soros", hindering potential citizen support for such organisations, including WCSOs.³⁵ Similarly, in **Serbia**, following smear campaigns, some people believe WCSOs cause divorce.³⁶ Such negative misperceptions can make it difficult for WCSOs to transform public opinion, foster social change, or access funding, such as through individual giving.

National Laws Impacting Access to Funding

National laws can impact WCSOs' access to funding.³⁷ A detailed examination of national regulatory legal frameworks enabling or hindering WCSOs from expanding their access to resources was beyond the scope this research. This section draws from interviews and rapid desk research to provide an overview.

²⁷ Embassy of Sweden: Pristina, *Multidimensional Poverty Analysis, Kosovo 2017*, 2017.

²⁸ Interviews, WCSOs, Kosovo, Montenegro, and North Macedonia, 2019.

²⁹ *Wassholm, C.*, p. 7.

³⁰ Interview, WCSO, BiH, 2019.

³¹ Interview, WCSO, Kosovo, 2019.

³² Interviews, WCSOs, Kosovo and Montenegro, 2019.

³³ Interview, funder, Kosovo, 2019.

³⁴ These were recurring themes in interviews in the region.

³⁵ Interview, WCSO, North Macedonia, 2019.

³⁶ Interview, WCSO, Serbia, 2019.

³⁷ Legal frameworks also hinder CSOs' work generally, though not elaborated here. A survey of 1,758 organisations in Eastern Europe found that CSOs in BiH, among others, felt that the legal framework restricted their operations (*More-Hollerweger et al.*, 2019, pp. 8-9). Research for this report identified examples. The Law on Free Legal Aid in Serbia undermines the work of WCSOs by only allowing lawyers in local self-government units to provide legal aid, discriminating against lawyers based on their place of work (Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia nr. 87/2018, Art. 9, "Providers", in Serbian). Lawyers working for human rights groups, including WCSOs, who have performed this service in the absence of an adequate law for nearly 20 years, will be prevented from providing these services to persons most in need. The state likely will not be able to afford the legal aid services, leaving persons who cannot afford legal aid unprotected (Coalition PrEUgovor Alarm, *Coalition prEUgovor Report on Progress of Serbia in Chapters 23 and 24*, 2018, p. 58). The Lawyers' Committee for Human Rights YUCOM has expressed concerns that the Law directly affects the right to equal access to justice (*Draft Law on Free Legal Aid Limits the Right of Access to Justice*, 2018). The financial and legal implications are expansive, damaging both WCSOs and the vulnerable groups they serve. In BiH, police used the Law on Public Order and Peace of Republika Srpska [No. 11/15](#) and the Law on Public Assemblies of Republika Srpska [No. 118/08](#) to question activists who organised a peaceful protest on International Women's Day, 8 March 2019.

Resources for Implementing Legal Commitments

In Albania, Kosovo, and Serbia, legal commitments to gender-responsive budgeting exist.³⁸ Since 2012, North Macedonia has had a strategy for gender-responsive budgeting.³⁹ If countries fully applied gender-responsive budgeting, it would contribute to more equal distribution of government funds, potentially providing more resources for WCSOs.

WB countries also require or at least encourage that laws and/or policies are gender mainstreamed.⁴⁰ If governments appropriately mainstreamed gender in all laws, they would need to allocate resources for implementing gender equality commitments. This could provide resources to WCSOs as experts, implementers, service providers, monitors, and evaluators of government programmes. Moreover, governments could compensate WCSOs for their expertise, such as in governmental working groups on draft laws, conducting *ex ante* gender impact assessments, and supporting gender mainstreaming of government programmes. Some funders' requirements for governments to gender mainstream programmes, particularly when incorporated into policy, such as by states' adoption of IPA-financed programmes, can create opportunities for financing. WCSOs can provide technical support in gender mainstreaming programmes and implementing government commitments to furthering gender equality. However, in practice, WCSOs report that governments have not applied these provisions appropriately.⁴¹ Government funding exists primarily in the form of ad-hoc grants or tendering procedures, if at all, and not as sustained, institutionalised support.

Laws on gender equality and social services establish opportunities for government contracting of WCSOs as experts and service providers. However, a recurring theme across the region was that the generally gender-blind nature of relevant laws hinders normative funding for public benefit service provision, prevention, and rehabilitation tasks, which are the core operations of many WCSOs. As mentioned, all governments have ratified or committed to implementing CEDAW, and according to CEDAW General Recommendation 28, states must encourage and support WCSOs financially.⁴² All WB governments also have committed to implementing or have ratified the Istanbul Convention, which has specific requirements for state parties to support WCSOs.⁴³

WCSOs specialised in such services cited several challenges with the implementation of these provisions (see Box 2). Often governments adopt such laws and policies, but then they do not allocate or make accessible the financing required to implement them.



International funds will not always be available. A national legal framework [for financing WCSOs] must exist.

WCSO, North Macedonia



There are good laws but local government institutions don't implement them.

WCSO, Albania

³⁸ Albania: [Law 68/2017 on Local Self-Government Finance](#), Art. 2.8, 36.4.c), and 54.i). Kosovo: [Law on Gender Equality](#), Art. 3.1.17, 5.1.5, 8.1.4., 8.1.8, 12.2.2. Serbia: [Budget System Law](#), Art. 2, paragraph 58v and 4.4.

³⁹ North Macedonia: Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, [Strategy for introducing Gender Responsive Budgeting in the Republic of Macedonia 2012-2017](#).

⁴⁰ Albania: Ministry of Social Welfare and Youth, [National Strategy and Action Plan on Gender Equality](#), 2016-2020, objectives 1.4, 2.1.2, 2.1.5, 2.2.5, 2.2.6, 2.2.9, 4.1.3, 4.1.4, 4.2.1. Kosovo: [Law on Gender Equality](#), Art. 3.1.16, 5.1.3, 8.1.4, 8.1.8, 12.2.2. Montenegro: [Law on Gender Equality](#), Art. 3. BiH: [Law on Gender Equality in Bosnia and Herzegovina Consolidated Version](#) No. 16/03 and 102/09, Art. 24.b), 27.a), 27.b). In Serbia, this obligation exists for policies through the [Law on Budgetary System](#), which also introduces obligatory gender budgeting. See also, Government of the Republic of Serbia, Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Unit, [Guidance for Social Impact Assessment](#).

⁴¹ Interviews, WCSOs.

⁴² For details on each country, see the [Introduction](#).

⁴³ Ibid.

Box 2. Normative Funding for Service Providers Addressing Violence

For decades, in the absence of state services, WCSOs were among the only actors providing shelter, SOS hotlines, and other support to women and children suffering from domestic violence, sex trafficking, and other forms of gender-based violence (primarily violence against women *because* they are women). Often following policy proposals and advocacy by WCSOs, WB governments have established laws relating to domestic violence and trafficking.¹ By ratifying the Istanbul Convention, governments must take steps to ensure provision and funding of services to persons who have suffered violence. Following such government commitments, several foreign funders that previously financed shelters and other WCSO service providers have discontinued funding based on the assumption that the state would take over responsibility for funding these services.

WCSOs believe this withdrawal of funding occurred too quickly and without sufficient attention to ensuring that governments established functioning strategies and normative frameworks for sustainable financing of qualified service providers. Insufficient discussion has taken place among foreign funders, government actors, and WCSO experts on how exactly governments will fund such services. Conversations have not addressed sensitive issues like how to preserve the independence and crucial watchdog roles of WCSO service providers if they are dependent on state funding. Given the private and often hidden nature of violence, supporting women who have suffered violence in accessing justice is among the only ways to monitor institutional performance in treating such cases. Government-funded WCSOs have expressed concerns that they have been silenced from demanding accountability from poor-performing institutions for fear (and sometimes direct threats) that their funding may be withdrawn. The issue of WCSOs being co-opted or controlled by governments because they are dependent on government funds has not been sufficiently addressed in the few existing funding frameworks. Moreover, recurring concerns came from WCSOs that nepotism, corruption, and/or CSOs politically supportive of the government tend to receive tenders, even when they lack expertise.

In **Serbia**, the Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veteran and Social Affairs opened a call for proposals on three separate occasions for operation of the government-funded SOS hotline for persons suffering violence, towards fulfilling Istanbul Convention requirements. However, the Ministry terminated every call due to irregularities, including those identified by the Autonomous Women's Centre, a WCSO specialised in this work.² In the end, the Ministry decided not to procure expert services, but rather to allocate the funding directly to a government institution under its own jurisdiction.³ Concerningly, at the time, the institution's employees lacked training, experience, and licenses required for operating an SOS hotline, as per the Istanbul Convention.⁴ This could place women at risk of receiving poor quality services. Meanwhile, very experienced WCSOs already licenced by the Ministry could have provided these services if the tendering procedure had been conducted appropriately.⁵

WCSOs have expressed concern that the introduction of state funding in ways such as this could be used to "kill off" WCSOs with decades of experience in public benefit service provision, replacing their services with lower quality or non-existent state services, or mediocre services with high thresholds that disqualify most women from receiving such services (e.g., only survivors with small children can access services). Thus, they have called for further discussion on the appropriate design of such services, to which they can contribute meaningfully based on their decades of expertise.

¹ For more information about legal changes to which WCSOs contributed, see [Why Support WCSOs?](#).

² Autonomous Women's Centre (AWC), "[Open Questions to the Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veteran and Social Affairs](#)", 2018.

³ Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veteran and Social Affairs of the Republic of Serbia, Decision, "[Decision to withdraw the open call for associations to provide SOS helpline services for women who have experienced violence](#)", Belgrade, 2017.

⁴ AWC, "[The Ministry of Labour Violates the Laws: A Letter from the AWC to the Public Procurement Directorate](#)", 2018.

⁵ Macanović, V. "[Where have the decades of work of women's organizations disappeared](#)", 2017.

For example, in the Federation of **Bosnia and Herzegovina** (FBiH), the Law on Protection of Domestic Violence provides for 70% of financing for safe houses from federal funds and 30% from the cantonal budget.¹ However, between the unavailability of funds and lack of accurate cost analyses, the Law has not been implemented appropriately.² In **Montenegro**, there are no specific funds allocated for specialised services, such as a SOS hotline for victims of violence or women's shelters, currently provided by WCSOs. Rather, the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare chooses such service providers through public procurement, public invitation, or public-private partnership, of the Law on Social and Child Welfare.³ In **Albania**, the recently established Social Fund enables municipalities to use state funds for social services for women, children in need, the elderly, and vulnerable categories.⁴ WCSOs could apply for grants for social service provision through this new financial mechanism, though none seem to have received such funding yet.⁵

In **Kosovo**, ad-hoc funding provided through grant rounds has led shelters to have funding gaps lasting several months, forcing them to close and placing women and children at great risk of violence. According to the National Strategy on Protection from Domestic Violence, the government should "allocate permanent budget for shelters, which should be sufficient to cover all expenses, including counselling and caretaking of victims of violence".⁶ After the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare (MLSW) failed to implement this properly, in 2019 the parliament approved a separate budget line to support shelters, following WCSOs' advocacy.⁷ Nevertheless, MLSW continued with similar grant schemes for WCSO service providers, not implementing appropriately the Strategy or parliament-approved budget line.⁸ Only following additional advocacy were funds allocated, albeit at the end of the year.⁹

Thus, while most WB countries have ad hoc grant schemes, governments have not established sustained funding for civil society, including diverse WCSOs. For service providers, normative funding via a permanent budget line could support cost recovery for services provided.¹⁰

¹ [Law on Protection from Domestic Violence of the Federation of BiH](#) No 20/2013, Art. 35.

² Interviews, WCSOs, 2019.

³ Pursuant to Article 72 of the [Law on Social and Child Welfare](#), No. 27/13, 1/15, 42/15, 47/15, 56/16, 66/16, 1/17, 31/17, 42/17, and 50/17 17.

⁴ Council of Ministers, [Decision "for Creation and Functionalisation of a Social Fund"](#), 2018, Decision 23.02.2018.

⁵ Correspondence with AWEN, 2020. The Fund has just begun to be implemented. WCSOs also said that draft amendments for laws on domestic violence and legal aid in Albania include provision of funds for specialised services; if passed, they could facilitate access to resources for WCSOs (interview, 2019). As of the end of 2019, the government had not finalised these laws yet.

⁶ [National Strategy of the Republic of Kosovo on Protection from Domestic Violence and Action Plan 2016-2020](#), p. 37. Municipalities also should allocate resources for "social sheltering: for victims of domestic violence, and in special cases they should provide material assistance to children and families in need" ([Law on Social and Family Services](#), Art. 1). The Strategy fails to clearly assign responsibility for financing to the Ministry or municipalities (p. 38, budget line 4.3.4).

⁷ Ministry of Finance of the Republic of Kosovo, Law No. 06/L-133 on [The Budget Appropriations for the Budget of the Republic of Kosovo 2019](#), Budget Line: 01500 1060, "Basic Expenditure for Shelter".

⁸ KWN, ["Advocacy Letter of Kosovo Shelters Towards the National Coordinator Against Domestic Violence, Expressing Concern on Non-Allocated Funds for Shelters"](#), 2019 (in Albanian).

⁹ KWN, ["Advocacy Leads Kosovo's New Government to Establish Budget Line for Shelters"](#), March 2020.

¹⁰ For an explanation of "normative funding", please see the [Glossary](#).

Cumbersome Tax Laws and Procedures

WCSOs cited several examples of legal frameworks limiting their work. Tax laws posed challenges for WCSOs in all WB countries, with some WCSOs paying taxes at rates similar to private companies. For example, while **Albanian** CSOs should be partially refunded for Value Added Tax (VAT) expenditures,¹¹ the lengthy, difficult process for claiming reimbursement takes time away from their activism.¹² Further, the Albanian government decision on reimbursements only applies to IPA II funds; reimbursement of VAT for other EU instruments or different donor-funded actions are not legally regulated. In each individual case, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) must be signed between the Ministry of Finance and the donor. According to a sector-wide monitoring study, CSOs are not treated according to their non-profit designation, and therefore the VAT reimbursement scheme for IPA-funded projects has not succeeded.¹³ The systems for reimbursement are complex and time-consuming in all WB countries, but particularly so in Albania, Montenegro, and Serbia.



CSOs are equated with the private sector and are treated as private businesses subject to the same laws as private firms.

WCSO, North Macedonia



Sometimes I believe that I dedicate more time to financial issues than programmatic ones.

WCSO, Albania

An Enabling Regulatory Environment for Philanthropic Giving

In addition to social and cultural factors, philanthropy depends on a conducive legal and regulatory environment.¹⁴ Rapid desk research suggests that none of the WB countries have a coherent, enabling legislative framework to facilitate systematic fundraising targeting the public and corporate donors. **Albania** has a Law on Sponsorships with incentives for businesses to donate in specified public interest areas, such as culture, art, and sports.¹⁵ The tax system permits donations between 3% and 5% of profit before tax, depending on the type of activities sponsored. However, the list of deductible activities only includes humanitarian, cultural, or artistic activities, or support to organisations focusing on sports, education, environment, literature, science, and research; it does not explicitly include support to organisations working on democracy and human rights.

In **BiH**, sponsorships and donations are regulated by the Law on Income for Corporate Businesses and the Law on Taxes on Personal Income. Tax deductions are allowable for up to 3% of gross annual income for donations in money or in-kind.¹⁶ However, individual donors that are not entrepreneurs cannot qualify for tax deductions on their donations.

In **Kosovo**, several laws relate to different aspects of philanthropy, contributing to confusion. Public interest organisations are exempt from taxes so long as they use their income exclusively to further their public benefit purpose, including income derived from donations and grants.¹⁷ Individuals and legal persons can deduct up to 10% of their taxable

¹¹ [MoU signed](#) between Council of Ministers in Albania and the European Commission.

¹² Interview, WCSO, Albania, 2019.

¹³ Hoxha, J., Tavani, K., Topi, A., Keruti, K., *Monitoring Matrix on Enabling Environment for Civil Society Development: Country Report for Albania 2017*, Partners Albania for Change and Development, 2018.

¹⁴ Hudson Institute, *The Index of Philanthropic Freedom 2015*.

¹⁵ Albania, [Law on Sponsorship](#) (with updated amendments).

¹⁶ [FBiH Law on Corporate Income Tax](#) and [FBiH Law on Personal Income Tax](#).

¹⁷ Republic of Kosovo, [Law on Freedom of Association in NGOs](#), Law No. 06/L-043.

income for donations for specified public benefit purposes.¹⁸ Taxpayers who make donations in particular areas can have an additional deduction of 10% of their income.¹⁹

In **Montenegro**, according to the income tax law, NGOs are exempt from taxation on grants, donations, membership dues, and non-economic sources of income.²⁰ "The Income Tax Law provides that NGOs are exempt from income taxation on their economic activities up to €4,000, provided that all of the exempt income is allocated to the primary statutory objectives for which the organisation was established."²¹ Corporations and individuals can deduct up to 3.5% of their gross income for contributions for medical, educational, scientific, religious, cultural, sport, humanitarian, and environmental purposes.²²

In **North Macedonia**, the law does not recognise the status of organisations working for social benefits, but only for projects and donations. CSOs, "associations of citizens", and foundations are eligible to receive donations if they engage in activities which support and promote public benefit purposes.²³ Corporations can deduct up to 5% of their taxable income for qualifying public benefit purposes, whereas individuals may deduct up to 20% of their taxable income for giving to qualifying public benefit purposes.

Serbia provides opportunities for corporate giving. The Law on Corporate Income Tax stipulates that expenditures in the taxpayer's balance sheet may be recognised as an expense up to a maximum of 5% of the total income for: 1) health, educational, scientific, humanitarian, religious and sporting purposes, environmental protection, as well as benefits provided to institutions and/or providers of social protection services established in accordance with the law governing social protection; and 2) humanitarian aid, that is, elimination of consequences arising in cases of emergency.²⁴ Expenditure on cultural investments, including cinematographic activities, up to 5% of total revenue, is recognized as an expense in the taxpayer's tax balance. The Law does not explicitly recognise the status of non-profit organisations for social benefit purposes. Therefore, CSOs must apply for tax deductions for each donation received. Gifts below the equivalent of \$900 provided by a single donor are exempt from income tax.²⁵ The Law on Personal Income Tax does not allow tax exemptions for individual giving.²⁶ The Law on Income Tax is unclear regarding gifts for institutional support for non-profits acting in the public interest.²⁷ Non-profits are exempt from taxation on grants, membership dues, donations, and non-economic sources of income.²⁸

More comprehensive, enabling legal frameworks could facilitate fundraising for WCSOs. However, the adoption of such legislation would require that legislatures recognise the need to increase public trust in and support of CSOs. This does not seem likely, or easy, considering the aforementioned [political context](#), amid shrinking space for civil society. Activists are coping with limitations in the legal framework and its implementation by advocating for changes to laws hindering their work. This includes through reports, public statements, events, street actions, conference attendance, networking, and media pressure.

¹⁸ Republic of Kosovo, [Law on Corporate Income Tax](#), Law No. 06/L-105, Art. 11, paragraph 5.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Republic of Montenegro, [Parliament of the Republic of Montenegro, Law on Tax on Income of Natural Persons Law No. 01-3873/2](#).

²¹ Ibid.

²² Republic of Montenegro, [Parliament of the Republic of Montenegro, Corporate Income Tax Law No. 065/01](#).

²³ Catalyst Balkans, [Tax Laws Affecting Philanthropy in the Countries of South Europe](#), 2013.

²⁴ Ministry of Finance of the Republic of Serbia, [Guideline for Tax Benefits of Donors](#), 2019, Belgrade, p. 2.

²⁵ Koeshall, N. for Catalyst Balkans, [Regional Report Balkan Countries](#).

²⁶ Ibid. [Golubovic, Dragan, cited in Catalyst Balkans](#), p. 50.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ [Non-profit Law in Serbia](#), 2019.

Conclusion: The Context

Global funding priorities and the general political context contribute to challenges for many WCSOs in accessing foreign funding, domestic government financing, and individual donations. Political instability coupled with broader trends towards nationalism and populism have created space for growing conservatism and anti-gender movements. These factors contribute to shrinking space for women's rights activists and WCSOs. In several countries tax laws create financial barriers for WCSOs and lengthy procedures contribute to inefficient use of time. None of the countries has a comprehensive enabling regulatory environment for WCSOs' strategic, sustainable fundraising from individuals and businesses, and the current political climate does not suggest that such legal changes will be easy to achieve. While some ad-hoc grant schemes exist, governments have not established sustainable funding for civil society. Sustained funding, such as normative funding, does not exist for non-profit public benefit services, arguably best provided by experienced WCSOs. Insufficient discussion has surrounded how states can best establish sustained funding for civil society while averting corruption, nepotism, and politicisation, as well as preserving the independent watchdog role of WCSOs. Autonomy is crucial for WCSOs' important work in holding institutions accountable to furthering human rights, improving access to justice for vulnerable groups, and enhancing rule of law. The EU pre-accession process, coupled with other international instruments outlined in the [Introduction](#), may present several opportunities for strengthening and institutionalising government support to (W)CSOs. This includes putting in place safeguards for transparent and fair resourcing. It also can include advocating to institutionalise processes for cooperation and coordination between the government and civil society, which could contribute to more appropriate funding for WCSOs.



Activists protest against femicide in front of the Ministry of Labour in Belgrade in Belgrade 2017. WCSOs' and activists' autonomy is crucial for holding institutions accountable to furthering human rights.

Photo: Marija Jankovic

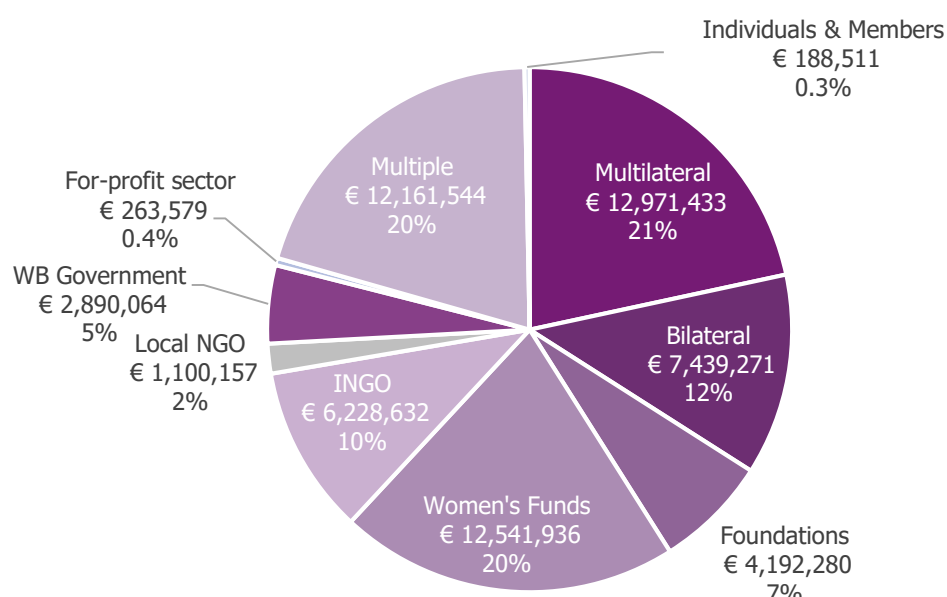
WHO FUNDS WOMEN'S RIGHTS?

This chapter examines which funders are engaged in providing financial support to WCSOs in the WB. Given the scarcity of other data, findings draw primarily from data provided by 85% of the WCSOs that participated in the research. Respondents comprised an estimated 69% of the population of all WCSOs known to operate in the region during this period, including most of the largest, active WCSOs.¹ Although not exhaustive, findings provide an indication of funding trends. Notably, 2019 had not ended at the time of the research, so findings for 2019 are indicative, but not all-inclusive. Case studies about different funders draw from data provided by these funders, among other sources. The chapter also discusses the types of funders that WCSOs prefer and reasons for their preferences.

Funders Active in the WB

Based on WCSOs' records, several different funders have supported WCSOs in the region between 2014 and mid-2019 with more than 1,963 different grants, contracts, or donations. Graph 4 shows the total funding that WCSOs reported receiving directly from funders from 2014 to mid-2019. Approximately 21% of WCSOs' funding came from multiple funders for which the precise amount received from each funder was unclear.² Based on the descriptive information provided, much of this funding derived from multilateral and bilateral funders. The graphs and narrative that follow illustrate this through the use of greater than symbols (">"), which indicate that multilaterals and bilaterals likely provided more funding than indicated.

Graph 4. Total Funds WCSOs Received by Funder Type



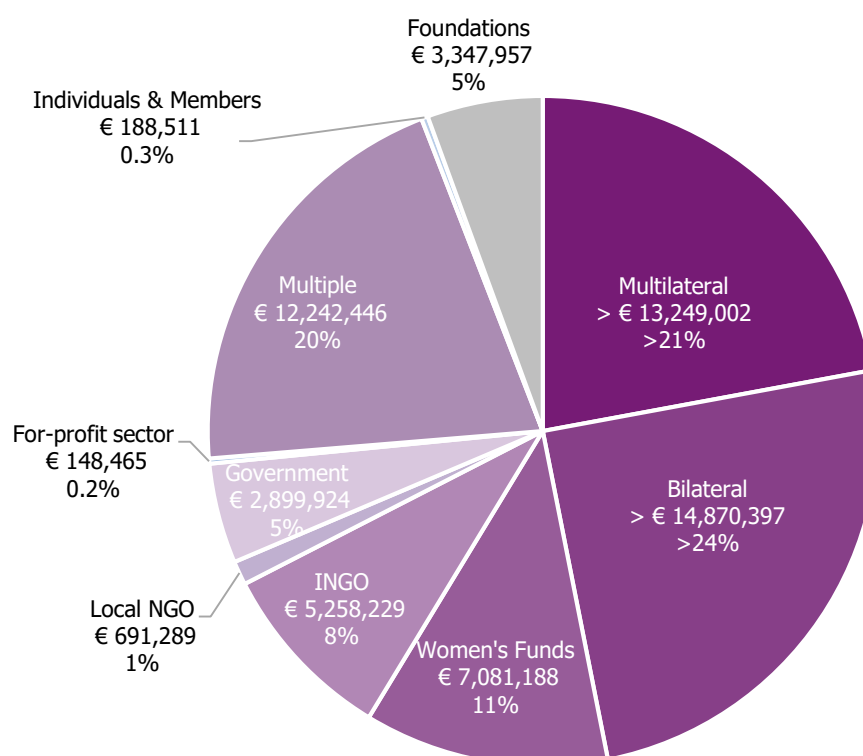
¹ For a breakdown by country, please see [Annex 3](#).

² For example, a WCSO would state that an initiative was funded by both a multilateral and a WB government, but did not divide how much support each provided. Despite attempts to clarify such data, the team did not receive enough information to attribute this funding to a particular funder category.

WCSOs reportedly received the most support from multilaterals during this period (>€13 million), accounting for >21% of all financial support reported. The next largest direct supporter of WCSOs was women's funds (€12.5 million),³ comprising 20% of reported funding. Notably, much of their funding derived originally from bilateral funders (see Graph 5). Bilaterals provided >12% of funding to WCSOs (>€7.4 million). INGOs provided 10% (€6.2 million), followed by foundations at 7% (€4.2 million), WB governments at 5% (€2.9 million), and local NGOs at 2% (€1.1 million). The for-profit sector, such as businesses, provided 0.4% (€263,579). Individuals and members contributed 0.3% (€188,511).

Graph 5 presents funding traced back to its original source, that is, the funder's source of funding, where identifiable.⁴ From this perspective, WCSOs received the most funding from bilaterals totalling >€14.9 million (>24%), followed by multilaterals at >€13.2 million (>21%). Approximately 11% came from women's funds (€7.1 million). When compared with Graph 4, this suggests that an estimated 44% of funding women's funds provided to WCSOs originated primarily from bilaterals and, albeit to a lesser extent, from multilaterals. One of the clearest examples is The Kvinna till Kvinna Foundation, which is included in Graph 4 among the women's funds. In Graph 5, much of The Kvinna till Kvinna Foundation's funds fall into the bilateral category, as the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) is the original source of these funds. Thus, in Graph 5, the amount of WCSO funding originating from women's funds decreases from 20% to 11%. Similarly, funds distributed by INGOs and local NGOs decreases, as they also receive funds from bilaterals or multilaterals, passing these funds on to WCSOs. The other funders' proportions and amounts of funding remain similarly small in comparison.

Graph 5. Total Funds by Original Funder



³ For a definition of women's funds, multilaterals, bilaterals, and other terms in this chapter, see the [Glossary](#).

⁴ It was not always possible to identify the original source of funding, but this is indicative. Obviously, multilateral funding, such as from the EU or UN, also originates from bilaterals, though it is kept separate here.

Unless otherwise noted, all graphs that follow refer to the original source of funding, where known. Bilateral funders, particularly through women's funds, tended to provide the most overall funds to WCSOs over time (Graph 6).⁵ Bilateral funding was surpassed only in 2015 by multilateral funding, following a steep decline in bilateral funding. The decline may be attributable to the global financial crisis and tightened spending by many governments. Multilateral funding surpassed bilateral funding again in 2018, which could be attributed to the increase in EU funding that year. In 2018, the EU-funded UN Women-implemented regional programme on violence against women started providing grants to WCSOs, and WCSOs received three comparatively larger EU-funded grants.

Multilateral funding has increased over time, from €1.9 million in 2014 to €2.7 in 2018. Funding from foundations, including women's funds, has remained fairly consistent over time, albeit decreasing between 2014 and 2017 and increasing in 2018. Funding from INGOs seems to have decreased over time. While WB government funding to WCSOs appears to have more than doubled between 2014 and 2018, it has remained comparably minimal. Funding from local NGOs, individuals, members, and businesses have remained consistently minimal. Again, funding for 2019 is only indicative.

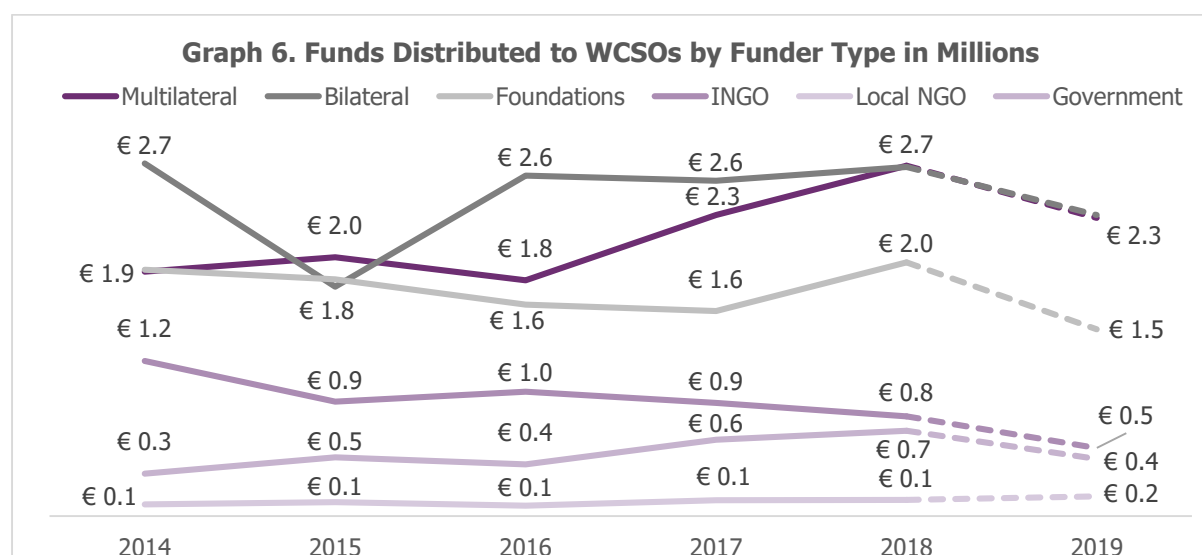


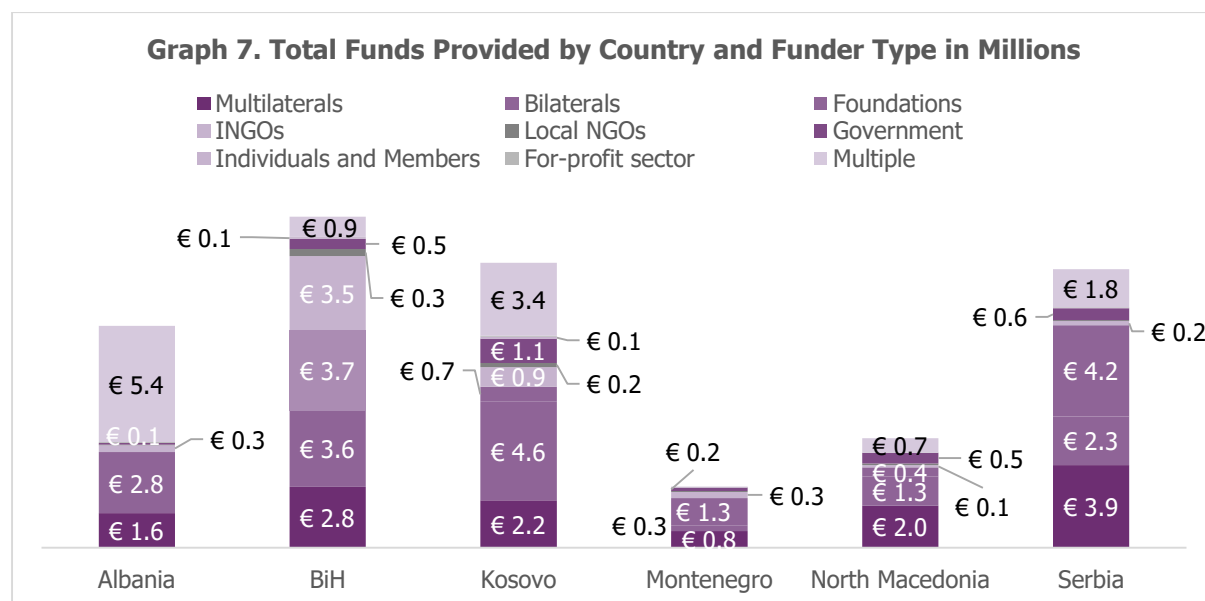
Table 2 provides an overview of funding distributed by different funders. Governments gave the highest number of grants, contracts, or other types of funding. They also had the lowest average fund size and smallest grant given. On the other end of the spectrum, multilaterals provided the largest funds on average and had the largest grant distributed.

	Multi-laterals	Bilaterals	Women's Funds	Other Foundations	INGOs	Local NGOs	Governments	Total/Overall
Total funding provided (millions)	€13.2	€14.9	€7.1	€3.3	€5.3	€6.9	€2.9	€62.0
Average fund size (thousands)	€57	€41	€37	€35	€21	€10	€6	€33
Minimum fund size	€128	€100	€250	€395	€49	€61	€9	€9
Maximum fund size (thousands)	€965	€697	€502	€500	€174	€285	€116	€1,468
# of funds given	242	174	360	123	293	170	459	1963

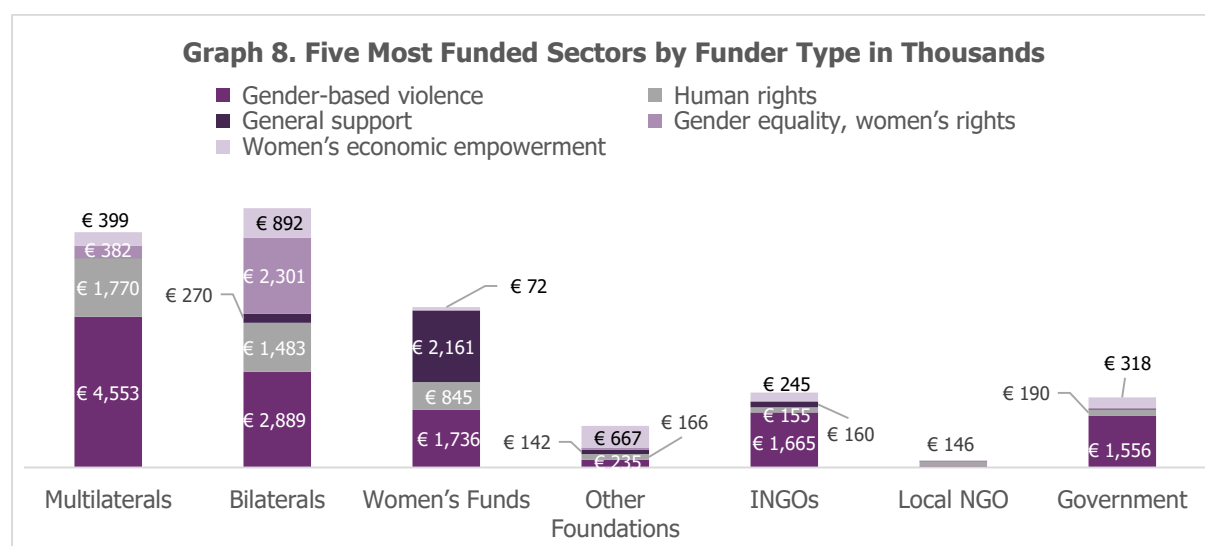
⁵ For overall trends, see the chapter on [Funding Trends](#).

⁶ Other funder types are not included because findings were too erratic and few to be meaningfully portrayed here. In this table, total funding refers to the amount that originated from the funder type, whereas the rows that follow refer to funds distributed by funders but that did not necessarily originate from them.

Graph 7 provides an overview of all funding reportedly received by WCSOs from 2014 to mid-2019 in each WB country, by funder type, in million euros. The most funds appear to have been distributed to WCSOs in **BiH**, with a rather balanced proportion of funding from bilaterals, multilaterals, foundations, and INGOs. WCSOs in **Kosovo** received the next largest portion of funds, followed by **Serbia, Albania**, and **North Macedonia**, all receiving funds primarily from bilaterals and multilaterals. WCSOs in **Montenegro** have received comparatively fewer resources, but this is partially attributable to the fact that fewer WCSOs exist in Montenegro than in other countries.



Graph 8 illustrates the five sectors or thematic areas that received the most funding.⁷ For all funders, except women's funds, the most funded area was addressing gender-based violence. Meanwhile, women's funds tended to provide more general support, particularly compared to other funders. Bilaterals provided substantially more funding towards gender equality and economic empowerment than did other funders. The sections that follow further examine funding provided to WCSOs by different types of funders.



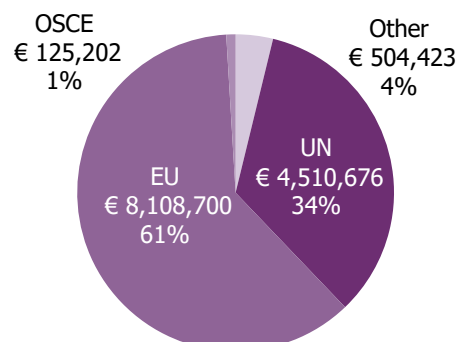
⁷ Amounts under €50,000 have been removed for readability.

Multilaterals

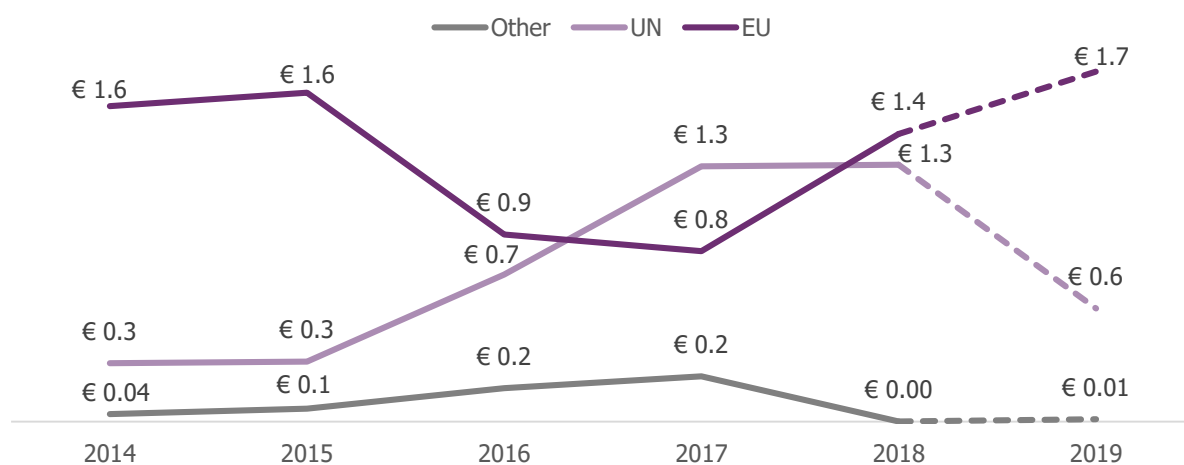
Multilaterals providing funds to WCSOs in the WB include the EU, UN, Council of Europe, and the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE).⁸ Among multilaterals, the EU seems to have provided the most funding to WCSOs (61%), amounting to an estimated €8.1 million in total from 2014 to mid-2019 (Graph 9). This includes identifiable situations in which the EU was the indirect, original source of funding to UN agencies, women's funds, INGOs, and local NGOs that then passed funds on to WCSOs.⁹

As illustrated previously (Graph 6), multilateral funding seems to have increased between 2014 and 2018. As Graph 10 depicts, EU support to WCSOs seems to have declined from 2015 to 2017, but then increased again in 2018. The EU provided financing through the EIDHR, the IPA II Civil Society Facility, Cross-border Cooperation instruments, Erasmus, and other IPA contracts at country and regional levels. Also considered here, when identifiable, the EU provided funding to some WCSOs via UN Women.¹⁰

Graph 9. Total Funds Given by Multilaterals



Graph 10. Funds Given by Multilaterals in Millions



⁸ Representatives of the UN and OSCE stated in interviews that they are not donors (2019). Nevertheless, they are included here because they do provide funds to WCSOs, and thus are referred to as funders.

⁹ While the authors attempted to identify all such cases, additional instances not reflected here may exist.

¹⁰ This was not always clearly discernible from the data and thus may be only partially represented here. Similarly, insufficient data was available to determine the original source of *all* UN funds distributed to WCSOs.

Case Study: The EU and Funding for Gender Equality in the WB

The EU has committed to furthering gender equality with the EU Comprehensive Approach to Women, Peace, and Security, the EU Strategic Approach to Women, Peace, and Security, and GAP II, though these are rather weak policies compared to a regulation.¹ Broadly, these include commitments towards funding WCSOs.² Although a Staff Working Document and thus not legally binding, GAP II rather ambitiously foresees that MSs will “commit to supporting the achievement” of GAP II.³ Objective 3 foresees “sufficient resources allocated by EU institutions and Member States to deliver on EU gender policy commitments.” Moreover, GAP II calls for EU actors, including MSs, to report annually on its implementation.⁴

GAP II requires that all EU spending, programming, and policy making is informed by gender analysis.⁵ However, a review of all **240** publicly available IPA II Action Documents for the WB found that only 5.8% included gender analysis, and 22.9% had some, albeit insufficient, gender analysis.⁶ As mentioned, 56% of these actions did not have any OECD gender marker assigned. Of those that did, independent analysis demonstrated that only 47% were marked correctly.⁷ After remarking actions, only 3.3% had a gender marker 1 and 0.4% a gender marker 2. This review also suggested that IPA II expenditures on WCSOs and gender equality were limited. Only 6.5% of Action Documents clearly stated that resources would be allocated for WCSOs. Additionally, based on Action Documents, only 0.04% of the total IPA II funds were clearly designated for gender equality. The EU’s present tracking systems do not allow for precise measurement of expenditures on gender equality or of funds benefitting WCSOs.

To assess whether the EU’s Comprehensive Approach to Women, Peace, and Security,⁸ or GAP II have had any influence on donors’ funding decisions in the WB, funders from the EU and MSs in the WB were asked if they were aware of these policies, and how they have influenced their funding decisions. The sample was not representative of all such funders in the WB, so it is not statistically significant. Nevertheless, funders’ responses remain indicative and interesting. Of the 18 funders interviewed that represented the EU or MSs, eight (44%) said that these policies had not informed their funding decisions, and seven (39%) said that these policies only somewhat informed their funding decisions. Some said that their headquarters likely use these policies, but they personally did not know what these policies contain. Only three of the EU and MS funders (17%), primarily Swedish funders, said these policies substantially informed their decisions. Few specific examples existed of how funders had used these policies to inform their strategies or funding decisions. While some said they mainstreamed gender in already-supported projects, very few mentioned funding new programmes towards gender equality *as a result* of these policies.⁹ Thus, the impact of policies like the Comprehensive Approach and GAP II on EU funding towards gender equality in the WB seems *ad hoc* and negligible.

5.8%

of EU IPA II Action Documents contain sufficient gender analysis

56%

of EU IPA II Action Documents lacked a Gender Marker

¹ For more on the weaknesses of these policies, see Farnsworth and Rashiti for KWN, [Following Through on EU Commitments to Gender Equality: Lessons Learned from GAP II to Inform GAP III](#), Pristina: 2019.

² See the [Introduction](#).

³ [GAP II](#), Objective 1, activity 1.3, p. 20.

⁴ [GAP II](#), Objective 2, indicator 2.4.4., p. 22. See also, pp. 16 and 39 on reporting.

⁵ [GAP II](#), Objective 4.

⁶ KWN, Policy Brief (untitled), forthcoming 2020.

⁷ Also, see the [Introduction](#). Researchers did not have information as to whether gender analyses were conducted, a pre-requisite for assigning a gender marker. Therefore, perhaps fewer actions were marked correctly.

⁸ Researchers asked about the Comprehensive Approach, rather than the new Strategic Approach, because the timeframe examined was 2014 to 2019, so it was more likely that the Comprehensive Approach would have influenced funding decisions.

⁹ The midterm evaluation of the EU IPA II Civil Society Facility also concluded that gender mainstreaming was “declarative” but lacked “real commitment” (AETS Consortium, [Mid-term Evaluation of the Civil Society Facility for the Western Balkans and Turkey: Appendices](#), 2017).

Case Study: The European Union Office in Kosovo

The European Union Office (EUO) supports Kosovo in making progress towards EU Accession. It supports and advises the Government of Kosovo, contributing to development as well as consolidation of fundamental freedoms and human rights. It also coordinates other EU presences in Kosovo, including MSs.¹ EU financial assistance funds several sectors: Democracy and Governance; Rule of Law and Fundamental Rights (with its subsectors of Justice, Home Affairs, Fundamental Rights, and Minorities); Energy; Competitiveness and Innovation; Education, Employment, and Social Policies; Agriculture and Rural Development; and Territorial and Regional Cooperation.²

Between 2014 and 2019, the EUO allocated €453 million for distribution to Kosovo.³ Of this, an estimated 0.6% of allocated funding focused explicitly on gender equality and women's rights (€2.9 million). Gender equality-related actions amounted to approximately 0.4% of all EUO expenditures (€1.9 million). Additional actions involved gender mainstreaming as a "cross-cutting issue",⁴ but data on expenditures towards gender equality within these actions were unavailable. The EU does not have systems in place for tracking such funding.

All actions focusing on gender equality were within the Rule of Law sector and the Human Rights sub-sector. The actions supported focused on addressing gender-based violence, increasing women's political participation, improving women's economic and social rights, and furthering LGBTQIA+ rights. Approximately 1% of all EUO funds during this period were to be distributed to civil society, and about 58% of this CSO funding was allocated to WCSOs. Overall, WCSOs received approximately 0.4% of the EUO's total expenditures. Additional actions involved sub-granting to WCSOs, but precise amounts were not identifiable. Of the funding allocated to gender equality, WCSOs were to receive approximately 91% of the funding.

With grant sizes averaging €237,000 per grant for two to four years, only larger CSOs with sufficient prior annual turnover,⁵ financial management capacities, abilities to secure co-funding, and strong English writing skills can apply for EU funding.⁶ The EU has acknowledged the challenges it faces in reaching smaller, grassroots organisations, seeking to address this through strong encouragement or requirements for its beneficiaries to use a proportion of their funding for sub-granting.⁷

0.6%

of EUO funds in Kosovo
were allocated for
Gender Equality

0.4%

of EUO expenditures in Kosovo
Supported WCSOs

58%

of EUO civil society support
Funded WCSOs

¹ EU Office in Kosovo/EUSR, website, "What We Do", accessed in April 2020.

² EC, *Indicative Strategy Paper for Kosovo (2014-2020)*, 2014.

³ Data provided by EUO, Section for Civil Society, Media and Research, Section Secretariat, August 2019.

⁴ Interview, 2019.

⁵ As per the *EC Practical Guide*, this tends to be a requirement (Art. 2.6.11.2).

⁶ This was also a recurring theme among WCSOs interviewed (2019).

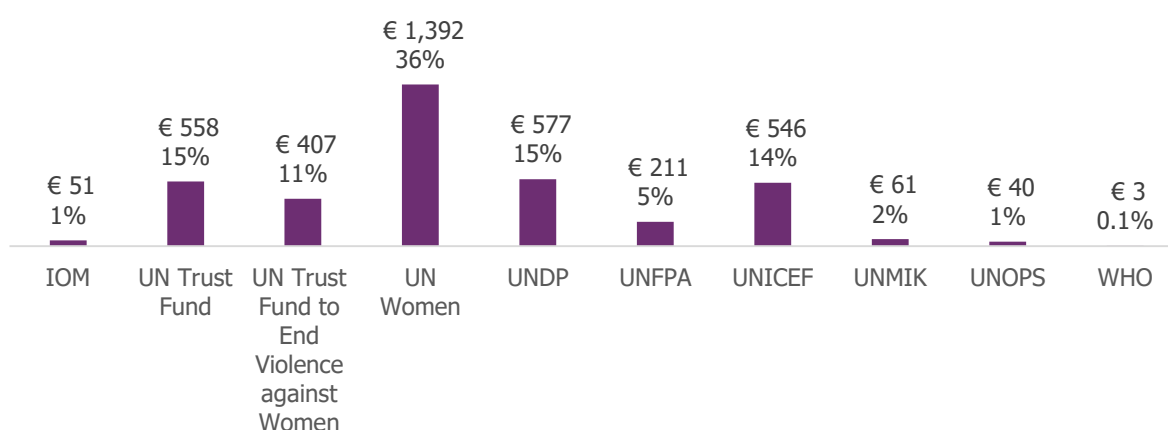
⁷ Interview, 2019.

As mentioned, the UN has several documents committing to furthering gender equality and supporting WCSOs, including the Beijing Platform for Action and CEDAW, among others.¹ The UN and its agencies provided an estimated 34% of the multilateral funding identified by WCSOs (€4.5 million). UN funding to WCSOs clearly increased between 2014 and 2018 (Graph 10). WCSOs reported receiving the most from UN Women (€1.4 million), comprising 36% of the support provided by UN agencies from 2014 to mid-2019 (Graph 11).²

Box 3. UN Agencies Funding WCSOs

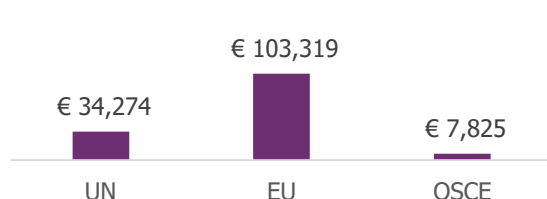
- ✓ International Office for Migration (IOM)
- ✓ Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (UN OHCHR)
- ✓ UN Children's Fund (UNICEF)
- ✓ UN Development Programme (UNDP)
- ✓ UN Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK)
- ✓ UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)
- ✓ UN Office for Project Services (UNOPS)
- ✓ UN Population Fund (UNFPA)
- ✓ UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women
- ✓ UN Women
- ✓ World Health Organisation

Graph 11. UN Funding for WCSOs by Agency in Thousands

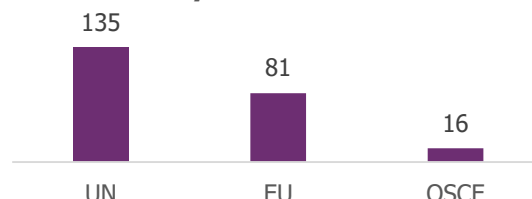


Funds distributed by multilaterals to WCSOs ranged from €128 to €965,117 with an average fund size of €56,513. The average amount provided by the EU to WCSOs was three times as much as the average funding provided by UN agencies (Graph 12). UN agencies appear to have distributed more grants or contracts ("funds") to WCSOs (Graph 13).

Graph 12. Average Fund Size from Multilaterals



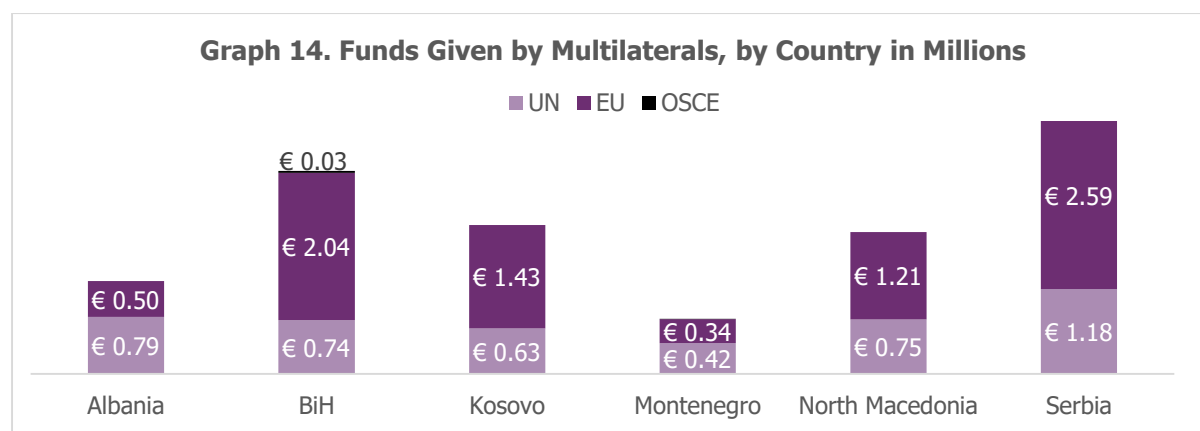
Graph 13. Number of Funds Given by Multilaterals



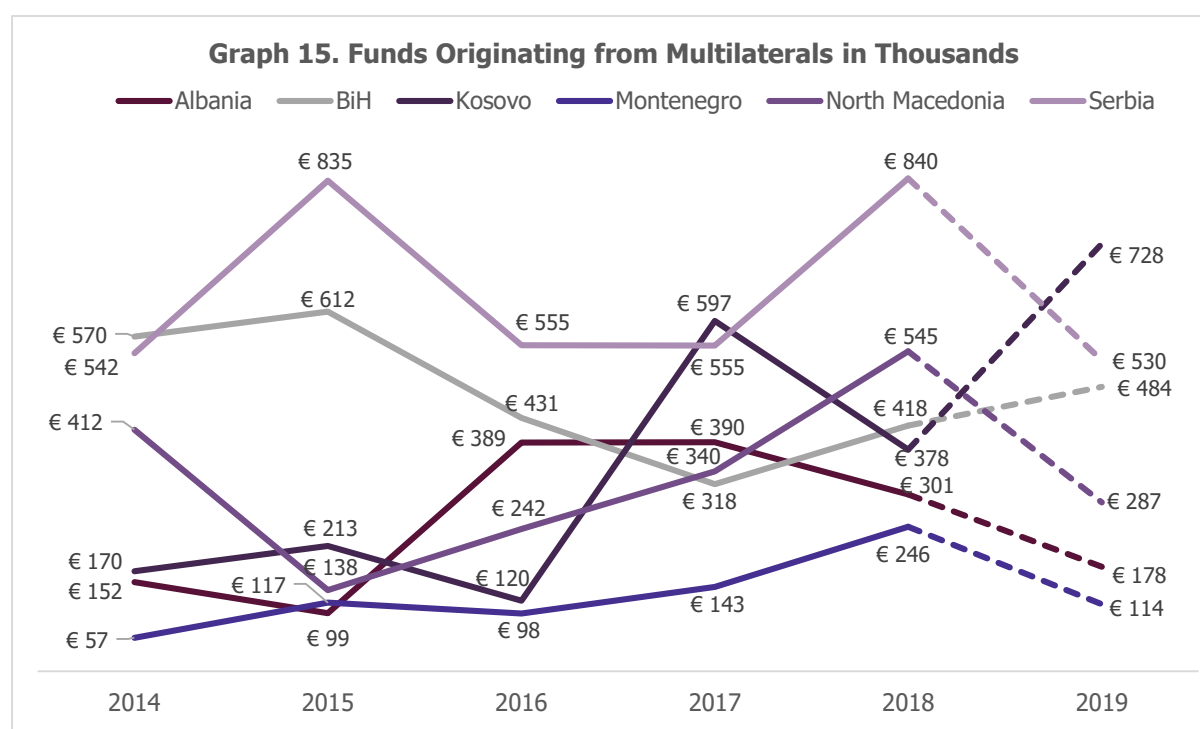
¹ See [Introduction](#).

² Notably several WCSOs mentioned "UN Trust Fund" but did not specify which. Potentially they referred to the UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women. However, it is represented separately in the graph. Established by [UN General Assembly Resolution 50/166](#) and administered by UN Women on behalf of the UN System, the UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women works with NGOs, governments, and UN country teams.

According to WCSO records, WCSOs in **Serbia** seem to have received more funding from both the EU and UN agencies than those in other countries, followed by **BiH** (Graph 14).³



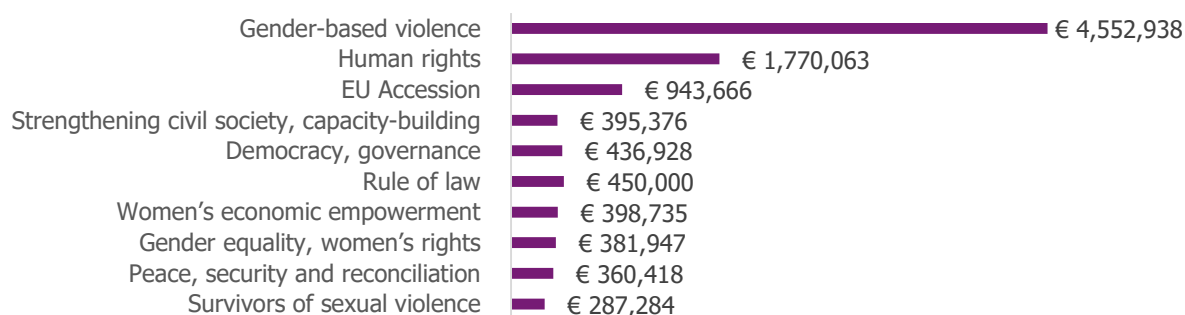
Graph 15 illustrates that multilateral funding within each country seems to have fluctuated over time, particularly in **Serbia** and **BiH**. In **Montenegro** and **North Macedonia**, funding seems to have increased over time, as well as in **Albania** and **Kosovo**, albeit with decreases in 2018.



According to data supplied by WCSOs, multilaterals mostly funded efforts to address gender-based violence. Other main areas supported included human rights and EU Accession (Graph 16).

³ Sometimes this funding was then distributed to WCSOs in other countries, which has been represented here where identifiable in the data.

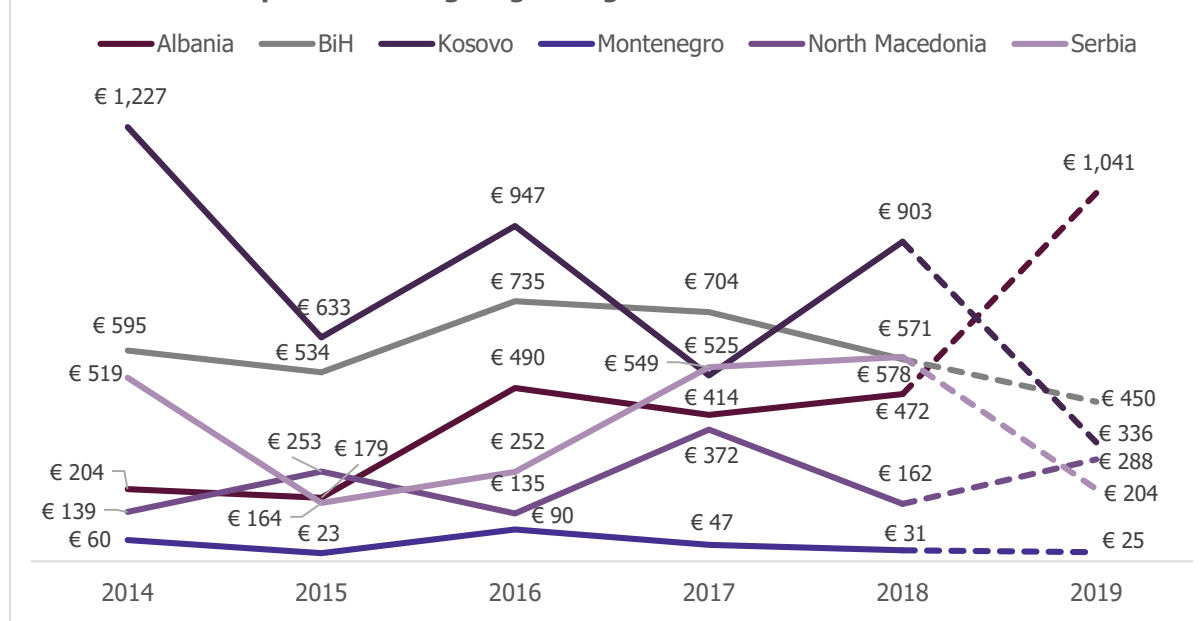
Graph 16. Main Areas Funded by Multilaterals



Bilaterals

Bilateral funding that WCSOs reported receiving has fluctuated over time in **Kosovo** and somewhat in **North Macedonia** (Graph 17). In contrast, funding from bilaterals remained fairly consistent in **BiH** and **Montenegro**. In **Albania**, bilateral funding has increased over time. WCSOs in **Kosovo** and **BiH** have tended to receive more support from bilateral funders than those in other countries.

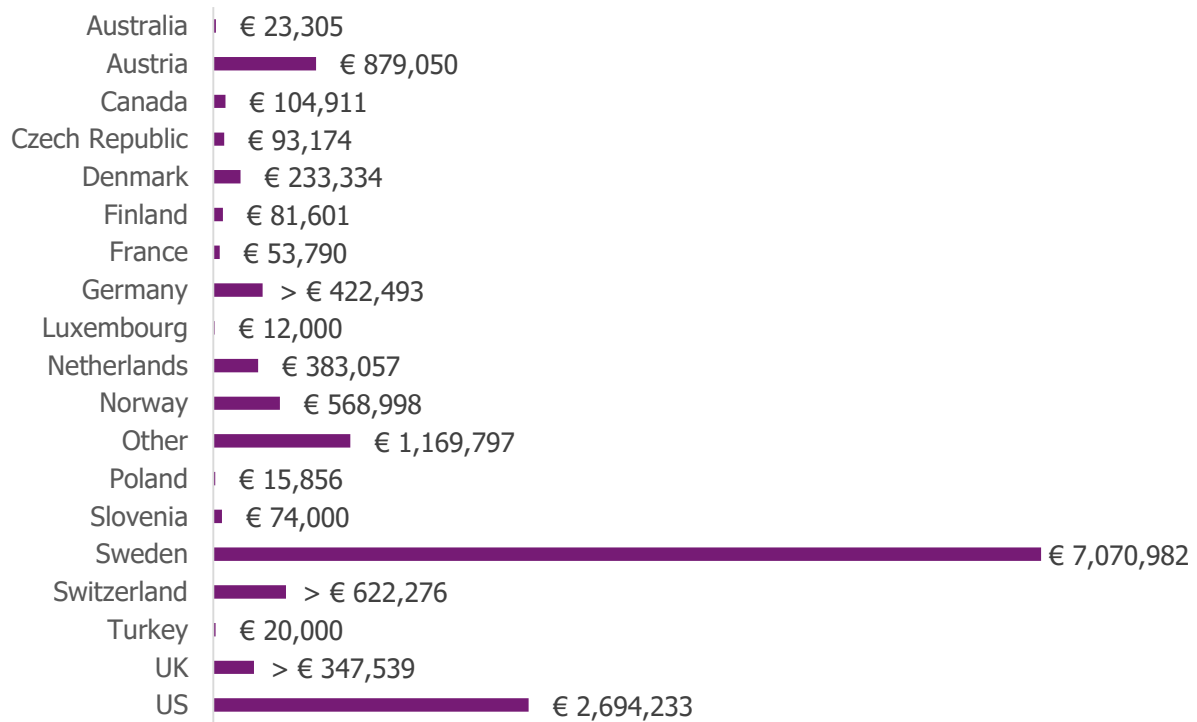
Graph 17. Funding Originating from Bilaterals in Thousands



WCSOs identified 18 different bilaterals from which they had received funding from 2015 to mid-2019.⁴ When tracing funds back to their original sources, **Sweden** provided the most funding to WCSOs (48% of bilateral funding), amounting to nearly €7.1 million, distributed primarily through The Kvinna till Kvinna Foundation (Graph 18). The **United States** (US) provided the second most funding at nearly €2.7 million (18%). Other larger bilateral funders included Switzerland (7%) and Austria (6%). The "Other" category includes data from multiple bilaterals that the research team could not divide accurately, primarily from Germany, the UK, and Switzerland, as represented by a greater than sign in Graph 18.

⁴ Other bilaterals may have provided funding, though they were not identified through this research.

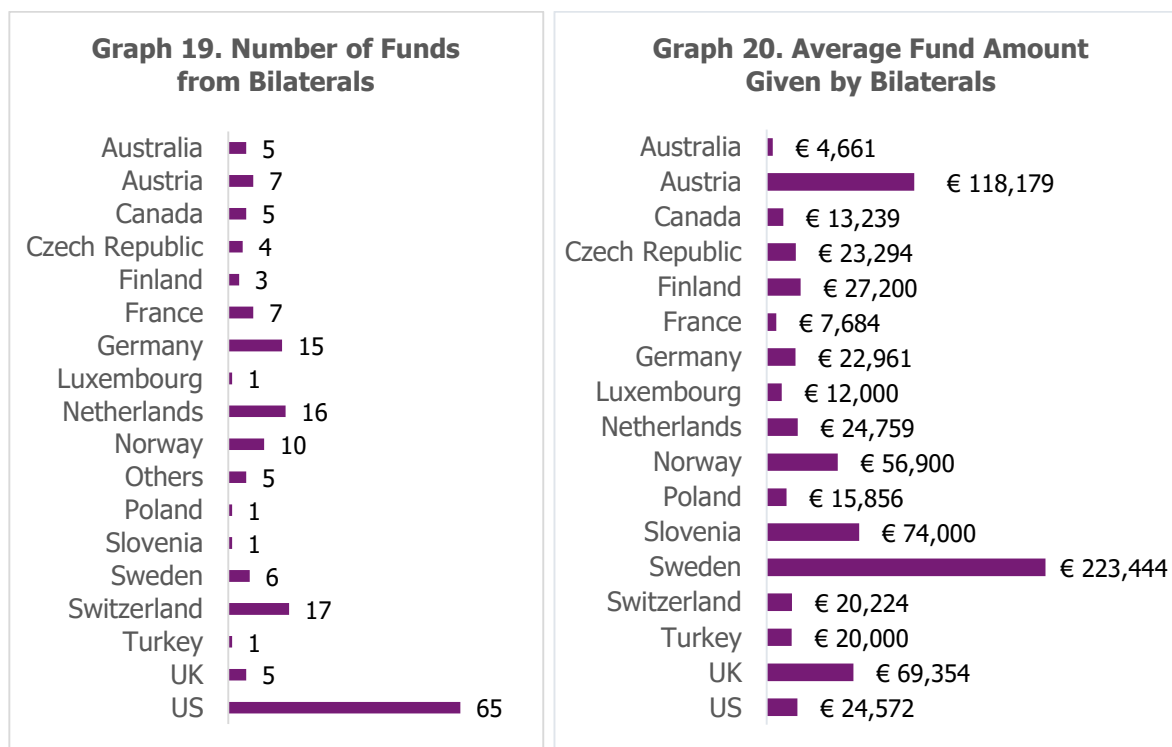
Graph 18. Total Funds Originating from Bilaterals



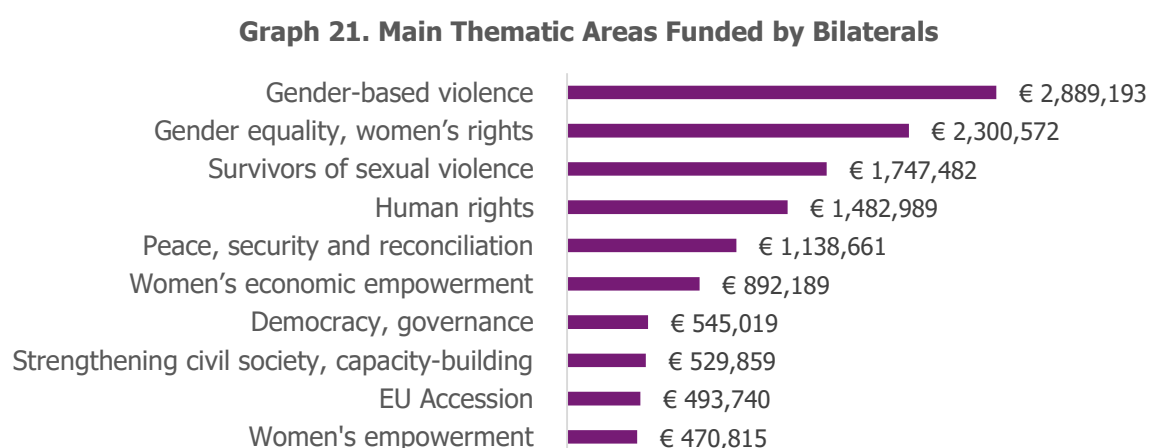
Bilaterals that WCSOs Said Funded Them by Country

Funder	Albania	BiH	Kosovo	Montenegro	North Macedonia	Serbia
Australia				✓	✓	✓
Austria	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Canada		✓	✓	✓		
Czech Republic		✓				
Denmark	✓		✓			
Finland			✓			✓
France	✓			✓	✓	✓
Germany	✓	✓	✓			
Luxembourg			✓			
Netherlands	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Norway		✓				✓
Poland				✓		
Slovenia	✓					
Sweden	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Switzerland	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Turkey			✓			
UK		✓	✓			
US	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Funding from bilaterals varied drastically, from €100 to €696,660, with the average funding amounting to €29,865 per grant or contract. The **US** funded substantially more initiatives by WCSOs (65) than other bilateral funders (see Graph 19). **Sweden** and **Austria** provided larger grants or contracts, on average, than did other bilateral funders (Graph 20).



The main thematic areas bilaterals funded included gender-based violence, and gender equality and women's rights (Graph 21). Other areas to which bilaterals tended to allocate substantial resources included supporting survivors of sexual violence perpetrated during conflict, human rights, and peace, security, and reconciliation.



Case Study: The Swiss-supported Civica Mobilitas, North Macedonia

An example of bilateral support, Civica Mobilitas is a programme of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) that seeks to support civil society in North Macedonia. The programme is implemented by NIRAS from Denmark, the Macedonian Centre for International Cooperation, and the Swedish Institute for Public Administration. SDC has committed to strengthening gender equality and the rights of women and girls, as one of Switzerland's seven strategic objectives guiding their activities.⁵

In its second phase, from 2014 to 2018, Civica Mobilitas spent €6 million, 85% of which was awarded to various CSOs.⁶ Overall, 198 CSOs received support via 232 grants. Of these, 35 grants focused on furthering gender equality (15%). Of the €5.1 million distributed from 2015 to 2017, only 8% went to WCSOs (€411,986). Via the Gender Equality Platform in North Macedonia, WCSOs have expressed concern regarding the minimal funding in support of WCSOs and gender equality.⁷ The programme's third phase will cover 2019-2022 with €4.4 million, 80% of which will be distributed to CSOs. Of the 35 grants already identified for disbursement, seven have gender equality as a priority (20%).

This rapid analysis of Civica Mobilitas suggests that even when the government considers gender equality a priority, a relatively small percentage of funding may go toward gender equality, and even less for WCSOs.

Organisational and/or political decisions by some funders or their governments seemingly shape support to WCSOs. For example, the **US**, with funding provided through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and its embassies, has committed to promoting gender equality and the advancement of women and girls.⁸ However, in one instance, this policy seemingly was undercut by a decision of USAID to abruptly cancel several open, ongoing contracts with CSOs in North Macedonia in 2019. This contributed to a significant and unexpected decrease in funding for some WCSOs that were working towards gender equality in the country.

Country policies, like those of **Austria**, the **Netherlands**, **Switzerland**, and **Sweden** influenced these bilateral donors' funding priorities.⁹ For example, a funder said that their emphasis on human rights derives from programmatic requirements for addressing women's rights and the integration of minority communities.¹⁰ Similarly, Dutch policies on human rights have influenced their decision to support the inclusion and empowerment of women.¹¹ Some funders said that their policies require other international funders, implementers, and contractors to address gender equality. For example, gender policies from the Swiss Ministry of Foreign Affairs reportedly affected funders to use gender mainstreaming more than specific projects targeting women's rights.¹² GIZ reported a similar approach, guided by the German government.¹³ The use of gender mainstreaming, rather than targeted programming, tended to be a recurring theme among the funders interviewed (see Box 4). Some bilateral funders like Sida or the Austrian Development Agency (ADA) require, or strongly encourage, that projects contain a gender equality component (see Box 5). They also require all programmes

⁵ Swiss Confederation, "[Dispatch on Switzerland's International Cooperation 2017-2020: Key Points in Brief](#)", 2016.

⁶ Data provided by Civica Mobilitas, 2019.

⁷ Email communication, May 2020.

⁸ USAID website, "[Gender Equality and Female Empowerment](#)", July 10, 2019, accessed on 16 December 2019.

⁹ Interview, bilateral funders, 2019.

¹⁰ Interview, regional funder, 2019.

¹¹ Interview, funder, Albania, 2019.

¹² Interviews, funders, North Macedonia, Kosovo, 2019.

¹³ Interview, funder, Kosovo, 2019.

to undergo gender quality control and monitoring, as foreseen in GAP II. Such policy requirements can involve resources for WCSOs, as experts in furthering gender equality. For example, in Kosovo, ADA has contracted KWN to provide capacity development support to all ADA beneficiaries, supporting them to improve their work towards gender equality within their programmes in diverse sectors. The EUO in Kosovo has sought similar support. These funders

have recognised that financially compensating WCSOs for their expertise can facilitate funders' own progress in implementing their policy commitments. While qualified, consultative, and compensated gender advisers remain necessary permanent positions within funders' organisations, their work can be complemented by WCSOs.

Box 5. ADA's Approach to Gender Mainstreaming

ADA has aligned its international framework and strategic approach with the requirements of EU GAP II. Gender mainstreaming is an integral part of all ADA thematic sectors and country strategies. Gender equality objectives are systematically integrated into all aid modalities including those related to political and policy dialogue; pooled funding; and direct budget-support and sector financing (used in some albeit not all countries). All programmes must undergo review by gender experts to ensure that project designs have been based on gender analysis and incorporate a gender perspective. Monitoring involves required reporting on progress towards addressing gender experts' recommendations on project documents. Attention to gender equality also is required in all project evaluations.

Box 4. Gender Mainstreaming

Rather than a goal in itself, gender mainstreaming is a strategy towards achieving gender equality. Gender can be mainstreamed in laws, policies, and spending.¹⁴ It involves the inclusion of a gender perspective throughout all phases of preparing, designing, implementing, monitoring, and evaluating policies and programmes. Gender analysis and *ex ante* gender impact assessment can inform appropriate gender mainstreaming of programmes by supporting the identification of meaningful objectives, anticipated results, and targets to address the gender inequalities identified. Several funders now require gender mainstreaming in programming. In the region, funders provided examples of using it to improve a gender perspective and gender equality within sectors like the environment and energy, which previously had few considerations relating to gender equality.

Gender mainstreaming has received some criticism. According to the World Bank, "Contrary to early optimism, mainstreaming has not succeeded in embedding a gender equality orientation in the institutional DNA of most development agencies".¹⁵ Moreover, they observed that commitments to furthering gender equality have not involved sufficient efforts to "build staff capacity, allocate adequate financing, and monitor and evaluate results". They observe failures to "link" mainstreaming to funding.

The effectiveness of gender mainstreaming likely depends on its use in practice. While some of the funders interviewed used it to ensure attention to gender quality in diverse sectors, others seem to have treated it as a "box-ticking" exercise. For example, a recurring trend among funders was that they use gender mainstreaming, so they do not need to set aside specific funding for gender equality or WCSOs. This represents a misunderstanding of the concept of gender mainstreaming. Appropriate gender mainstreaming should involve gender-responsive budgeting, which includes the use of gender analysis to inform expenditures.¹⁶ Moreover, in line with best practices in gender-responsive budgeting, the amounts allocated and spent on diverse women and men also should be made transparent and evaluated. However, seemingly confirming the World Bank's view, a recurring trend among funders was that their expenditures towards gender equality and women's rights could not be measured accurately *because* they had used gender mainstreaming so "gender is everywhere". Without monitoring and assessing actual expenditures, it is difficult to evaluate whether gender mainstreaming has occurred. As mentioned, weak monitoring and evaluation systems contributed to difficulties in tracking resources towards gender equality as part of this research.

¹⁴ EIGE, *What is Gender Mainstreaming*, website accessed on 24 May 2020.

¹⁵ World Bank Group, *Gender Equality, Poverty Reduction, and Inclusive Growth, 2016-2023 Gender Strategy*, p. 23.

¹⁶ For further information, see: EIGE, *What is Gender Budgeting*, website accessed on 27 May 2020.

Case Study: Sida's Support to Gender Equality and WCSOs

The Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) bases its work on the policy framework for Swedish development cooperation and humanitarian assistance, which includes gender equality among its priority areas,¹ as well as on country, regional, and global strategies defined by the Swedish government. Sida has provided consistent development assistance to the WB, amounting to approximately €433.5 million in total funding allocated between 2014 and 2019.² Of this, €120.8 million was

allocated to civil society, comprising 27.9% of Sida's funds to the region. Of the total funding allocated, €57.7 million focused explicitly on furthering gender equality (13.3%).³ Of this, Sida provided €30.3 million to WCSOs focusing on furthering gender equality, comprising 7% of all allocated funding and 52.5% of Sida's funding allocated solely for furthering gender equality.⁴

These data only refer to actions marked with the OECD-DAC Gender Equality Marker 2, that is, funding focused explicitly on furthering gender equality.⁵ The data presented do not include funding for Gender Marker 1 actions, that is, actions that have an objective to further gender equality among other objectives but not as the action's primary purpose. As a policy, the Swedish government requires that all programmes are gender mainstreamed, which means that several actions have a Gender Marker 1. However, it is difficult to ascertain from Gender Marker 1 projects the precise amount of expenditures on gender equality and WCSOs, respectively. Thus, Sida has directed substantially more funding towards furthering gender equality and to WCSOs beyond what is represented here.

Considering that this data is incomplete, caution is required in interpreting funding trends over time. Bearing this in mind, Sida's funding focused solely on furthering gender equality (Gender Marker 2 funding) seems to have more than doubled over time, from €5.4 million in 2014 to €10.9 million in 2019 (Graph 22). Even so, as a share of the overall funding, it has increased only slightly from 8.7% in 2014 to 11.9% in 2019. Funding to WCSOs working to further gender equality has increased rather considerably in absolute terms from €4.7 million in 2014 to €6.4 in 2018, albeit decreasing to €4.4 million in 2019. The increase of €1.7 million represents a 36% increase from the initial €4.7 million in 2014. However, as a share of Sida's overall funding, the increase remains very small: from 7.6% to 8.2%. Interestingly, the percentage of funds dedicated to furthering gender equality that went to WCSOs has decreased substantially over time, from 87% of gender equality focused funding in 2014 to 40% in 2019. This suggests a trend in distributing more funds for gender equality-related initiatives to recipients other than WCSOs.



There is a very small part of the total aid that goes to the women's rights movement and feminist movements. So, we would really like to see a much bigger part of development aid supporting the work of WCSOs.

Sida representative



¹ Government of Sweden, *Policy framework for Swedish development cooperation and humanitarian assistance*, 2016.

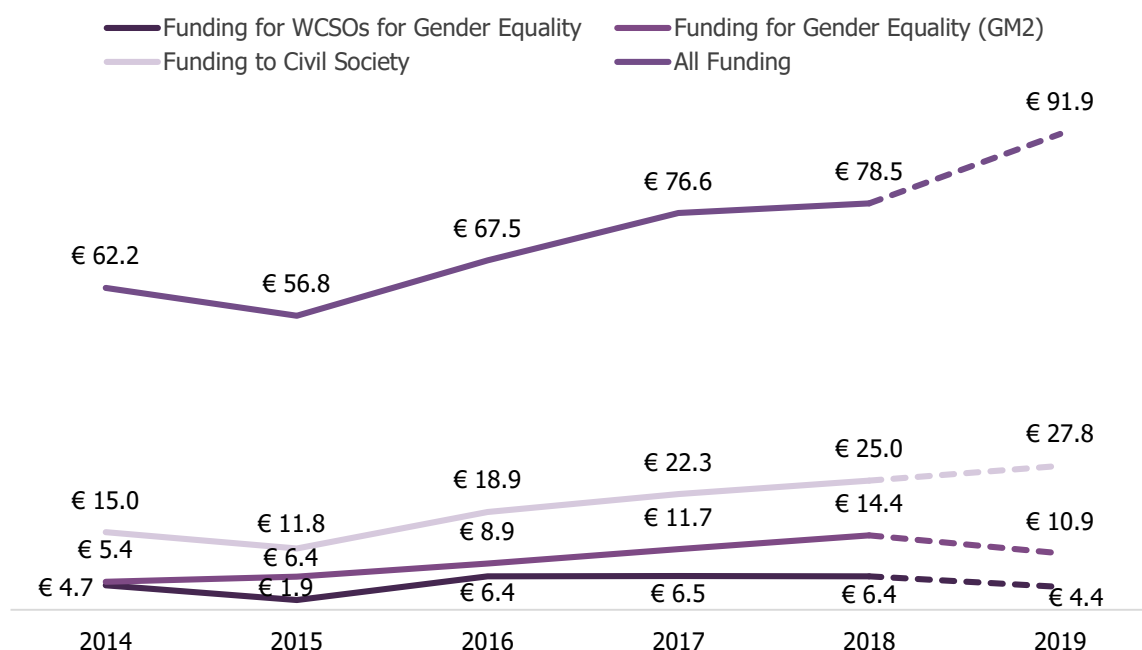
² Data provided by Sida, 2019.

³ This includes all Gender Marker 2 projects.

⁴ This includes WCSOs working on actions encoded as Gender Marker 2 projects with the OECD DAC sector code "Women's rights organisations and movements, and government institutions".

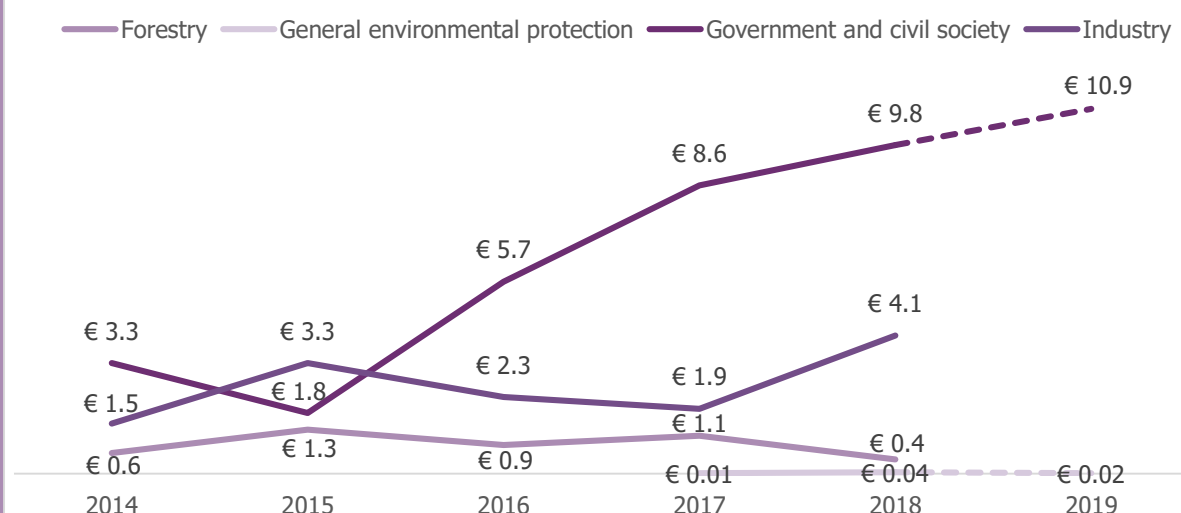
⁵ For further information about the OECD Gender Marker, see Box 1.

Graph 22. Sida Funding by Year and Type in Millions



Sida's funding that targets gender equality is concentrated in five sectors. Between 2014 and 2019, Sida distributed the largest portion of this particular funding to "Government and Civil Society" (€40.1 million),⁶ comprising 69.5% of Sida's funding towards gender equality (Graph 23). Funding for gender equality in Industry amounted to €13.1 million (22.8%), in Forestry €4.3 million (7.5%), and approximately 0.1% in Environmental Protection, and in Trade Policy and Regulations and Trade-related Adjustment sectors, respectively.⁷

Graph 23. Sida Funding towards Gender Equality by Sector in Millions



⁶ These sectors refer to categories used in Sida's data management system, which are defined and used according to the sector codes defined by OECD DAC.

⁷ Funding related to trade policy is not reflected in the graph as it only existed in 2016 (€50,692).

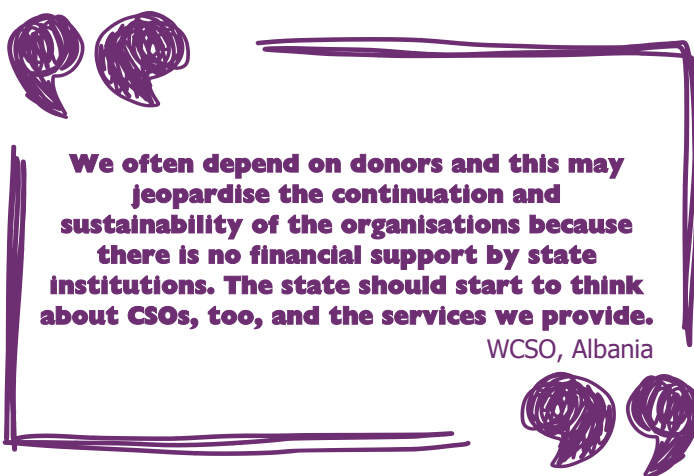
WB Governments

Most WB governments have laws that enable their financial support of WCSOs.¹ As funders noted during interviews, while foreign support may be required for a period of time, eventually local governments need to take over funding and support civil society.

WB governments did not make comprehensive official data regarding grants for gender equality and/or WCSOs publicly available.² Therefore, findings in this section draw primarily from the survey of WCSOs. While

direct budget support from bilateral and multilateral funders to government budgets means that the original source of funding cannot be determined definitively, data suggest that most government funds came from government budgets, as indicated by the diverse array of government bodies that have funded WCSOs.

Between 2014 and 2019, government bodies in the WB provided 468 different grants, contracts, or other forms of funding to 96 different WCSOs. Amounts ranged from €9 to €115,801, with each individual fund averaging €9,616 from central government bodies, and €2,357 from local government bodies. Country differences are illustrated in Table 3.

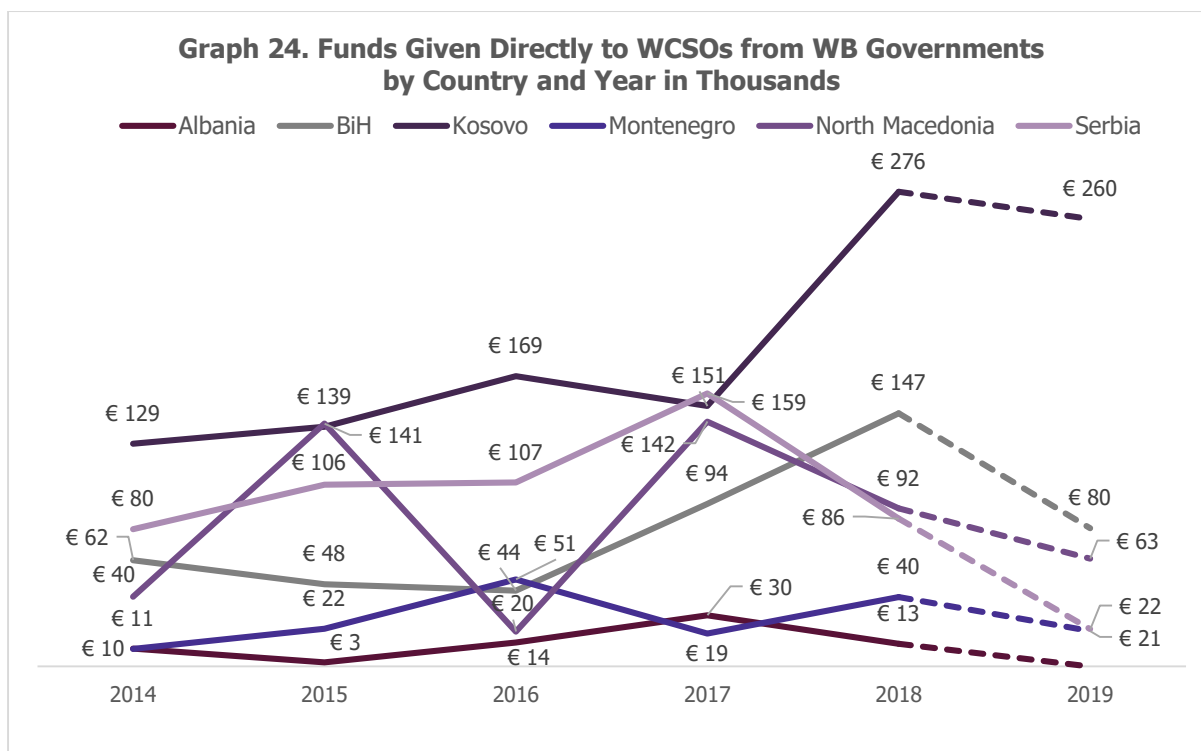


	Albania	BiH	Kosovo	Montenegro	North Macedonia	Serbia	Total
Total funding provided (in thousands)	€70	€476	€1,124	€163	€499	€559	€2,890
Average grant size	€7,769	€6,257	€7,904	€6,515	€9,974	€3,604	€6,097
# of grants/contracts given by governments	9	76	144	25	50	155	459
# of WCSO recipients	3	14	43	6	12	18	96
# of WCSOs in sample	23	32	111	8	36	30	240
% of WCSOs in sample receiving government funds	13%	44%	39%	75%	33%	60%	40%

WB governments tended to provide more funding to WCSOs in **Kosovo, Serbia, and North Macedonia** than in the other countries. While data for 2019 is incomplete, government funding to WCSOs in the WB appears to have increased slightly over time. However, this is attributable primarily to the substantial increase in **Kosovo**, where government funding to WCSOs has more than doubled between 2014 and 2017 (Graph 24).

¹ For further information, see the section on "[National Laws Impacting Access to Funding](#)".

² Researchers could not locate comprehensive online databases for any of the countries. Countries only had data available from some, individual government bodies and ministries. In some instances, data could be requested from individual ministries. In Serbia, the government [publishes reports](#) on funds provided to CSOs by government bodies at national, provincial, and local level. However, they do not mention beneficiary CSOs individually, but only by sector or geographic location (2016, in Serbian). In Kosovo, the government manages an online "[Aid Management Platform](#)", but it only includes data from foreign funders and not Kosovo institutions.



Among other potential factors, the substantial increases in **Kosovo** could be attributed in part to WCSOs' successful advocacy for increased government funding of shelters. It also could be due to several WCSO initiatives to advocate to municipalities and ministries for more gender balanced subsidy expenditures, coupled with support for WCSOs to apply for government subsidies. For example, KWN provided training to government officials as well as its diverse membership,¹ including small and rural WCSOs, in gender-responsive budgeting so they could interpret government expenditures from a gender perspective, including government subsidies. This, coupled with WCSO advocacy, may have contributed to awareness among some officials regarding the need to distribute subsidies more equally among women and men, as well as provided WCSOs with tools for holding officials more accountable to gender-responsive budgeting commitments. Through the Kosovo Women's Fund, WCSOs also received support to further their capacities in preparing bids and grant applications, as well as to assist other WCSOs and women in doing so, better enabling them to apply for government subsidies.

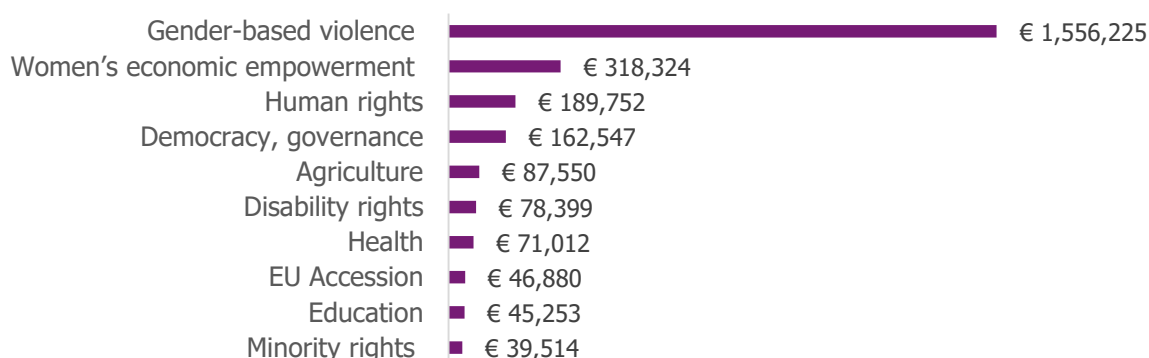
Government funding to WCSOs also has increased in **BiH**. Despite initial increases, government funding in most other countries declined in 2017 or 2018, particularly in **Serbia**. While difficult to interpret directly from the data, activists believed that a potential reason for the substantial decrease in government funding could be the shrinking space for WCSOs there, motivated by the reestablishment of traditional values and gender roles. This seems to have contributed to decreases in funding provided to WCSOs by local governments, the directing of state funds to GONGOs, and the funding of state institutions instead of WCSOs. Funding in **North Macedonia**, as reported by WCSOs, fluctuated considerably from year to year; funding also fluctuated, albeit less substantially, in **Montenegro**.

The government bodies that funded WCSOs were diverse.² Similar to other funders, WB governments seem to have allocated significantly more funds to addressing gender-based violence than to other thematic areas (Graph 25).

¹ OSCE in Kosovo, Helvetas, UN Women, GIZ, and the Kosovo Institute for Public Administration have provided training to government officials on gender-responsive budgeting as well.

² [Annex 4](#) contains a list.

Graph 25. Thematic Areas Funded by Governments



In accordance with the Law on Gender Equality in **BiH**, the Agency for Gender Equality of BiH, as well as the Gender Centres of FBiH and Republika Srpska should support WCSOs through small grants.³ In December 2019, the Agency for Gender Equality announced it would deliver approximately €41,000 under the Financial Mechanism for the Implementation of the Gender Action Plan of Bosnia and Herzegovina (FIGAP) II Programme, supported by pooled bilateral funding from Swedish, Swiss, and Austrian governments.⁴ The maximum grant amount is €7,661 per grant, lasting up to six months.⁵ The existence of this Programme would suggest that some of the funds in Graph 24 actually originate from bilateral sources. However, the Programme's call for grants is open to all CSOs, not only WCSOs. Based on interviews with WCSOs, only one WCSO reported receiving funds from FIGAP. Although the low response rate in BiH could contribute to some discrepancy, it seems that most government funding to WCSOs in BiH came from other government bodies (97%). During interviews, women's rights activists in BiH said that the FIGAP II Programme exemplifies how WCSOs receive only a meagre amount of funds from larger donors; these funds are distributed in smaller amounts through agencies and do not always reach WCSOs.

In **Montenegro**, the government distributes funding for gender equality mainly through the Ministry of Human and Minority Rights, with €107,970 of €290,000 (37%) distributed to 10 WCSOs (24 CSOs that received funding in 2019).⁶ However, WCSOs said that the funding available to them is insufficient and that evaluators sitting on the selection committees often lack sensitivity and understanding of gender equality.⁷

The pages that follow contain case studies of specific government bodies in North Macedonia, Serbia, and Kosovo. Overall, the case studies coupled with other research findings suggest that funding for gender equality and WCSOs, respectively, comprises a very small portion of government funding provided to civil society in WB countries.

³ [Law on Gender Equality in Bosnia and Herzegovina](#) No 16/03 and 102/09, Art. 26(m) and Art. 27(1)(h).

⁴ For more information see [FIGAP](#) (in Bosnian).

⁵ Ibid. Converted to euros (April 2020).

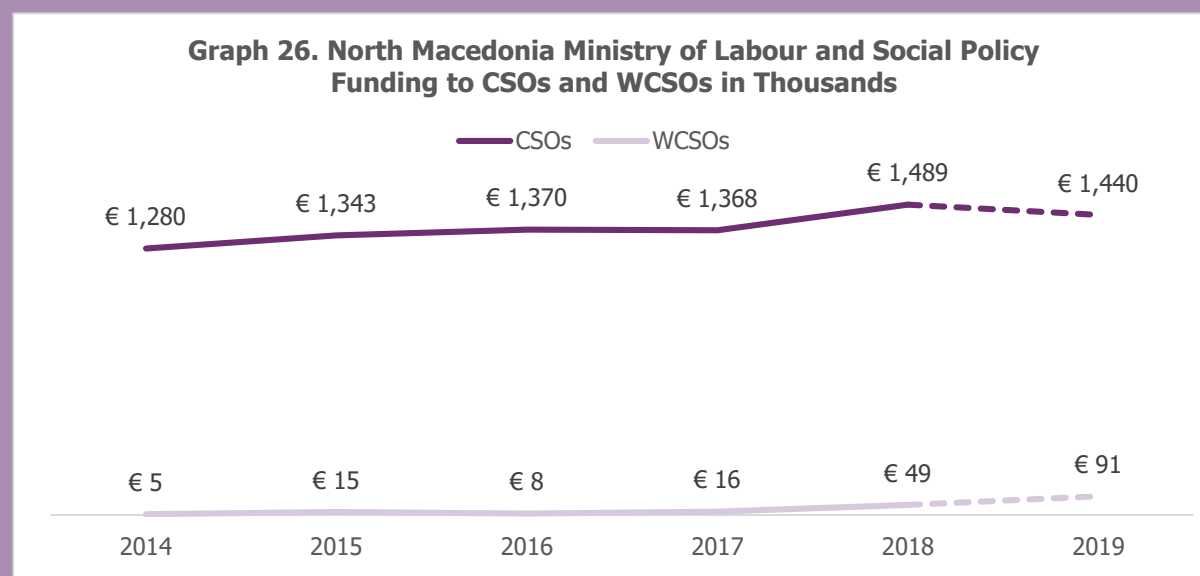
⁶ Ministry of Human and Minority Rights of Montenegro, [Decision on allocation of funds to projects / programs of non-governmental organisations in the field of gender equality](#), (in Montenegrin) 11.10.2019.

⁷ Interview, WCSO, Montenegro, 2019.

Case Study: The Government of North Macedonia

In 2019, North Macedonia had an estimated population size of nearly 2.1 million inhabitants, 49.9% women.⁸ From 2014 to 2019, the Department for Cooperation with Non-Governmental Organisations in the General Secretariat of the Government of the Republic of North Macedonia reported granting €773,960 to civil society.⁹ The sectors funded included Economic Growth, Employability, and Quality of Life; EU and NATO Integration; Fight against Crime and Corruption; Rule of Law; Air Pollution; and Investing in Innovation, Technology, and Education. In 2017 and 2018, the Government did not distribute any funds, amid the change in Government. In total, the Department distributed €74,370 related to gender equality or women's rights, comprising 9% of civil society funds granted. Of this, €64,370 was distributed directly to WCSOs, amounting to 8% of all civil society funds granted. The thematic areas supported primarily included addressing human trafficking, but also domestic violence and women's economic empowerment.

In addition to funding provided by the aforementioned Department, the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy also funded CSOs. From 2014 to 2019, the Ministry granted a total of €8.5 million to CSOs. WCSOs working on gender equality and women's empowerment received only 2.2% of this funding.¹⁰ The funding to WCSOs mainly supported projects and services to address gender-based violence. As Graph 26 illustrates, in absolute terms, funding to WCSOs increased from less than €5,000 in 2014 to €91,000 in 2019. As a percentage of CSO funding, specific funding to WCSOs also has increased slightly overtime, from 0.4% of CSO funds in 2014 to 6.3% in 2019. Moreover, the average grant allocated to WCSOs has increased from €4,626 in 2014 to €36,710 in 2019. Nevertheless, on average WCSOs still receive 73% less funds per year than do other CSOs.



The Ministry provided most funding to WCSOs starting in 2018, reflecting new priorities that followed the government change in North Macedonia. The case of North Macedonia illustrates how WCSOs' access to financing within their countries may be affected substantially by government changes.

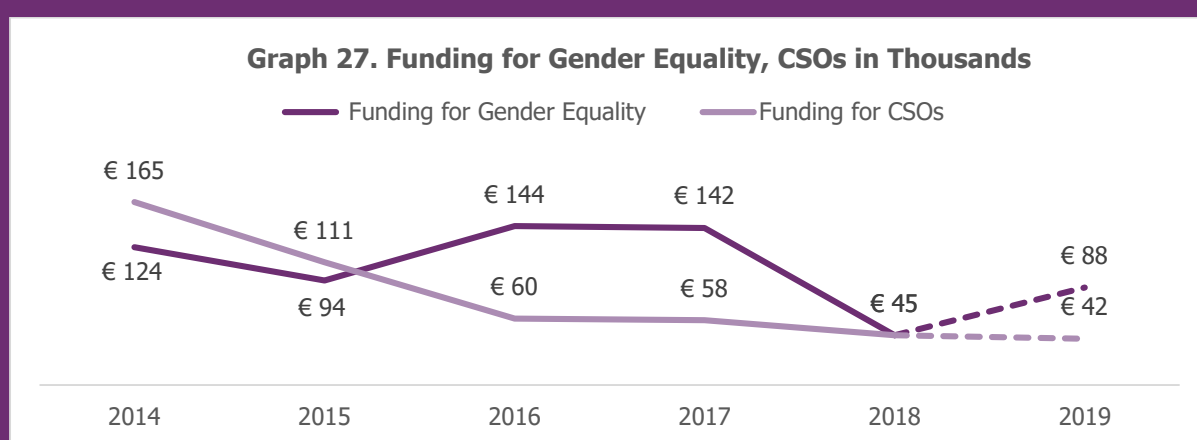
⁸ Republic of North Macedonia, State Statistical Office, *Women and Men in North Macedonia*, 2019.

⁹ Data obtained from the Government of North Macedonia, 2019.

¹⁰ The Ministry does not track grants to WCSOs, but the research team calculated this manually based on information provided.

Case Study: Provincial Secretariat for Social Policy, Demography, and Gender Equality in Vojvodina, Serbia

The Provincial Secretariat for Social Policy, Demography, and Gender Equality in Vojvodina, Serbia distributed a total of €711,794 in funding from 2014 to 2019, including €637,475 towards gender equality. Approximately 68% of the total funding went to CSOs (€481,822); whereas the rest seems to have gone to employers, such as for women survivors' economic empowerment. The Secretariat reportedly distributed this funding in two main areas: economic empowerment of women survivors of violence and the promotion of gender equality. Some funding also supported women's associations. The Secretariat does not track the amount of funds given to WCSOs so it is unclear whether the funding went to WCSOs or other CSOs. Overall, in line with the aforementioned general trends in Serbia, funding for gender equality seems to have decreased since 2017, while funding for CSOs has decreased steadily since 2014 (Graph 27).



Case Study: The Municipality of Junik, Kosovo

The Municipality of Junik, located in the Gjakova region of western Kosovo, is a small municipality with an estimated 6,370 inhabitants.¹¹ With a total annual budget of less than €1.8 million euros 2019,¹² Junik has limited subsidies to offer, averaging €8,703 annually between 2016 and 2019.¹³ According to officials, 26% of the €5,460 in subsidies distributed in 2016 sought to support women, particularly subsidies for medical and social welfare (comprising 47% of subsidies in this sector). In 2017, 38% of subsidies (€2,300) supported women, including: the domestic violence safe house, publishing a book by a woman author, and support for social and medical issues. Yet, women received only 20% of social and medical support subsidies in 2018 and 42% in 2019. This funding that benefitted women does not necessarily equate to funding for furthering gender equality. Among the funding distributed, only €200 went to a WCSO, a safe house, comprising 3.3% of subsidies in 2017, 0.6% across these four years.

This rapid analysis of the Municipality of Junik's expenditures suggests that grassroots WCSOs may receive a small proportion of the subsidies distributed by local government. Additionally, research suggests that governments may not always understand the difference between funding for women beneficiaries and funding for gender equality. Thus, they may not allocate resources explicitly for furthering gender equality.

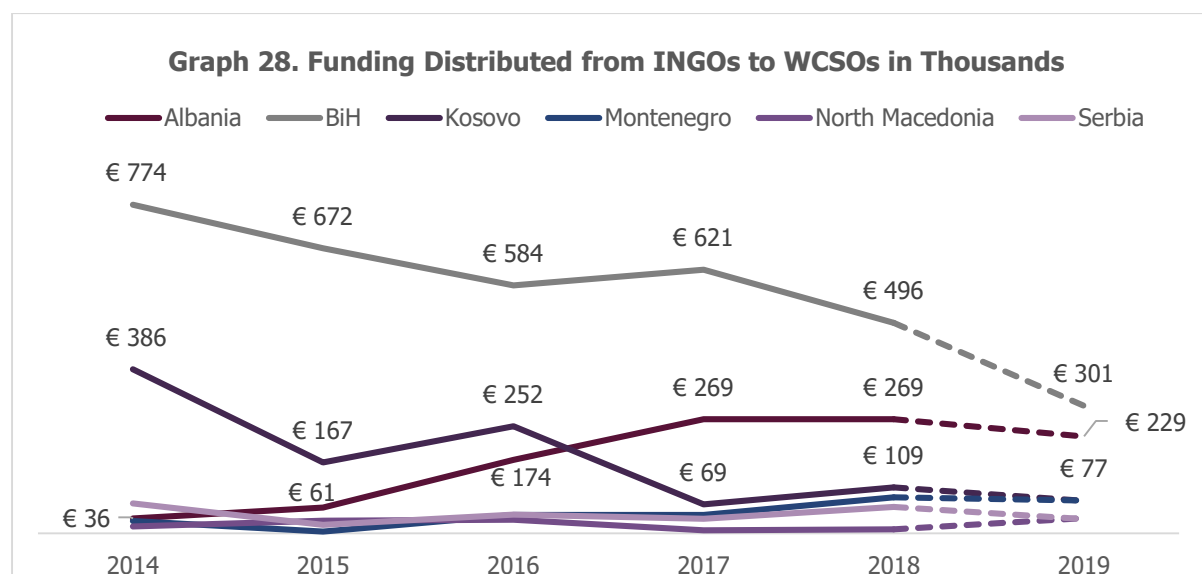
¹¹ Republic of Kosovo, Kosovo Agency of Statistics, *Population Estimates*, 2018.

¹² Ministry of Finance of the Republic of Kosovo, *Annual Budget 2019*.

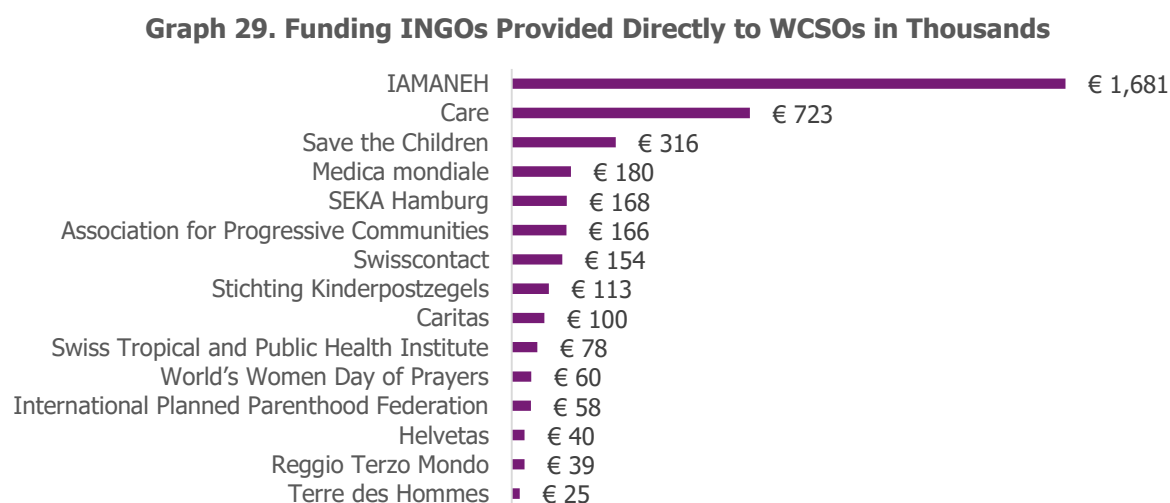
¹³ Data obtained from the Directorate for Budget and Finance of the Municipality of Junik, 2019.

INGOs

In total, INGOs provided 293 instances of funding to WCSOs in the region, totalling €6.2 million from 2014 to 2019. Funds ranged from €49 to €173,693, with an average amount of €21,322. WCSOs in **BiH** received more funding from INGOs than did those in other countries (see Graph 28). WCSOs in **Kosovo** received the next largest portion of funding from INGOs, followed by those in **Albania**. Funding from INGOs has decreased over time, particularly in **BiH** and **Kosovo**. Exceptionally, in **Albania** it has increased. In the other countries, funding from INGOs has remained fairly consistent, but minimal, well under €80,000 per year.



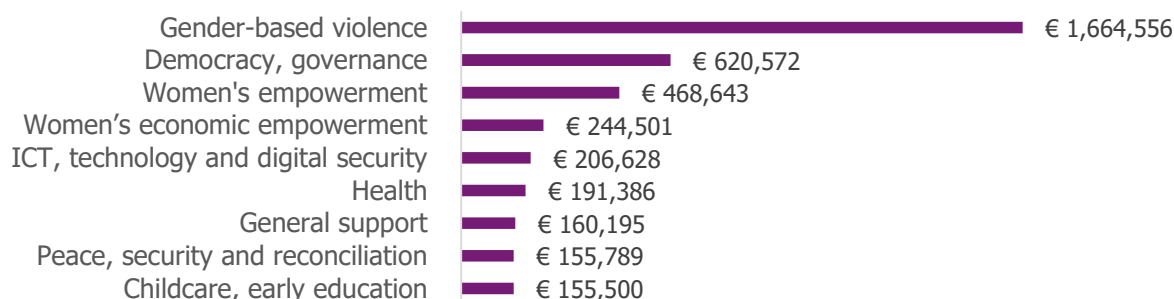
The most funding that WCSOs reported receiving from INGOs came from the International Association for Maternal and Neonatal Health (IAMANEH), followed by Care and Save the Children (Graph 29). INGOs distributing funds to WCSOs in several WB countries included Amica, Care, Caritas, IAMANEH, Medica mondiale, Olof Palme International, Save the Children, SEKA Hamburg, Swisscontact, Women Against Violence Europe Network, and World Vision.¹⁴



¹⁴ For a list of all INGOs that provided support by country, see [Annex 4](#).

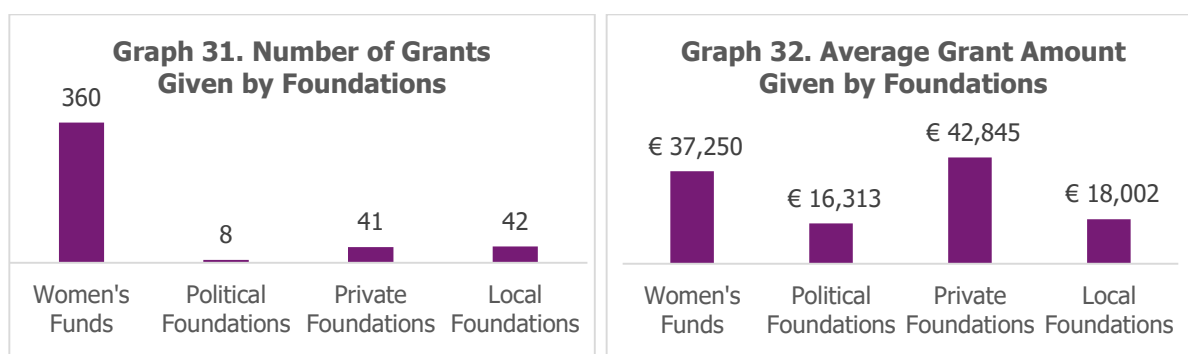
Like other funders, INGOs primarily supported efforts to address gender-based violence. Other thematic areas that they supported included democracy and governance, and women's empowerment (Graph 30).

Graph 30. Sectors Funded by INGOs



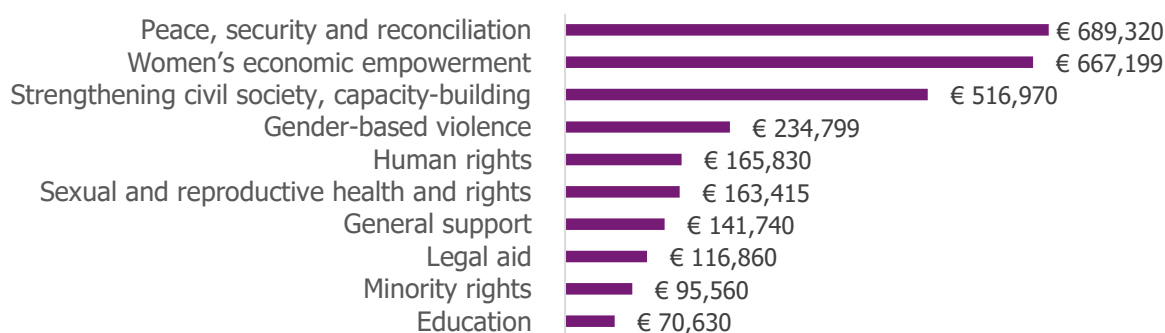
Foundations

In total, foundations provided 483 grants to WCSOs in the region, totalling €17.7 million from 2014 to mid-2019. The grant amounts ranged from €250 to €501,914, with an average amount of €36,564 per grant. By far, among the different types of foundations, women's funds provided the most grants (Graph 31), and had the second largest average grant size (Graph 32). In contrast, private foundations tended to provide the largest average grant sizes (€42,845 per grant).

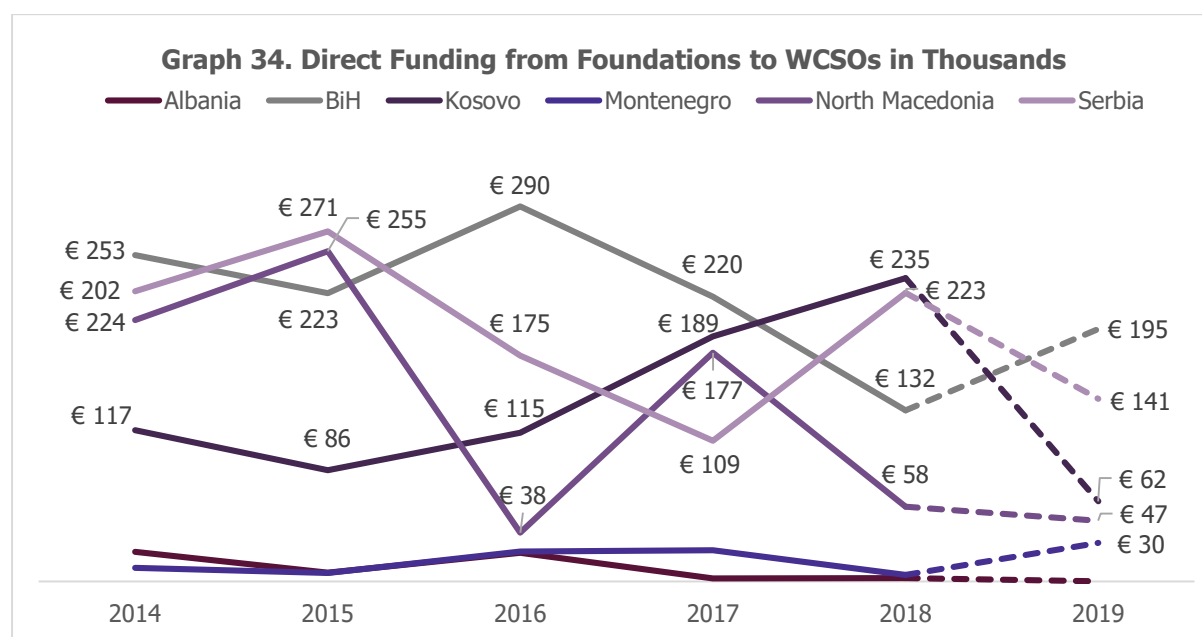


The sectors or thematic areas supported by foundations differed somewhat from those supported by other funders; most foundations' funding seems to have supported peace, security, and reconciliation (Graph 33). Support for women's economic empowerment remained the second most supported sector.

Graph 33. Sectors Funded by Foundations



Graph 34 portrays funding foundations granted directly to WCSOs by country from 2014 to mid-2019, excluding data from women's funds, which are examined separately in the next section. It illustrates that funding from the foundations has fluctuated over time, particularly in **North Macedonia**. WCSOs in **BiH** appear to have received comparatively more resources from foundations than WCSOs in other countries (€1.3 million), followed by WCSOs in **Serbia** (€1.1). Although WCSOs in **North Macedonia** received sizeable contributions from foundations in 2015, namely from the Foundation for Open Society in Macedonia (FOSM), this dropped significantly in the years that followed. In contrast to the decreases in foundation funding in these three countries, WCSOs in **Kosovo** reported an increase in funding between 2016 and 2018. WCSOs in **Albania** and **Montenegro** received comparatively fewer resources from foundations than WCSOs in the other WB countries (well under €25,000 annually).



WCSOs reported receiving funds from private foundations, political foundations, and local foundations, among others.¹⁵ Support from **private foundations** appears rather ad hoc in the region. WCSOs in **North Macedonia** and **Serbia** received comparatively more funds from private foundations, but funding was sporadic and decreased over time. Among the private foundations, Open Society Foundations provided 4% of the funding. It should be observed that sometimes their funding derived from bilaterals, such as USAID's funding of FOSM in North Macedonia. In other instances, their funding came directly from the Open Society Foundation itself, funded primarily by George Soros. **Political foundations** tended to support WCSOs in **BiH**, and their funding has decreased over time. The only other countries in which WCSOs seemed to have received support from political foundations were **Serbia** and **Albania**. More funding from **local foundations** benefitted WCSOs in **BiH** and **Kosovo** than in the other countries.

¹⁵ For further information regarding the foundations that provided support, please see [Annex 4](#).

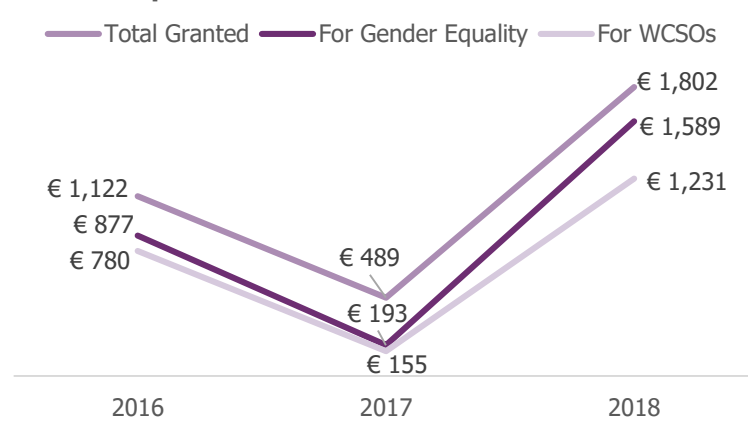
Case Study: Kosovo Foundation for Open Society

The Kosovo Foundation for Open Society (KFOS) is a locally registered foundation. KFOS is a member of the international network of philanthropic foundations for open society, financed by international philanthropist George Soros.¹⁶ KFOS has programmes on European Integration, civil society development, and minority and Roma rights. Their work focuses on capacity-building, enhancing the implementation of existing policies, and the development of new policies. KFOS implements projects designed by the foundation itself, but also supports CSOs with operational and other financial assistance. KFOS reported spending just over €5 million from 2016 to 2019. Of this, €723,077 was spent on administrative expenses (14%) and €4.3 million was awarded to CSOs (86%). None of the 17 CSO programmes funded had furthering gender equality as a priority, and none were implemented by WCSOs.

Case Study: The TRAG Foundation

TRAG is a regional foundation working towards community development, based in Serbia, with grant-making in BiH and Montenegro as well.¹⁷ Its work involves philanthropy promotion, capacity-building, and grants.¹⁸ TRAG offers grants in several sectors, including Agriculture, Fishing, and Forestry; Arts and Culture; Local Development; Science and Education; Environmental Protection; Human Rights, Gender Equality, and Women's Rights; and, Security.¹⁹ From 2016 through 2018, TRAG has granted €3.4 million to CSOs. A considerable amount of this funding supported projects towards gender equality and women's empowerment, amounting to 78% of all funding (nearly €2.7 million). Moreover, 64% of the total amount was granted to WCSOs (nearly €2.2 million). This may be attributed in part to the fact that the Oak Foundation, a women's fund, has used TRAG as an intermediary to distribute funds to WCSOs in the WB since 2015. The Oak Foundation funds the TRAG programme on Issues Affecting Women. TRAG also funds WCSOs through its other programmes. In total, 82% of all funds granted towards furthering women's rights and gender equality went directly to WCSOs. In this sense, TRAG is somewhat unique in the amount of funding granted to gender equality and WCSOs, compared to other local foundations that are not women's funds.

Graph 35. TRAG Grants in Thousands



¹⁶ See more information on Open Society Foundations [here](#).

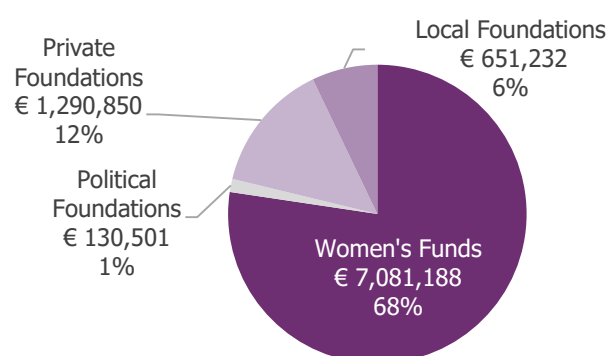
¹⁷ [TRAG Foundation website](#).

¹⁸ Bjelanovic and Myers for CEE FC, Bratislava, "A Case Study of TRAG Foundation", 2017.

¹⁹ Data provided by TRAG, 2019.

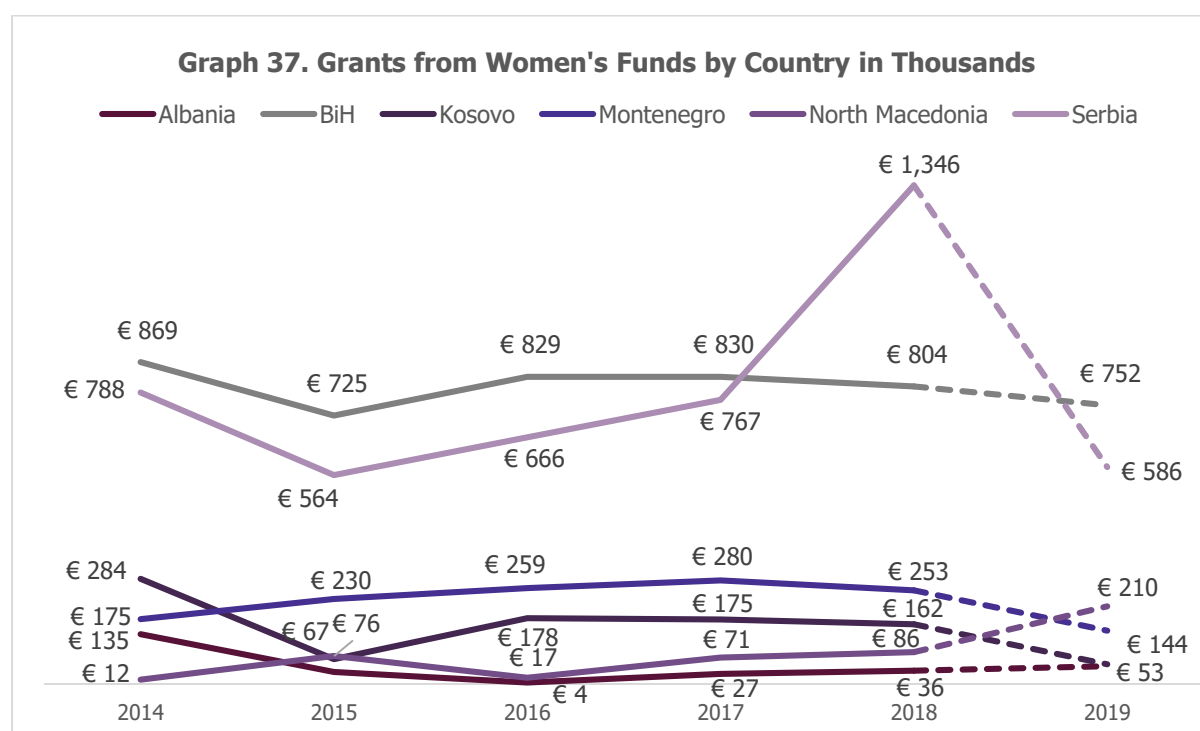
Women's funds distributed the most funding to WCSOs, by far, among the different types of foundations, with contributions totalling nearly €7.1 million (68% of foundation funding) from 2014 to mid-2019 (Graph 36). Private foundations provided 12% of foundations' total funding to WCSOs. Local foundations distributed 6% and political foundations 1%.²⁰

Graph 36. Grants to WCSOs by Foundation Type



Women's Funds

This section takes a closer look at the substantial amount of donations provided to WCSOs through women's funds and the existing literature on the special role that these funds can play in reaching WCSOs.²¹ As stated, women's funds provided approximately €7.1 million to WCSOs in the WB between 2015 and mid-2019, comprising 11% of all funding to WCSOs. This increases to €12.5 million, 20%, of funds given directly to WCSOs, when not tracing funding back to its original source.²² The average grant size was €37,250. Donations have remained fairly consistent over time, with WCSOs reportedly receiving, altogether, an average of €2 million per year from 2014 through 2017 from women's funds. This increased significantly to €2.7 million in 2018, largely due to an increase in support of organisations in **Serbia** (Graph 36). WCSOs in **BiH** and **Serbia** reported receiving substantially more funds from women's funds than WCSOs in other countries.



²⁰ The graph total does not sum to 100% because foundations that the research team could not identify as political, private, local, or women's funds are not represented here.

²¹ AWID, *Watering the Leaves, Starving the Roots*, p. 90.

²² See the further explanation in the beginning of this chapter. As discussed there, women's funds seem to have received most of their funding from bilateral funders, especially Sweden.

Several international women's funds supported WCSOs in the region (see Box 6). Women's funds located in the WB include the KWN **Kosovo** Women's Fund, Reconstruction Women's Fund in **Serbia**, and the Lara Foundation, CURE Foundation, and Women's Empowerment Foundation in **BiH**. Like other funders, women's funds tended to provide the most financial support to combating gender-based violence (Graph 38). Uniquely, they tended to provide more general support, including core funding to WCSOs, compared to other funders.

Historically, women's funds have been seen as reliable, well-respected partners for WCSOs, given their flexibility and longevity in supporting the women's movement.²³ Women's funds frequently are committed to supporting marginalised and underrepresented populations that would otherwise lack financing.²⁴ They often prioritise strategies that increase information exchange and cooperation among WCSOs, directly contributing to "movement building".²⁵ Since women's funds typically share the same vision as their beneficiaries, they tend to be more adaptable to beneficiaries' needs.²⁶ This flexibility allows them to fund both small and large projects that enable recipients to determine their own priorities.²⁷ Moreover, they can act as a bridge between smaller WCSOs and larger funders, supporting access to resources for smaller groups, communication of needs to larger funders, and greater transparency in funding.²⁸ In this sense, women's funds can play the role of "ambassador" for WCSOs that do not always have access to large-scale funders.²⁹ This too can contribute to greater access to resources for WCSOs.

Box 6. International Women's Funds Supporting WCSOs

- ✓ Astraea
- ✓ cfd the feminist Peace Organisation
- ✓ Ecumenical Women's Fund
- ✓ Feminist Trust Fund
- ✓ *Filia die Frauenstiftung* Foundation
- ✓ Frida Young Feminists Fund
- ✓ Global Fund for Women
- ✓ Heart and Hand Foundation
- ✓ International Network of Women's Funds Prospera
- ✓ The Kvinna till Kvinna Foundation
- ✓ Mama Cash
- ✓ Mediterranean Women's Fund
- ✓ Millby Foundation
- ✓ Oak Foundation
- ✓ Operation 1325
- ✓ Philanthropy Advancing Women's Human Rights
- ✓ Rita Fund
- ✓ Urgent Action Fund

Graph 38. Thematic Areas Funded by Women's Funds



²³ Dallas Women's Foundation with Chambers Family Fund, *Creating a Women's Fund: A Philanthropic Strategy for Women and Girls, 2nd Edition*, Women's Funding Network, 2017.

²⁴ AWID, *Watering the Leaves, Starving the Roots*, p. 88.

²⁵ Ibid, p. 90.

²⁶ Interview, WCSO, BiH, 2019.

²⁷ Interview, WCSO, Serbia, 2019.

²⁸ Interviews, WCSOs, Kosovo, North Macedonia, 2019.

²⁹ AWID, *Watering the Leaves, Starving the Roots*, p. 88.

Case Study: The Kvinna till Kvinna Foundation

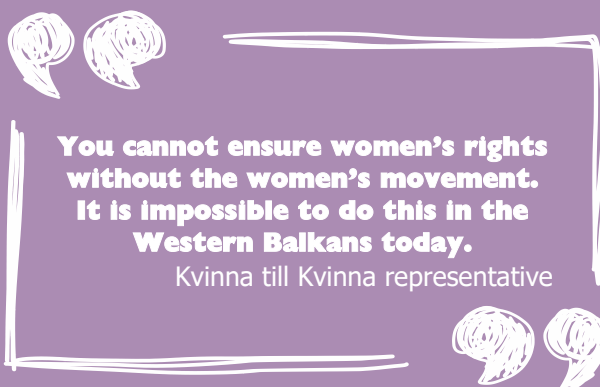
The Kvinna till Kvinna Foundation is a Swedish non-governmental organisation, categorised as a women's fund in this research.³⁰ Its vision is "a world of peace, based on gender equality and democracy, where conflicts are solved without violence, a world in which human rights are respected and everyone can feel safe and secure, and a world in which women have influence over decision-making and participate fully and effectively in society's development".³¹ Since 1993, Kvinna till Kvinna has worked to protect and promote women's rights in more than 20 countries. Its "birth" as a foundation accompanied the rise of many WCSOs in the WB, as Kvinna till Kvinna supported activists affected by the fall of the Former Yugoslavia and wars in the WB. Since then, its work has expanded to the Middle East, the South Caucasus and Africa.

Kvinna till Kvinna operates based on an institutionally ingrained belief that women's rights activists have the best knowledge of the priorities, needs, and challenges faced by women and girls living in their countries.³² Therefore, Kvinna till Kvinna supports women's rights groups and movements because they are "absolutely essential and important" in bringing about social change, namely gender equality.³³ "All progress regarding protection, prevention,

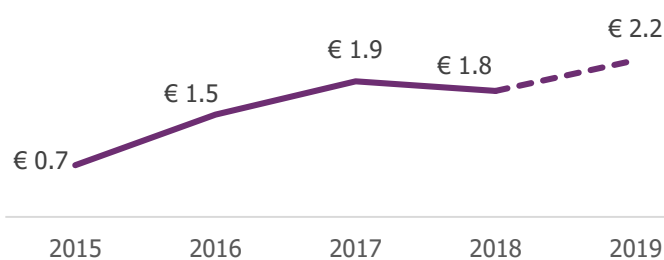
legislation, and attitude changes can be accredited to women's organisations. Legislation would not exist without women's organisations", Kvinna till Kvinna representatives said. Kvinna till Kvinna distributes funds directly to its partner WCSOs, "allowing them to make the changes they need to make". In practice, this means that partner organisations identify their own agenda, including problems and potential solutions.³⁴

Between 2015 and 2019, Kvinna till Kvinna spent nearly €8.2 million in the WB via a combination of country and regional programmes. As Graph 39 illustrates, funding has steadily increased since 2015, save a slight downturn in 2018. All of Kvinna till Kvinna's funding focuses on furthering peace, gender equality, and women's rights. Kvinna till Kvinna's priority areas include addressing gender-based violence; women, peace, and security; and equal participation.

Between 2015 and 2019, direct support to its partners in the region amounted to more than €2.9 million, comprising approximately 79% of the funds distributed. The remaining funds also supported WCSOs by providing networking and capacity-building opportunities, as well as supporting annual advocacy trips to Brussels. In most countries, funding distributed to Kvinna till Kvinna's partners more than doubled between 2015 and 2016 (Graph 40).



Graph 39. Kvinna till Kvinna Funds Distributed in the WB in Millions



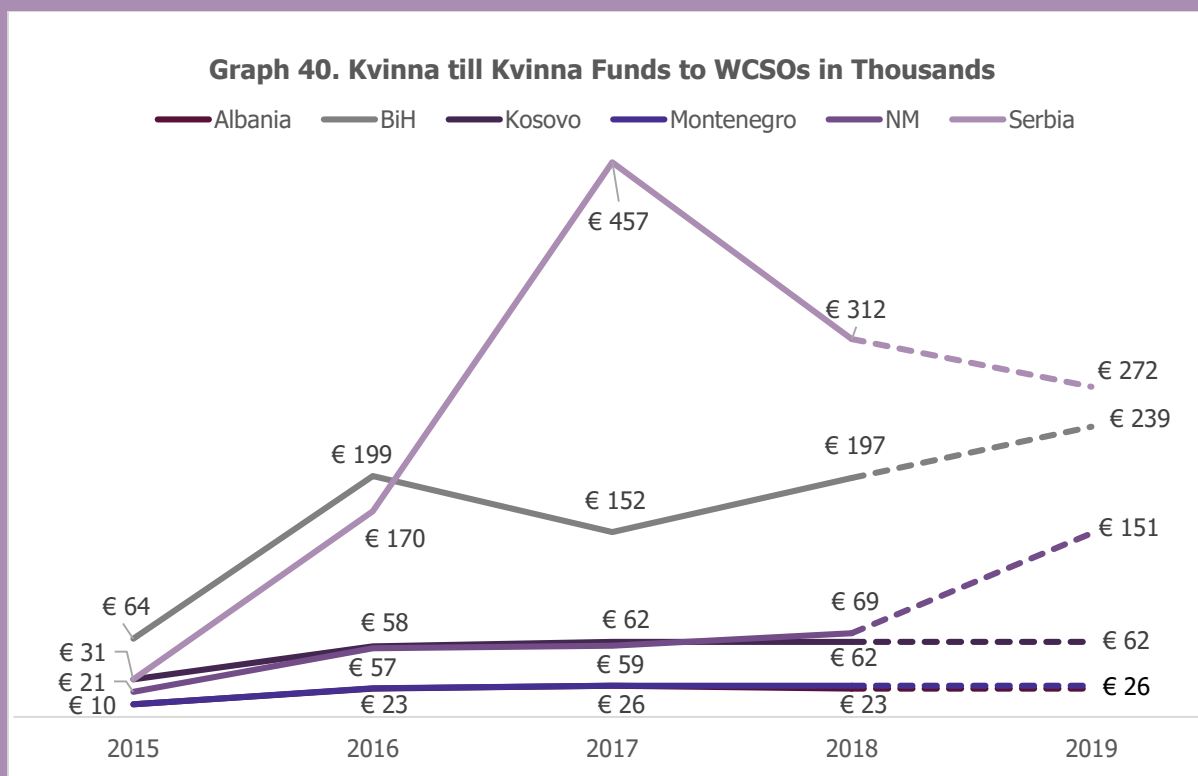
³⁰ Kvinna till Kvinna means "Woman to Woman" in Swedish. The Foundation also identifies as an INGO, but was categorized as a women's fund for the purpose of this research given its substantial granting in the WB.

³¹ Kvinna till Kvinna website, "[Kvinna till Kvinna: Who We Are](#)".

³² Ibid.

³³ Interview, 2019.

³⁴ Rönngren, J. for Kvinna till Kvinna, [Making Achievements Last: Learning from Exit Experiences](#), 2011.



Kvinna till Kvinna has a somewhat unique approach in that it does not have open calls for proposals, but rather carefully selects its partners, providing direct support to more than 130 partner organisations.³⁵ Activists observed that this partnership approach contributes to solidarity within the women's movement, rather than competition over resources, which can undermine movement-building and progress towards shared aims.³⁶ Following assessment and evaluation, grants last one to four years, often with follow-on grants to the same organisations. Thus, some WCSOs in the WB have received support for more than 25 years. WCSOs said that this long-term partnership approach enables them to work on making long-term changes. Kvinna till Kvinna has observed that in order for WCSOs to develop their capacities and identity, they need stable, long-term funding.³⁷ Overall, several WCSOs across the region highlighted Kvinna till Kvinna's approach of directly supporting and trusting WCSOs as a good practice. The Keystone's external evaluation and benchmarking of partnership performance in 2016 also ranks Kvinna till Kvinna fourth out of 76 comparable INGOs and funders in terms of "overall satisfaction".³⁸ Kvinna till Kvinna representatives highlighted that long-term, predictable core funding and institutional funding is the greatest need of WCSOs across the WB, and they try to respond to this need through direct support.³⁹

While few funders interviewed knew their future plans for the region, Kvinna till Kvinna representatives said that they plan to continue supporting approximately 40 of their current partner organisations in the WB, focusing on similar thematic areas.⁴⁰ They plan to support additional organisations with capacity development, networking opportunities, and political and advocacy support.

³⁵ Kvinna till Kvinna also provides some smaller, shorter service agreements. Kvinna till Kvinna website, "[What We Do](#)", accessed in April 2020.

³⁶ KWN interviews, 2019.

³⁷ Rönngren, J., 2011.

³⁸ Keystone Performance Surveys, Development Partnership Surveys, "Partner Feed-back Report: Kvinna till Kvinna", 2016.

³⁹ Interview, 2019.

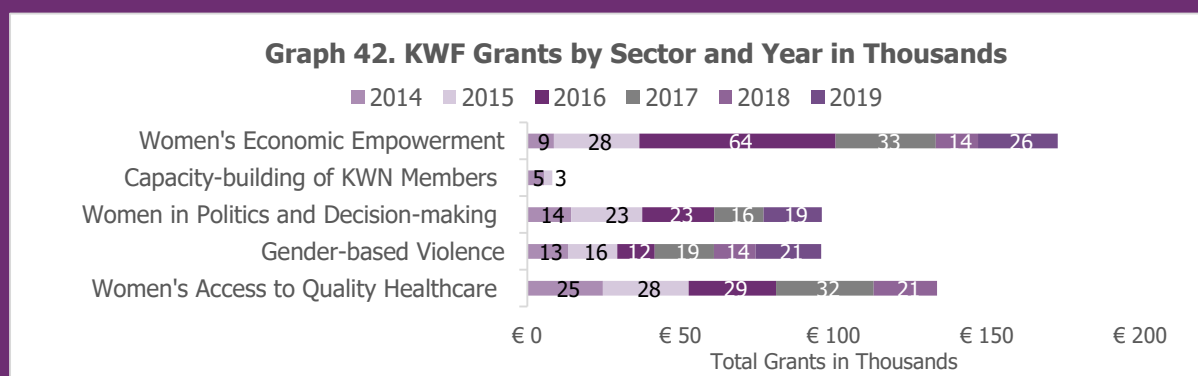
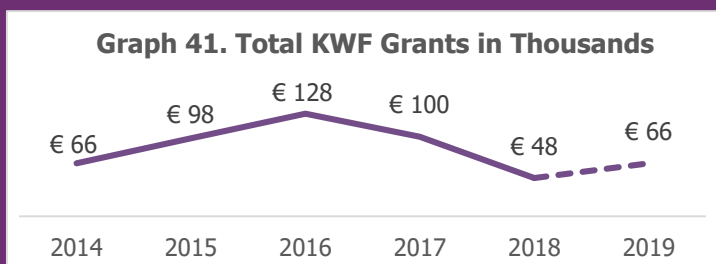
⁴⁰ Ibid.

Case Study: The Kosovo Women's Fund

KWN is a network with 161 diverse WCSO members throughout Kosovo. KWN's mission is to "support protect and promote the rights and interests of women and girls". In response to shifting donor priorities, shrinking funds, and complex application procedures for local WCSOs,⁴¹ KWN established the Kosovo Women's Fund (KWF) in 2012, initially supported by The Kvinna till Kvinna Foundation. KWF provides small grants for WCSOs in Kosovo, up to €5,000 per grant, €8,000 for partnerships among WCSOs, and more when funding allows. Grants enable KWN members to collaborate towards the joint strategic aims of KWN, identified by its members.⁴² In 2019, it began distributing grants to CSOs in the WB as well.

An added benefit of the Fund is that its staff provide continuous, tailored capacity development opportunities, including supporting grant applicants in writing proposals, as well as grant recipients, based on identified needs. This includes capacity-building in project, organisational, and financial management, as well as advocacy. The application procedure is simple, enabling smaller WCSOs' access. Meanwhile, it provides opportunities for WCSOs to learn about application processes so they can use such skills in applying to other funders in the future. Unsuccessful applicants receive detailed regret letters from the KWF Grant Review Committee, explaining why their application was not selected. KWN staff provide follow-up mentoring to help them learn, so they can apply again in the future. KWN's approach of grants coupled with tailored capacity-building has received recognition as a good practice by its beneficiaries, but also by the EC's Centre of Thematic Expertise on Civil Society Support.⁴³

Since 2012, KWF has provided 197 grants to 107 WCSOs, amounting to €1,011,387. WCSOs have had 21,028 direct beneficiaries, with several initiatives ongoing. Additionally, nearly €200,000 were distributed in 2020 alone. The total amount distributed each year fluctuated (Graph 41), as KWN must secure funding from other funders. To date the largest funders have included the EU, ADA, and UN Women. All funds distributed during this period went to WCSOs. While grants are multi-dimensional, including components for capacity-building and empowering women's political participation, based on organisations' requests most funds have supported women's economic empowerment, totalling €173,000 (34%) between 2014 and 2019 (Graph 42).⁴⁴



⁴¹ Farnsworth, N. and Gashi, E., 2013.

⁴² KWN, *KWN Strategy 2019-2022*, 2018.

⁴³ KWN, "Exemplary Kosovo Women's Fund Informs EU Sub-Granting Programs Internationally", KWN website, 2016.

⁴⁴ See KWN, *Little Grants, Big Changes*, and *Women's Rights are Human Rights: Little Grants, Important Changes 2016-2017*.

Case Study: Reconstruction Women's Fund, Serbia

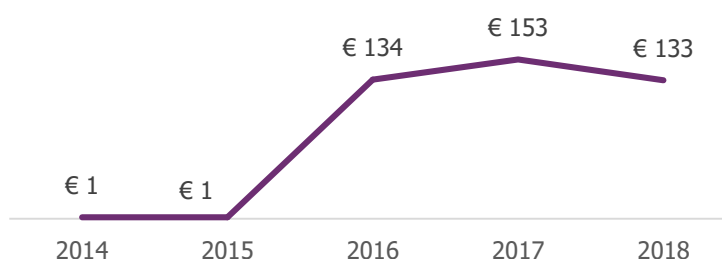
The Reconstruction Women's Fund (RWF), based in Belgrade, Serbia, supports feminist activism through four grant modalities.⁴⁵ This includes 1) General Support Grants, which provide flexibility and freedom to women's groups and activists; 2) Žarana Papić Stipends, for academics and activists to improve intellectual exchange related to feminism, women's issues, and gender; 3) Special Focus Grants on specific issues, such as Roma women's activism and gender-based violence; and 4) Rapid Response Grants, which are small, urgent grants processed within 72 hours. RWF provides the latter category of grants in unpredictable, short-term situations related to women's human rights violations, violence, and discrimination.⁴⁶ All of RWF's funds focus on furthering gender equality and women's rights. Most funds go to WCSOs, though individual women's rights activists also benefit, such as from Rapid Response Grants or academic stipends. From 2014 through 2018, RWF awarded a total of €423,164. Since 2015, the funding that they have distributed has increased substantially (Graph 43).



RWF are experts on women's activism, the women's movement, and how to build a women's movement. That's important because in order to change a patriarchal society, you have to support women and WCSOs specifically. You could never find this specific expertise in a general, non-women's fund.

International Funder

Graph 43. RWF Grants Awarded in Thousands



Local NGOs

WCSOs in the WB received funds from several local NGOs,⁴⁷ including other WCSOs. Grants averaged €10,001 each. Rarely were local NGOs the original source of funding; their funds could be traced back to other sources, primarily multilateral and bilateral funders. Thus, some of the funds accounted for here already may have been reflected in prior sections. They are examined separately to reflect on the role of local NGOs as funders.⁴⁸

Findings suggest that substantial resource-sharing occurred among WCSOs in WB countries. Of the WCSOs interviewed, 25 (10%) stated that they had provided subgrants to other organisations.

⁴⁵ Reconstruction Women's Fund, website, "[RWFund Programs](#)", accessed in April 2020.

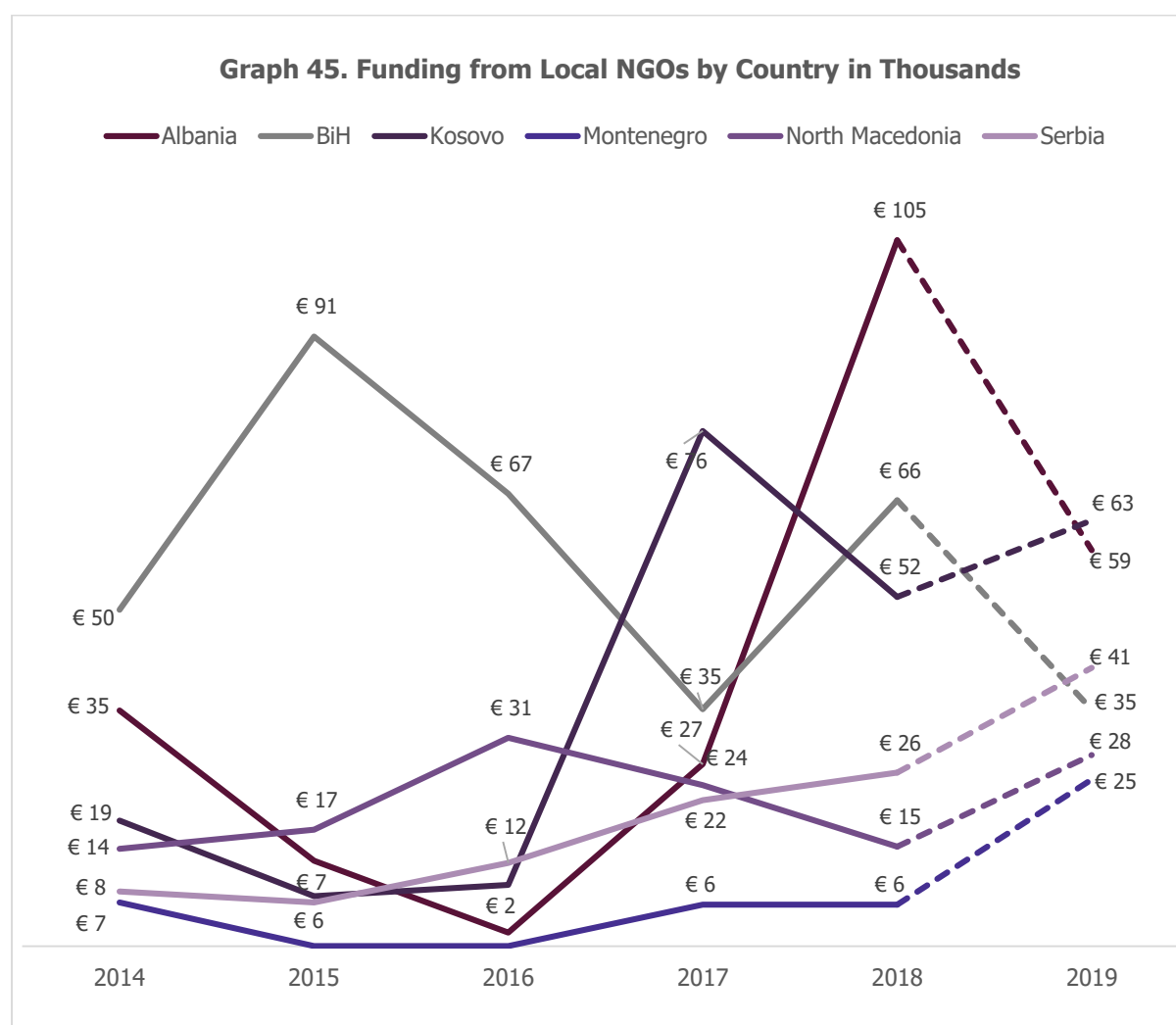
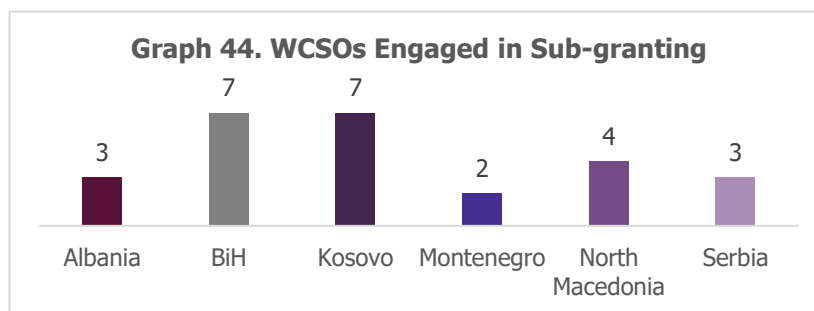
⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ The term NGO is used in reference to local NGOs discussed as funders in order to simplify reading. No other differentiation is made between the terms CSOs and NGOs in this particular publication.

⁴⁸ For a list of local NGOs that WCSOs reported receiving funding from, see [Annex 4](#).

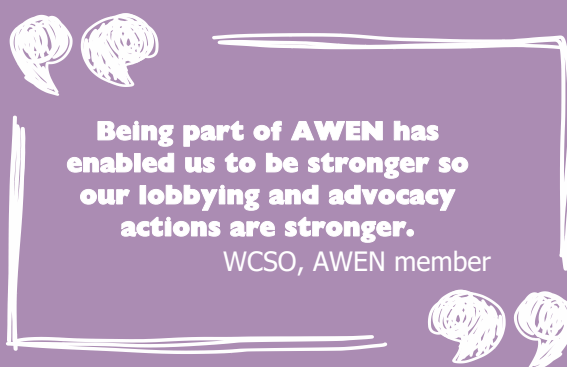
Comparatively more WCSOs in **Kosovo** (7) and **BiH** (7) were engaged in sub-granting than WCSOs interviewed in the other countries (Graph 44).

In **BiH**, WCSOs seemed to have received more funding from local NGOs than WCSOs in other countries had (Graph 45). Funding from local NGOs fluctuated in most countries, except in **Serbia** and **Montenegro** where funding, albeit minimal, increased slightly over time. Given the modest, uncertain, and inconsistent amount of funding provided by local NGOs, WCSOs cannot rely on them as a steady source of funding.

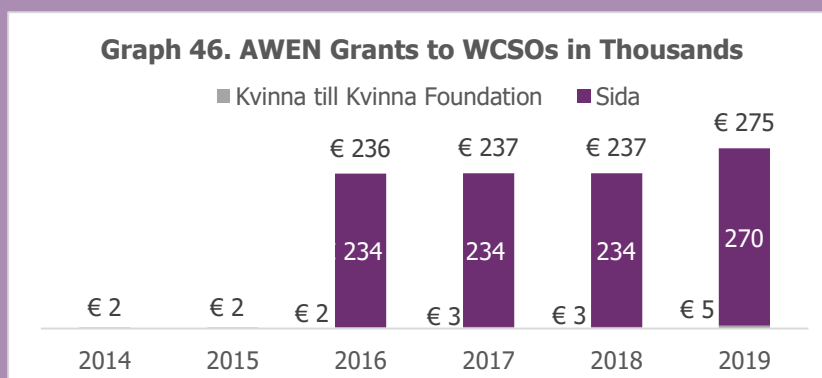


Case Study: The Albanian Women's Empowerment Network

The Albanian Women's Empowerment Network (AWEN) is a CSO network based in Tirana with ten member organisations throughout Albania. AWEN's mission is to "to work together to empower girls and women socially, economically, and politically to participate and realize their rights throughout Albania".⁴⁹ AWEN achieves its goals through joint advocacy, partnerships, research, capacity development of its members, awareness-raising, monitoring, capacity-building of duty bearers to meet their legal obligations, specialised support services, and empowering women and girls. Formed in 2011, AWEN's work focuses primarily on addressing gender-based violence.



AWEN provides funding primarily to its WCSO members and sometimes to other small WCSOs. All funding focuses on furthering gender equality. In total, AWEN has provided €987,072 to WCSOs between 2014 and 2019. This has included multiyear funding. As Graph 46 illustrates, AWEN still receives some funding from The Kvinna till Kvinna Foundation, originating from Sida, for regional advocacy initiatives related to the EU Accession process.



The Kvinna till Kvinna Foundation advised AWEN members in taking steps towards establishing AWEN through long-term support in networking and capacity-building. When Kvinna till Kvinna began considering phasing out its financial support to Albania, they supported AWEN in taking over their role in distributing funds to WCSOs, as a viable exit strategy.⁵⁰ Following a thorough capacity assessment and due diligence screening, Sida in Albania began funding AWEN directly, with funds shared among AWEN members. Direct funding from Sida has enabled AWEN to increase the grant amounts to its members. It also has contributed to stability over time. This is important given the sensitive nature of members' work, as many are public benefit service providers for persons who have suffered gender-based violence. This also has supported the long-term growth of AWEN members in terms of organisational and financial capacities.

AWEN thus serves as an interesting example of how funders can provide larger, direct awards to WCSOs for further distribution among other WCSOs. Such an approach that bolsters solidarity among WCSOs, rather than competition, can contribute to strengthening the women's movement.

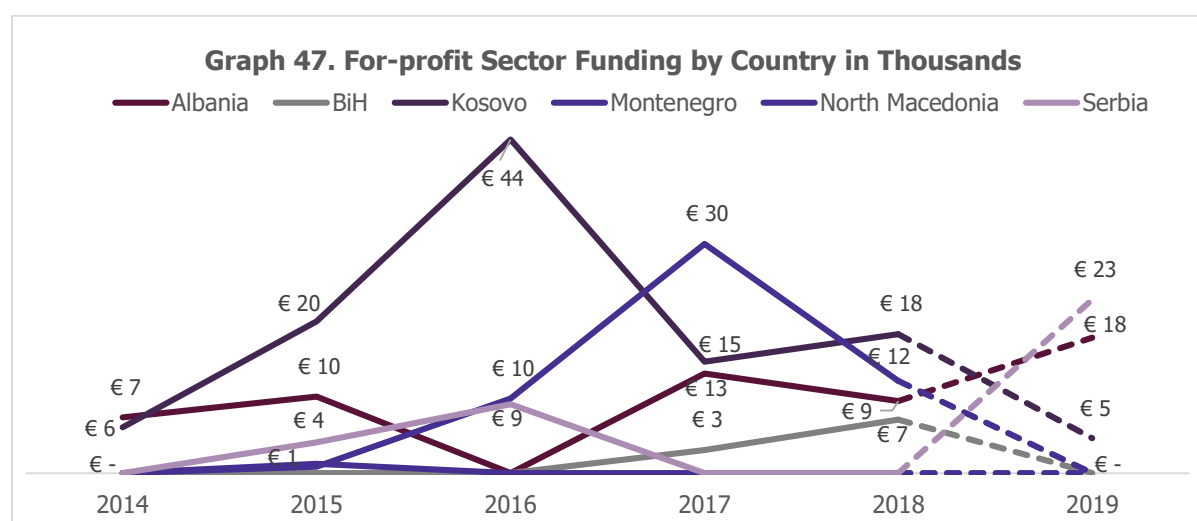
⁴⁹ For the full mission statement, see: [AWEN, website, "History"](#), accessed in April 2020. Its members are: 1) Gender Alliance for Development Centre, Tirana; 2) Association of Women and Girls with Social Problems, Durrës; 3) Me, the Woman, Pogradec; 4) Woman to Woman, Shkoder; 5) Agritra Vision, Peshkopi; 6) Woman's Forum, Elbasan; 7) The Psycho-Social Center "Vatra", Vlora; 8) Jona Association, Saranda; 9) Counselling Line for Girls and Women, Tirana; and 10) Centre for Civic Initiatives, Tirana.

⁵⁰ Correspondence with funder and WCSO, Albania, 2020.

The For-Profit Sector

As described here, the for-profit sector includes businesses giving donations directly to WCSOs. It does not include private foundations,⁵¹ described earlier, though some private foundations received their funds from the for-profit sector (e.g., the IKEA Foundation or Bayern Foundation). Less than 1% of the funding that WCSOs in the region reported receiving originated from the for-profit sector, amounting to a total of €148,465 between 2014 and 2019. Meanwhile, WCSOs received €263,579 from the for-profit sector when considering funding distributed through for-profit actors from other funders (illustrated in Graph 47). The difference between funds *originating* from the for-profit sector (e.g., donations from local businesses), and funds passing *through* the for-profit sector can be attributed primarily to contractors distributing bilateral funds. For example, in Kosovo WCSOs received funding from the private company Chemonics, contracted by USAID, accounting for the steep increase in funding delivered to WCSOs in Kosovo in 2016 (see Graph 47). While funding from the for-profit sector remains minimal in all countries, WCSOs in **Kosovo** (€106,680), **Albania** (€57,400), and **North Macedonia** (€52,597) appear to have received more funds from the for-profit sector than WCSOs in other countries. Funding from this sector has been rather inconsistent from year to year.

For-profit funders that WCSOs said they had received in-cash support from included BH Telekom and Lush in **BiH**; TEB bank, Dukagjini Insurance Company, and KEDS electric company in **Kosovo**; Hypo Alpe Adria Bank in **Montenegro**; Consulting DOO and Triglav Insurance in **North Macedonia**; and the Institute of Transportation CIP, GOMEX stores, and the Serbian Oil Industry in **Serbia**.



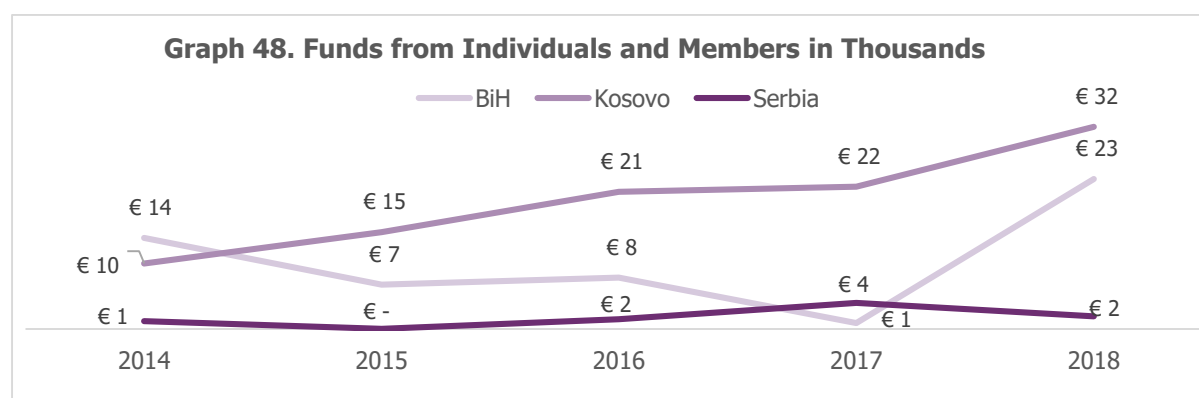
Individuals, Members, and Self-Generated Resources

WCSOs in the WB have used various techniques to generate income from other sources, including fundraising from individuals, introducing membership fees, crowd-sourcing, online giving, service-provision, and organising fundraising events or activities. For example, in **BiH**, WCSOs have received donations from informal groups in Germany and Switzerland. WCSOs in **Serbia** have used crowd-sourcing, such as through *Donacije.rs* and Globalgiving. WCSOs in **Kosovo** similarly have used the Network for Good, through a fiscal sponsor. Fundraising events across the region have generated income for various activities, particularly those less funded by traditional donors or requiring urgent funds outside funders' regular funding cycles.

⁵¹ That is, to the extent discernable to the research team, based on internet research.

WCSOs reported names of more than 36 individuals who had supported them, and individual gifts ranged from a euro to €21,500. Even so, funds from individuals and membership fees combined comprised a meagre 0.3% of all funds generated from 2015 to 2019, totalling an estimated €188,511. Existing literature suggests that this could be due in part to the aforementioned weak culture of giving in the WB.⁵² The inadequate legal environment and absence of tax incentives also hinder giving.⁵³ Further research is needed related to this topic and opportunities for generating additional resources for WCSOs.

WCSOs in **Kosovo** and **BiH** raised substantially more funds from individual donors and members than did WCSOs in other countries. While this funding has decreased in BiH, in Kosovo it has increased over time (Graph 48). Since 2016, funding from individuals also has increased slightly in **Serbia**. Substantially more funds came from individual donations than from members in these countries. WCSOs in the other WB countries did not report receiving any financial donations from individuals or members from 2014 to 2018.⁵⁴



Albeit scarcely mentioned, a few WCSOs gave examples of providing services to generate funds. In **Albania**, **Kosovo**, and **North Macedonia** WCSOs reported conducting research and public opinion polls. In **Kosovo** and **Montenegro**, they provided consulting services related to gender equality. WCSOs said that such service contracts can help generate additional, more flexible income. In **Albania**, a WCSO has utilised a local restaurant to generate funds. In **Kosovo**, a woman's shelter sold products made by women there to cover costs, particularly in emergency situations. Another organisation in BiH said they generated funds through social entrepreneurship and the "Diplomatski Bazaar", a bazaar in which diplomats make food and sell women's handmade products. While such funds have helped WCSOs fill funding gaps, they have been insufficient for fully funding organisations. Moreover, some activists expressed concerns that service provision can divert energy and attention away from their organisational strategic priorities.⁵⁵

WCSOs Preferences Regarding Funders

When asked which funders they prefer and why, WCSOs in all countries tended not to have any strong preferences regarding who funds them, so long as funders support their goals. Nevertheless, as Graph 49 illustrates, a slightly higher percentage of WCSOs stated they would prefer to receive funds from multilaterals (44%), followed by bilaterals (41%), women's funds (34%), local government (28%), and national governments (28%). Fewer

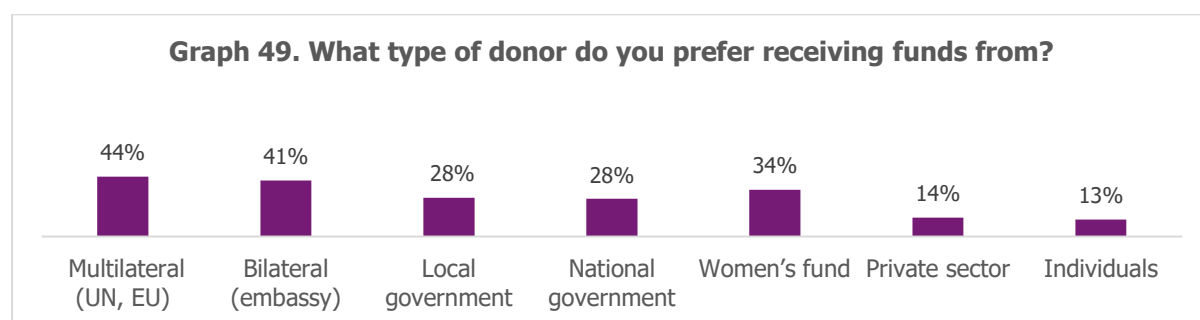
⁵² See the section on [Global Funding Trends](#), particularly Charities Aid Foundation, *World Giving Index*, 2019.

⁵³ See the section on [An Enabling Regulatory Environment for Philanthropic Giving](#).

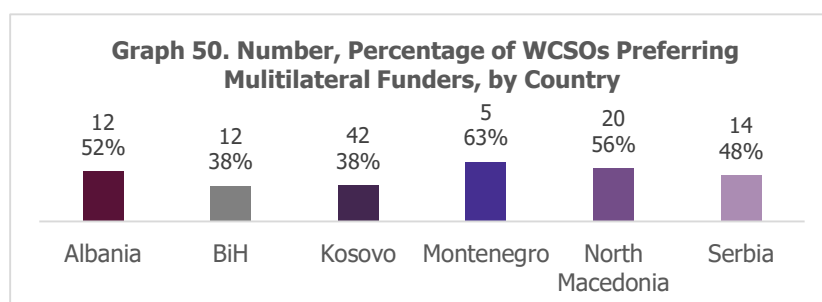
⁵⁴ Data from 2019 was too incomplete to include.

⁵⁵ Interviews, WCSOs, 2019.

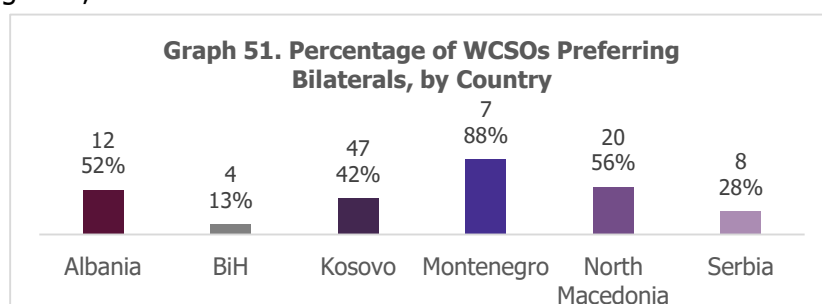
preferred for-profit funders (14%) or individual donors (13%).⁵⁶ WCSOs could select multiple responses, so this and the graphs that follow do not total 100%.



By country, a higher percentage of interviewed WCSOs preferred receiving funds from multilaterals in **Montenegro** (63%) and **North Macedonia** (56%) than in other countries, though this is perhaps partially attributable to the smaller sample size in these countries (Graph 50). Some WCSOs said they preferred multilateral support because multilaterals offer “adjustable, available” and sensitive support. Also, they offer longer term grants, WCSOs said.

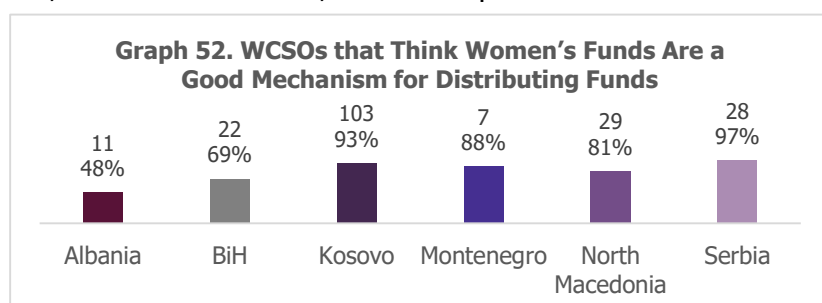


Compared to other countries, a higher percentage of WCSOs preferred bilateral funders in **Montenegro** (88%), **North Macedonia** (56%), and **Albania** (52%) (Graph 51). They enlisted an understanding of WCSO



needs, recognition of their work, and simpler, more flexible application criteria among their reasons for preferring bilateral funders. These funders are also “more sensitive, have concrete strategies, are more responsible, and cover all costs”, a WCSO representative said.⁵⁷

Only a third of respondents “preferred” receiving funds from women’s funds. Even so, on a separate question, 84% thought that women’s funds are a good mechanism for distributing funds to WCSOs, though



16% did not. A higher percentage think women’s funds are a good mechanism in **Serbia** (97%) and **Kosovo** (93%), followed by **Montenegro** (88%), **North Macedonia** (81%), and **BiH** (69%) (see Graph 52). As Graph 37 previously indicated, women’s funds have distributed

⁵⁶ Due to an oversight, the multiple-choice responses did not include foundations. However, four WCSOs wrote foundations in the “other” category. Given this small number of responses, it is not represented in the graph.

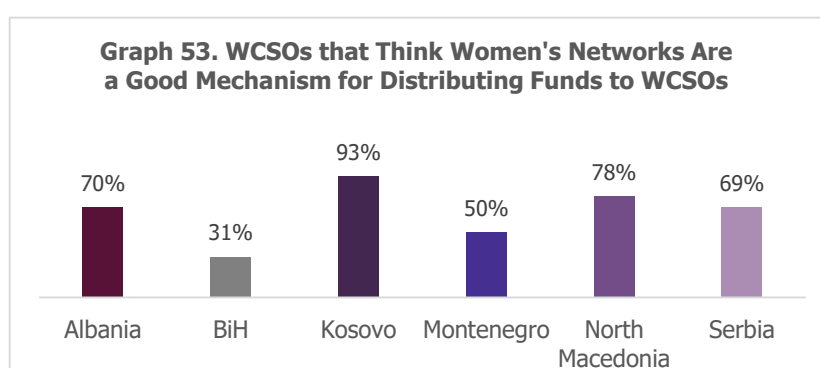
⁵⁷ Interview, WCSO, North Macedonia, 2019.

substantially more resources in BiH and Serbia than in the other countries. However, given the differences in views in BiH and Serbia, the amount of funds distributed does not necessarily indicate whether WCSOs prefer receiving support from women's funds.

Comparatively fewer WCSOs in **Albania** thought women's funds were a good mechanism (48%). Some said that they did not see the added value of intermediary donors, stating that it only adds bureaucratic procedures. Some WCSOs in **Albania** and **BiH** expressed concerns about women's funds, stating that they had: bureaucratic procedures, potential favouritism of WCSOs in capitals, insufficient attention to the most vulnerable WCSOs and insufficient sustainable resources for sub-granting.⁵⁸ A WCSO in **Serbia** stated that women's funds must work "based on principles of inclusion, equality and without giving an advantage to specific regions, organisations, leaders", suggesting that women's funds in Serbia could improve their inclusivity.⁵⁹

Some observed that the effectiveness of women's funds depended on the country context and how women's funds engage with their communities. WCSOs cited shared ideologies, transparency, more access to larger funds, experience, awareness, and understanding of WCSOs' needs and priorities as positive elements of women's funds. As a WCSO in BiH stated, "We have positive experiences with them", and "they know the needs".⁶⁰ Women's funds also adapt to the needs of WCSOs, particularly when offering funds to smaller organisations that lack capacities for applying for larger funders, respondents said. For example, WCSOs said that the Kosovo Women's Fund serves as a "bridge" between smaller WCSOs and larger funders.⁶¹ While larger WCSOs may be able to have direct funding, women's funds may be useful for reaching WCSOs that do not know English or cannot manage large funds. Perhaps the differing opinions may be attributable in part to WCSOs' individual experiences with women's funds.

Women's networks also have distributed larger funds to several WCSOs, such as through AWEN, KWN, and the Network against Violence against Women in Serbia.⁶² Most interviewed WCSOs think that women's networks are a good mechanism for distributing funds to their members (76%). However, 24% said that they do not think networks are a good mechanism for fund distribution. As Graph 53 illustrates, the highest percentage of interviewed WCSOs that think women's networks are a good mechanism are in **Kosovo**, followed by **North Macedonia**, **Albania**, **Serbia**, and **Montenegro**. Comparatively fewer WCSOs in **BiH** felt networks were a good mechanism (31%). WCSOs in BiH said that the existing women's network in BiH is too informal to distribute funds. A WCSO in North Macedonia stated that the purpose of networks should be joint action, rather than fund distribution. WCSOs expressed concerns that in some instances, networks have competed with their members for resources or have not met the needs of their members. In contrast



⁵⁸ Interviews, WCSOs, Albania, BiH, 2019.

⁵⁹ Interview, WCSO, Serbia, 2019.

⁶⁰ Interview, WCSO, BiH, 2019.

⁶¹ Interview, WCSO, Kosovo, 2019.

⁶² While AWEN and the Network against Violence against Women do not identify as women's funds, KWN has a Women's Fund. KWN also provides resources directly to its members (not through the Kosovo Women's Fund), such as when members specialise in working on particular issues (e.g., sexual violence or domestic violence). For further information, see the case studies on KWN under [women's funds](#) and on AWEN under [local NGOs](#).

and as shown by the quantitative responses, WCSOs in Kosovo seemed satisfied with the work of KWN and its Kosovo Women's Fund.

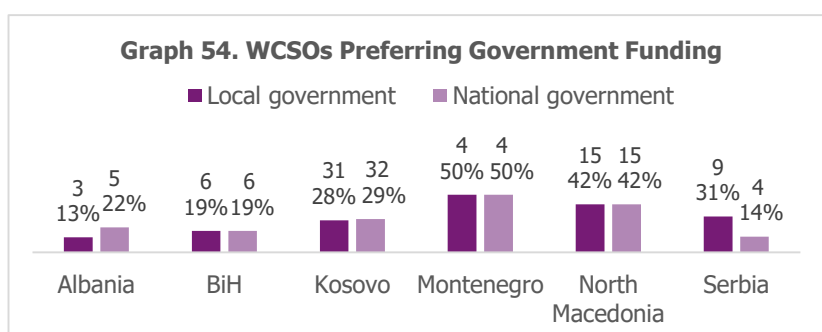
WCSO respondents observed that networks, like women's funds, can provide access to funding to groups that otherwise may not have such access, and can reduce administrative burdens for funders in-country by assuming the responsibility for managing and overseeing subgrants. An added benefit is their knowledge of the situation and proximity to subgrant recipients, which contributes to efficiency and effectiveness. Women's networks reach target groups at the local level and adequately meet specific needs, making them good advocates for smaller WCSOs and inherently stronger than individual organisations.⁶³ They also provide unique, tailored capacity development.⁶⁴ Strong cooperation among women's groups via networks can create more opportunities for projects and funding. For example, KWN has a joint strategy created by its members, and sub-granting enables members to collaborate to implement a broader, shared strategy.⁶⁵ Once a network matures, ensures mutual cooperation among its members and funders, and receives reliable resources, it can become a sustainable source of funding, WCSOs said.⁶⁶

A higher percentage of WCSOs interviewed in **Montenegro** (50%) than in other countries preferred government funding. Again, this may be due to the small sample size (Graph 54). WCSOs in **Kosovo** and **North Macedonia** said they preferred funding from governments because such funds are "more sustainable and secure".⁶⁷ Others similarly said that long-term, institutional support from a combination of their governments and embassies would be ideal.

[KWN] is well-informed about calls for projects. They are open, understandable, and reasonable and help us review our projects.
WCSO, Kosovo

They are familiar with the needs of women's organisations and the needs of women in general, can identify priorities, and know better how and where to distribute funds, which prevents overlap.
WCSO, North Macedonia

The ideal would be long-term funds, especially from embassies and the government, because they are more secure.
WCSO, Kosovo



⁶³ Interviews, WCSOs, Albania, BiH, 2019.

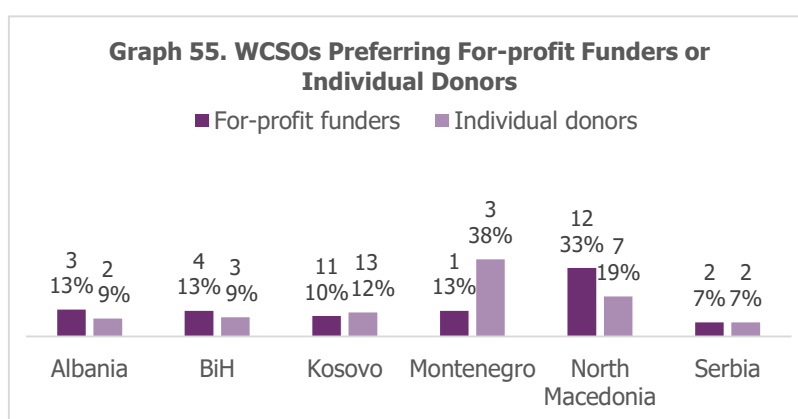
⁶⁴ Interview, WCSO, 2019. For further information, see the [Case Study](#).

⁶⁵ Interviews, WCSOs, Kosovo, 2019. For further information, see KWN, *KWN Strategy 2019-2022*, 2018.

⁶⁶ Interviews, WCSOs, Montenegro, BiH, 2019.

⁶⁷ Interviews, WCSOs, Kosovo, North Macedonia, 2019.

Comparatively fewer WCSOs preferred receiving funds from for-profit funders or individual supporters (Graph 55). Among those that did, A reason given for preferring such funders included the potential for enhancing organisations' sustainability. Given the meagreness and volatility of such funding to date, such reasoning may seem surprising. At the same time, one interpretation of this viewpoint may be that some WCSOs may see such funding as an opportunity to diversify their funding sources, particularly in the future, which could contribute to their resourcing and sustainability in the long-term, particularly if foreign funding declines.



Conclusion: Who Funds Women's Rights in the WB?

Generally, the funding environment in the WB remains, in AWID's words, "weak, distorted and fragmented".⁶⁸ The fact that several funders have their own policies, strategies, and timeframes for funding contributes to this fragmentation and undermines coordination, as funders seldom can or will adjust their own funding policies to align with those of other funders. The vast majority of funding to WCSOs in the WB from 2014 to mid-2019 derived from multilaterals and bilaterals, often passing through other multilaterals, women's funds, foundations, INGOs, or local organisations. Governments, local NGOs, and foundations provided significantly less support in comparison. Funding for gender equality and WCSOs, respectively, seems to comprise a very small proportion of government funding for civil society in WB countries. Funding from individuals and businesses was particularly minimal.

WCSOs' differing opinions on which funders they prefer may relate to their own capacities and experiences with different funders. WCSOs are diverse. While larger WCSOs may access multilateral and bilateral funds, smaller WCSOs may not; they depend on local organisations, foundations, and women's funds for support. Women's funds and networks can provide unique opportunities for reaching marginalised and smaller WCSOs that cannot access or manage larger grants. Thus, as AWID has observed, a healthy "feminist funding ecosystem" with various funders and funds available seems essential for meeting the needs of diverse WCSOs. However, as indicated in the first chapter, decreasing reliance on foreign funding will require substantially improved political situations, legal frameworks, and cultures of giving, if WCSOs are to sustain their work using domestic resources.

⁶⁸ Miller, K. and Jones, R., *Toward a Feminist Funding Ecosystem*.

FUNDING TRENDS

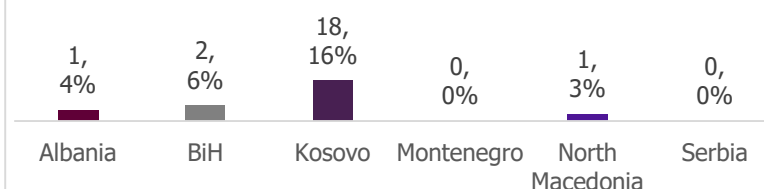
This chapter responds to the research question, “What funding has been available for the period of 2014-2019 for WCSOs, women and girls, and gender equality, respectively?” As mentioned, detailed information on funding trends was difficult to obtain from the funders interviewed. Funders generally indicated that either they did not have this data, only kept some of it, or were unable to share it. Moreover, funders often viewed gender equality and women’s rights as “cross-cutting themes”. Thus, some said, such funding was integrated into overall budget lines, making it difficult to extract specific details. Only limited information was available through websites, documents, and databases provided by a few funders. Where available, such information was presented in the previous chapter in case studies on funders. However, it was difficult to draw specific conclusions regarding funding provided by funders. Therefore, this chapter focuses on funding to WCSOs, based on the financial data that WCSO respondents provided. It discusses overall funding trends by thematic areas, target group, and strategy, including how the funds available for each have aligned with WCSOs’ priorities. It examines funding amounts and timeframes, as well as discusses preferred approaches from the perspectives of funders and WCSOs. Finally, it presents the limited information available regarding future funding for the region.

Overall Trends in Funding to WCSOs

Overall, 91% of the WCSOs interviewed had at some point received funding (219), and 9% never had any funding (22). The latter worked on a voluntary basis. A higher percentage of WCSOs in **Kosovo** (16%) never had funding, compared to WCSOs in other countries (Graph 56).

Graph 57 illustrates the total known funding that WCSOs received between 2014 and mid-2019, based on WCSOs’ reported income. Funding seems to have decreased between 2014 and 2016, but increased thereafter. Again, 2019 is illustrative but incomplete. Graph 58 illustrates funding that WCSOs reported receiving, by country and year. WCSOs in **BiH** seem to have received the most funding, though funding has decreased over time. WCSOs in **Kosovo** received the second most funding. While they saw a decrease in funding from 2014 to 2015, funding seems to have increased since then. WCSOs in **Serbia** received the third most funding, which seems to have declined between 2015 and 2017, but then increased substantially in 2018. Although they have witnessed some variation in funding, WCSOs in Albania, North Macedonia, and

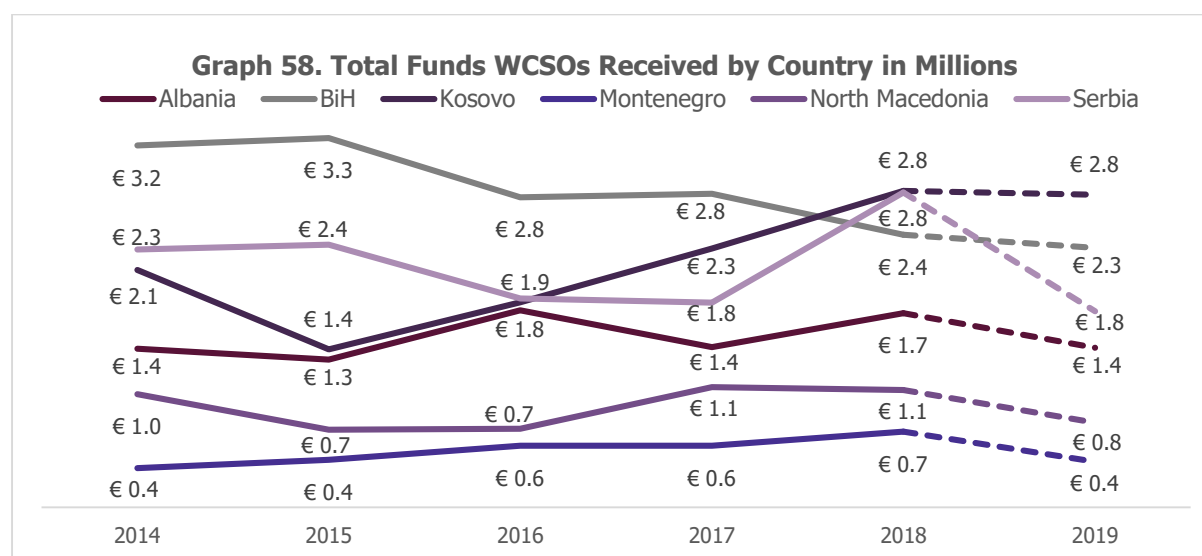
Graph 56. WCSOs Never Receiving Funding



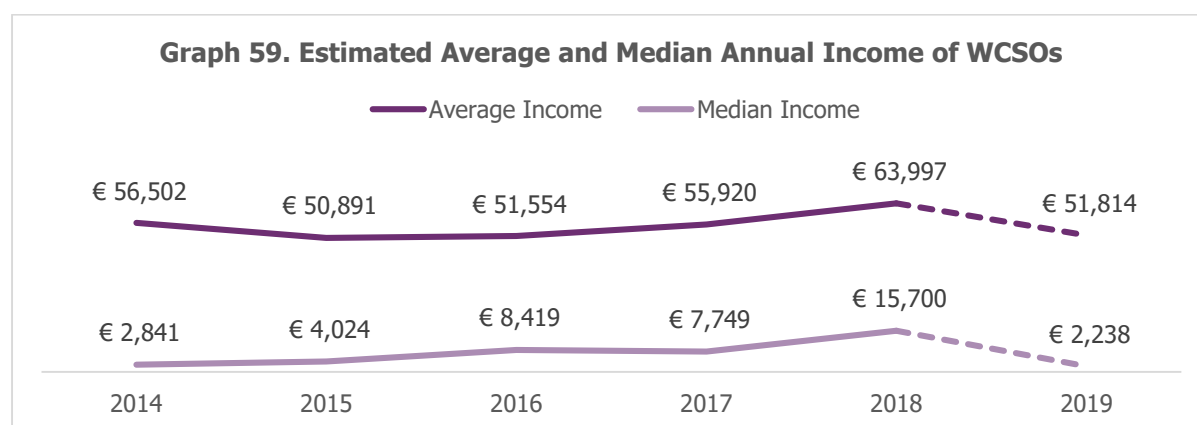
Graph 57. Estimated Total Funding Received by WCSOs in Millions



Montenegro have had more consistent, albeit less, funding over time than those in other countries.

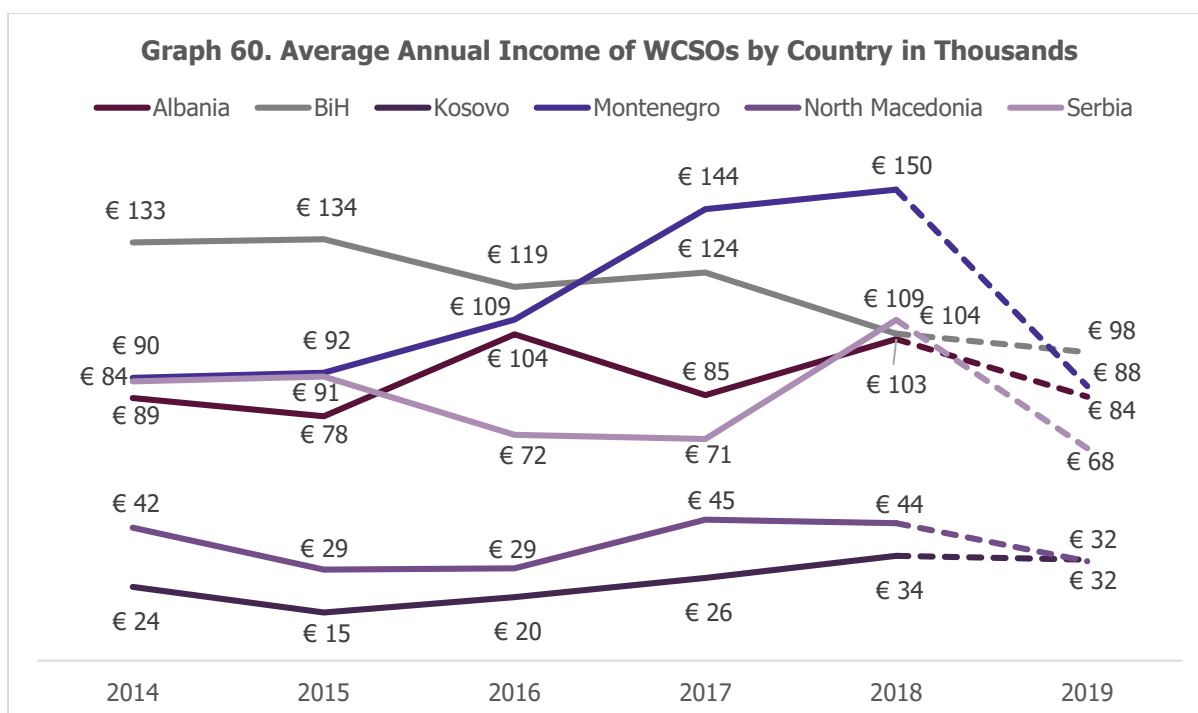


The average annual funding received per WCSO in the WB from 2014 to 2018, was €55,773. WCSOs serving women with different abilities had nearly seven times fewer resources than other WCSOs, averaging €8,226 per year in annual income. Similarly, rural WCSOs had substantially fewer resources, averaging €7,706 per year, with rural WCSOs in Kosovo (€2,321) and Serbia (€1,705) having even lower average incomes during this period.¹ Overall, the annual income was skewed by eight organisations that had annual incomes of more than €500,000. The median annual income was only €6,000. Graph 59 illustrates the average and median annual incomes of WCSOs by year.



For the period of 2014 to 2018, WCSOs in **BiH** received more funds annually than did those in other countries, averaging €123,068 annually (Graph 60). An exception was **Montenegro** in 2017 and 2018. Over time, the trends in average annual funding seem similar as the overall funding trends portrayed in Graph 58: in **BiH** average annual income per WCSO seems to have decreased; in **Albania**, **Serbia**, and **North Macedonia** average annual income varied; and in **Kosovo** average annual income increased since 2015, albeit slightly. In contrast to Graph 58, average annual income increased quite substantially in Montenegro over time.

¹ Overall, WCSOs serving Roma women did not seem to have lower annual incomes than other WCSOs in the region, except in North Macedonia. Roma WCSOs may face other added challenges in accessing resources.

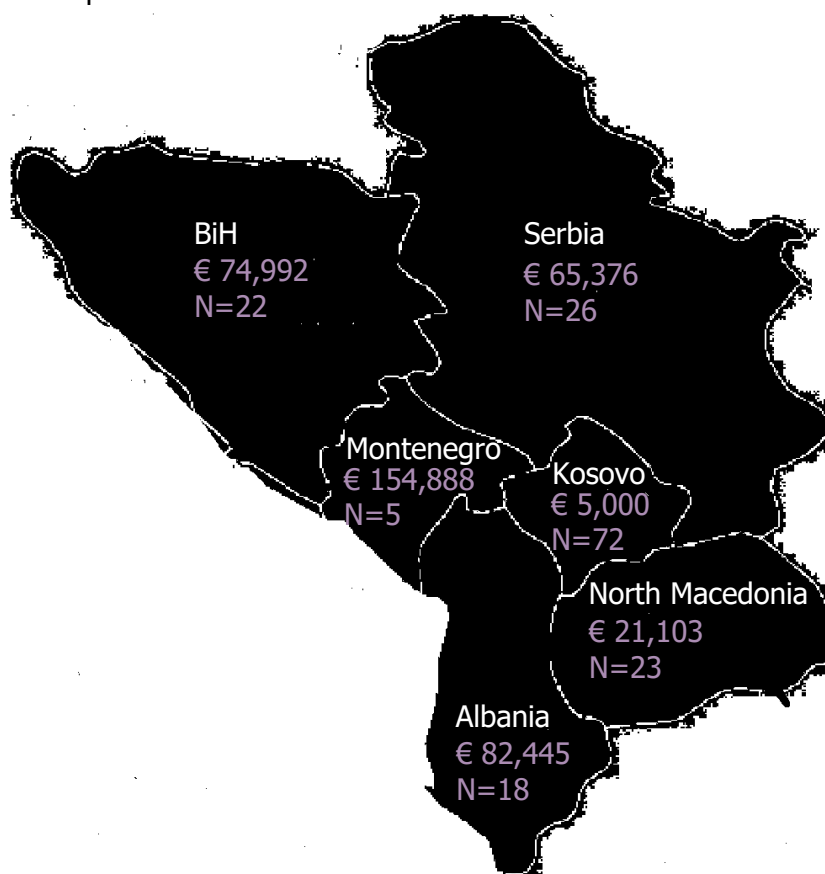


Financial Situation of WB WCSOs in 2018

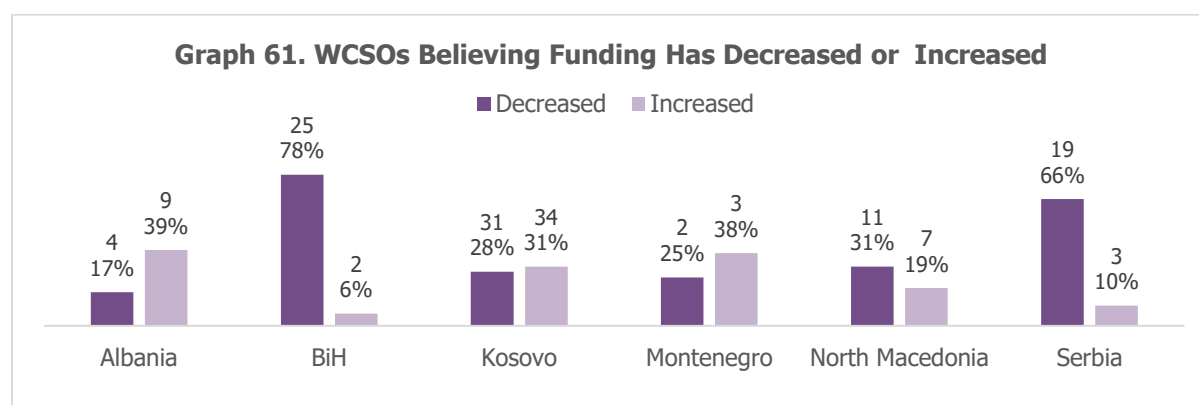
€ = Median income

Number of respondents (N)=162

68% of sample

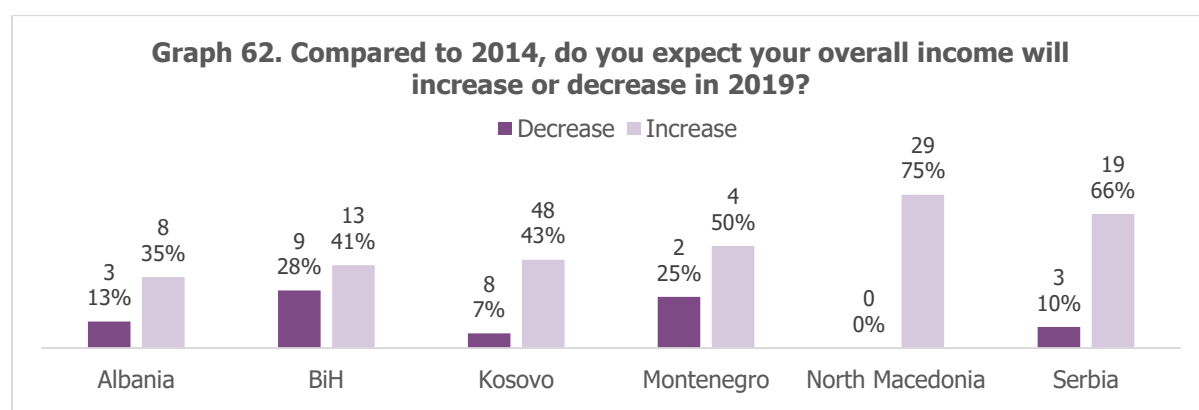


Regardless of the funding reportedly received by WCSOs, organisations had varying perceptions regarding the funding available over time. More WCSOs perceived that funding had decreased since 2014 (38%) than those that thought it had increased (24%). Meanwhile, 8% said that it had remained the same.² Substantially more WCSOs in **BiH** (78%) and **Serbia** (66%) said they had seen decreases in funds compared to those in other countries (see Graph 61). In contrast, a higher percentage of WCSOs in **Albania** (39%) said they had observed increases in funding. Across the WB, but especially in North Macedonia, Serbia, and BiH, some WCSOs said that funders are providing considerably less funding for WCSOs and women's rights in the last five years. Some said they have witnessed a decrease in funding as donors shifted funding to topics like anti-corruption, addressing violent extremism, and migration.



The differences in the estimated funding trends presented in the prior graphs, and these perceptions, perhaps can be explained by the diversity and varied experiences of WCSOs. While a few larger organisations may have seen an increase in funding over time, smaller WCSOs may not have received such resources, experiencing a decrease in funding.

Looking forward, half of the WCSOs interviewed believed that their overall income would be more in 2019 than it was in 2014. Meanwhile, 10% thought that their overall income would be less, and 12% thought it would remain the same. One-fourth were unsure.³ More WCSOs in **BiH** (28%) and **Montenegro** (25%) predicted decreases in funding compared to WCSOs in other countries (Graph 62).⁴ In contrast, more organisations from **North Macedonia** (75%), **Serbia** (66%), and **Montenegro** (50%) believed that their income would be higher in 2019 than in 2014.



² Additionally, 69 WCSOs said they did not know (29%).

³ Two percent did not respond.

⁴ N = 239.

Overall, **35%** of the WCSOs interviewed said that they did not meet their planned budget in 2018. As Graph 63 illustrates, half of the organisations in **Kosovo** reported not securing enough funds to meet their needs, followed by 38% in **Montenegro** and 31% in **North Macedonia**.

WCSOs in Montenegro said they struggled to cover overhead costs including electricity, phone, and internet. “[It’s] June now, [and] we’ve had electricity cut three times this year because we don’t have money”, a WCSO

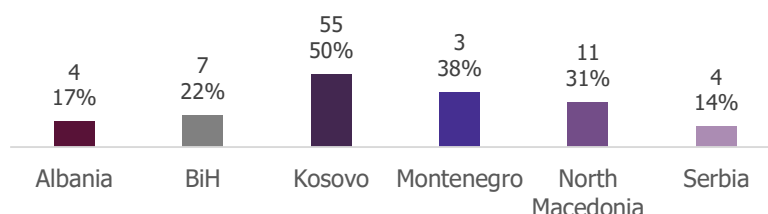
representative in Montenegro said. A higher percentage of WCSOs in **Albania** (74%) and **Serbia** (69%) reported securing their sought budgets.

Since 2014, most WCSOs (**82%**) have experienced periods in which they did not have enough resources. Only 18% said they had always had enough resources to cover their costs. The highest percentage of WCSOs that reported not having enough resources

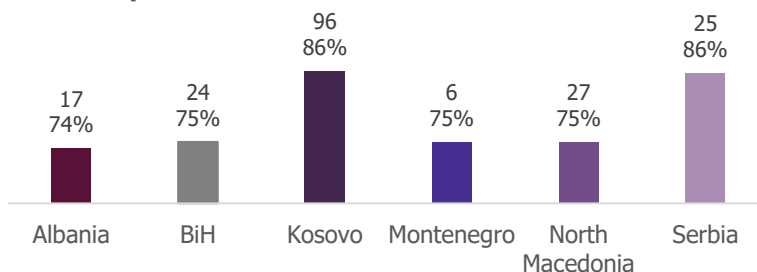
were in **Kosovo** (86%) and **Serbia** (86%) (Graph 64).

As a result of funding shortages, WCSOs have had to cut activities (58%), delay or not pay salaries (58%), reduce staff size (39%) and/or cut programmes (40%).⁵ More WCSOs in **Albania** (71%)⁶ and **BiH** (75%)⁷ reported having to cut activities. A higher percentage of WCSOs in **Albania** (53%) had cut programmes. Meanwhile, a higher percentage of WCSOs in **North Macedonia** (56%)⁸ and **BiH** (50%) had reduced their staff size.

Graph 63. Percentage of WCSOs that Did Not Meet Their Planned Budget in 2018



Graph 64. WCSOs that Ever Lacked Resources



We closed because we didn't have money for the basic functioning of the organisation including utilities, rent, and website maintenance.

WCSO, Serbia

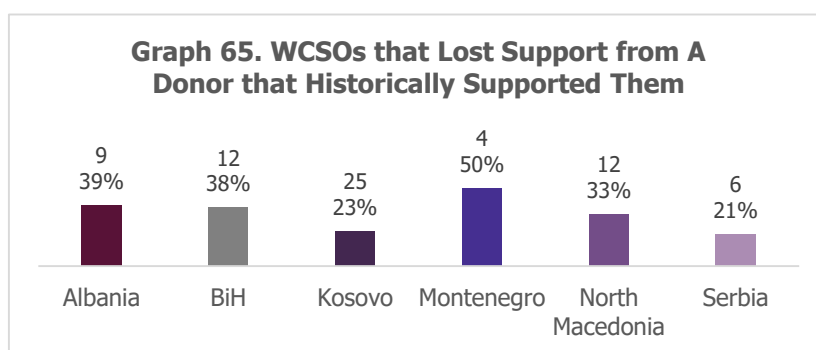
⁵ N = 195.

⁶ N = 17.

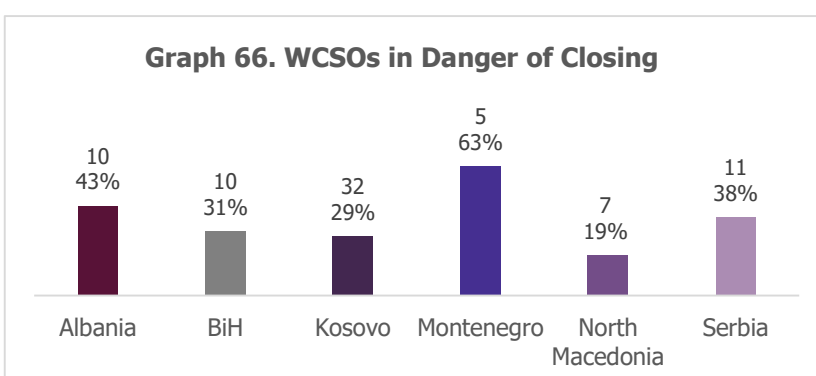
⁷ N = 24.

⁸ N = 27.

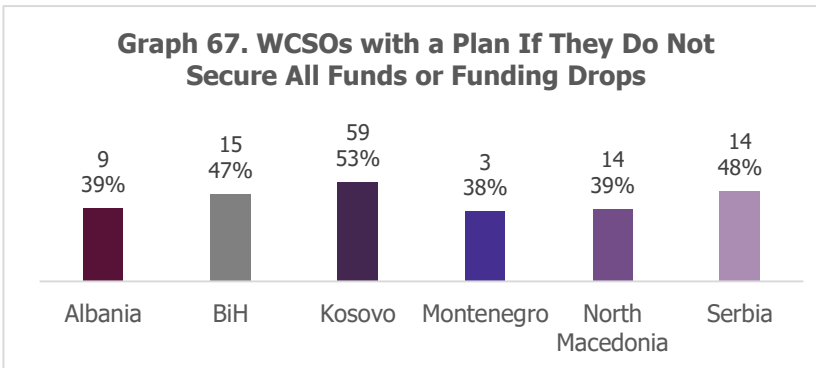
Since 2014, **28%** of the interviewed WCSOs said they had lost financial support from a funder that had historically supported them or had funders that had committed support, but later withdrew. A slightly higher percentage of WCSOs in **Montenegro** (50%) and **Albania** (39%) reported losing planned support than in other countries (Graph 65). The WCSOs that lost support from funders similarly said they had to reduce activities (65%), cut programmes (49%), decrease their staff (44%), and delay staff salaries (41%), among other implications (28%).⁹



Further, **31%** of WCSOs interviewed said they had been in danger of closing their organisation due to lack of funds (75) (Graph 66). Some WCSOs continued working without funding, on a voluntary basis.



While 101 organisations said they had a contingency plan in case they would not secure enough funding or if their funding decreased, 114 did not (**48%**). More organisations lacked plans in **Kosovo** (53%) (see Graph 67). In such situations, WCSOs could sell organisational assets for funds. While 63% of surveyed WCSOs had such assets available, 37% did not.



A technique WCSOs in **BiH** reported using for such situations was establishing reserve funds by asking contractors to donate 1-5% of their income back to the organisation. However, in **Albania**, according to the Law on NGOs, “no reserve funding is allowed”,¹⁰ so they cannot establish savings for situations in which they lack resources. Contingency plans that WCSOs in the WB mentioned for dealing with funding shortages included reducing staff, focusing on one or two key priorities, launching fundraising initiatives, and/or voluntarism.¹¹ WCSOs also reported undertaking stronger advocacy efforts and writing letters to the public

⁹ N = 68. A higher percentage had to reduce their staff in Albania (67%) and Kosovo (52%); had to delay or not pay staff salaries in Kosovo (60%), Montenegro (50%), and Albania (44%); and had to reduce programs in Kosovo (64%), Albania (56%), Serbia (50%), and Montenegro (50%). A higher percentage of WCSOs in Kosovo (75%), Albania (67%), BiH (67%), and Serbia (67%) had to cut activities.

¹⁰ Interviews, WCSOs, Albania, 2019; Law No. 8788 on [Non-Profit Organisations](#).

¹¹ Interviews, WCSOs, Albania, North Macedonia, and Montenegro, 2019.

and government to address insufficient funding.¹² In Serbia, Kosovo, and Albania, WCSOs said they would try to continue their activities on a voluntary basis.

Since 2014, 158 WCSOs (66%) had new sources of funding that they did not have previously. This included 50% of WCSOs in Kosovo, 69% in North Macedonia, 83% in Albania, 84% in BiH, 86% in Serbia, and 88% in Montenegro. Reportedly, re-granting from local organisations as well as the EU has improved the availability of funds in **North Macedonia** and **Kosovo**. In EU candidate countries, WCSOs generally tend to be hopeful that membership will increase the amount of EU funds available in the future.¹³

¹² Interview, WCSO, BiH, 2019.

¹³ [More-Hollerweger, et al.](#), p. 11.

Thematic Areas or Sectors Funded

This section examines the amount of funding that WCSOs reported receiving for work in different thematic areas or “sectors”. It then compares this with the areas that WCSOs considered priorities. Graph 68 shows the total funding that WCSOs reported receiving by sector from 2014 to mid-2019. Data could not always be clearly disaggregated by sector.¹⁴ Sometimes a single contract or grant would contribute to multiple sectors, such as anti-discrimination and labour force participation. Clearly most sectors would relate to women’s rights and/or gender equality, though this is listed separately as several WCSOs had initiatives that focused broadly on both. A few sectors described below would technically fall under the category of gender-based violence, but they are enlisted separately to be more precise. All data were coded based on the most specific sector mentioned. Funding for specific target groups, such as Roma, were coded based on the sector, such as education or economic empowerment, rather than the group targeted. Considering these limitations in coding the data, findings should be considered illustrative of trends, but not exhaustive or exact. Generally, interviews with funders confirmed that they have supported similar areas as those represented in the graph.¹⁵

As Graph 68 illustrates, most funding for WCSOs in the WB between 2014 and mid-2019 went towards addressing gender-based violence, primarily violence against women. This accounted for 27% of all funds that WCSOs reported receiving (€16.2 million). This category includes various forms of violence. Within this category, €2.7 million went towards addressing human sex trafficking and €3 million towards domestic violence, specifically.

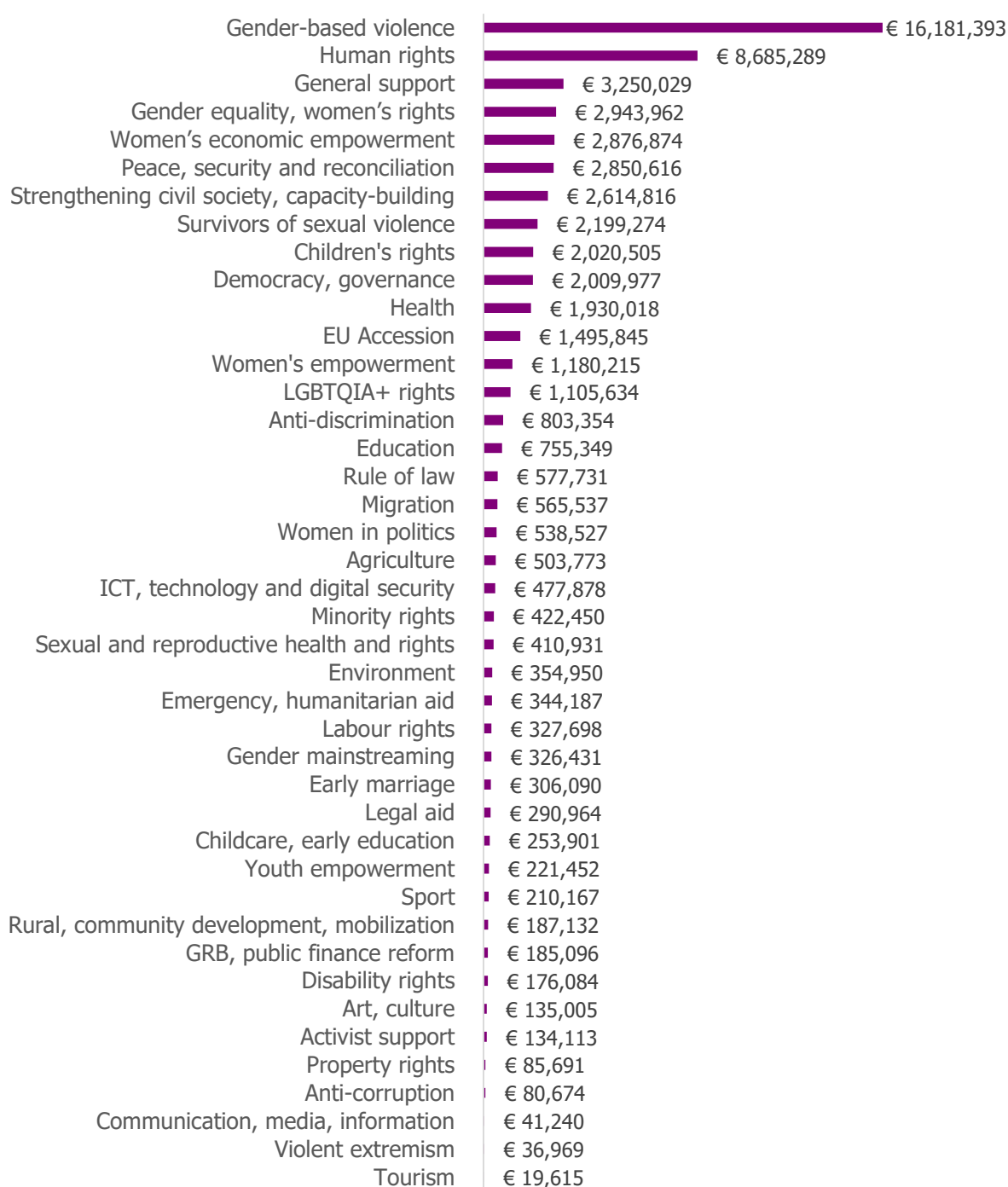


Autonomous Women’s Centre and Women in Black demonstrate on the International Day against Femicide, 6 Dec. 2017, Belgrade.

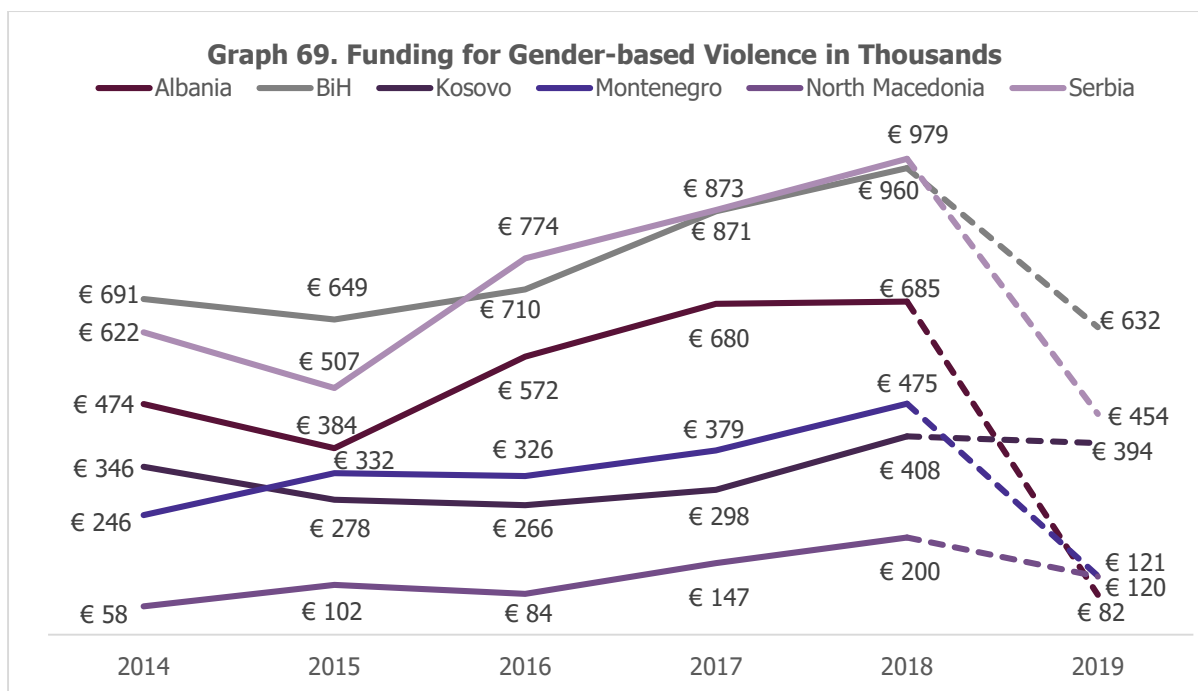
¹⁴ Particularly in BiH, some WCSOs had to implement projects outside their core missions to survive, and these were not always primarily focused on tackling gender inequalities and furthering women’s rights.

¹⁵ Interviews with two regional funders, 2019; [Rönngren, J.](#), p. 7.

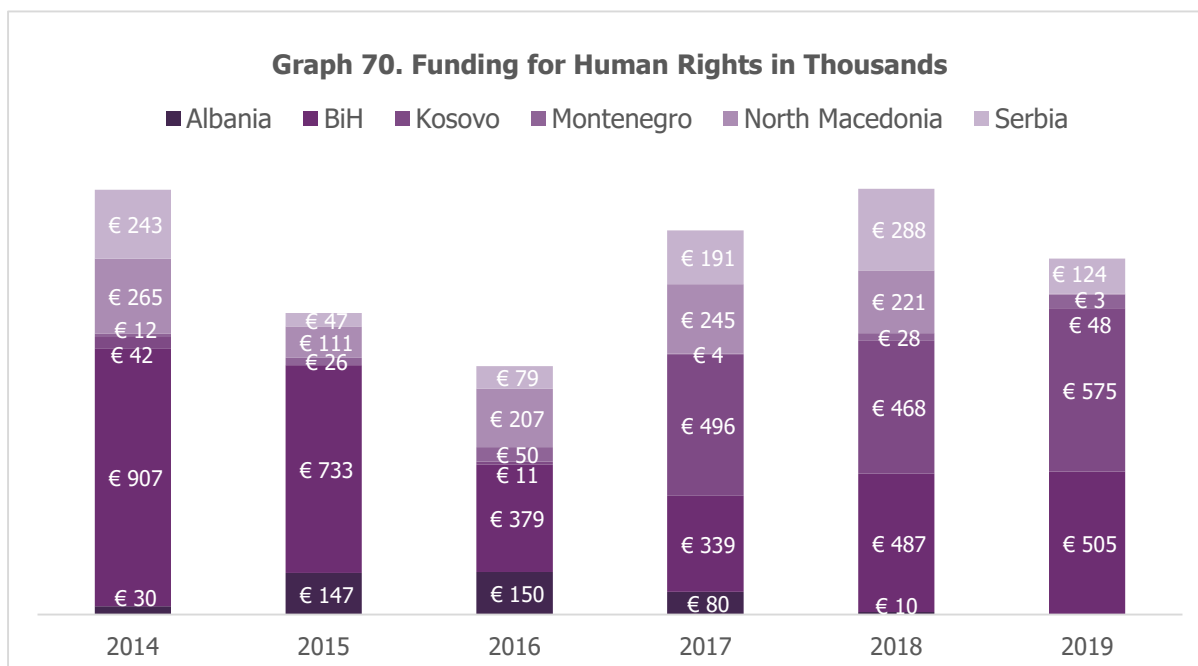
Graph 68. Total Funding WCSOs Reported Receiving by Thematic Area



As Graph 69 illustrates, funding for addressing gender-based violence generally has increased over time in all countries. By far, WCSOs in **BiH** received the most funding for addressing gender-based violence, totalling €4.5 million, followed by **Serbia** at €4.2 million and **Albania** at €2.9 million. In addition to this funding for gender-based violence, €2.2 million (3.6% of all funding) went towards supporting survivors of sexual violence perpetrated during war. Most of this funding was distributed in **Kosovo** (just under €2.2 million) and increased over time, except in 2018. WCSOs in **BiH** received €158,064 for this purpose. No funding was distributed to other countries, except €5,700 to **North Macedonia** in 2019. Additionally, WCSOs received €0.3 million for efforts to end early marriage.

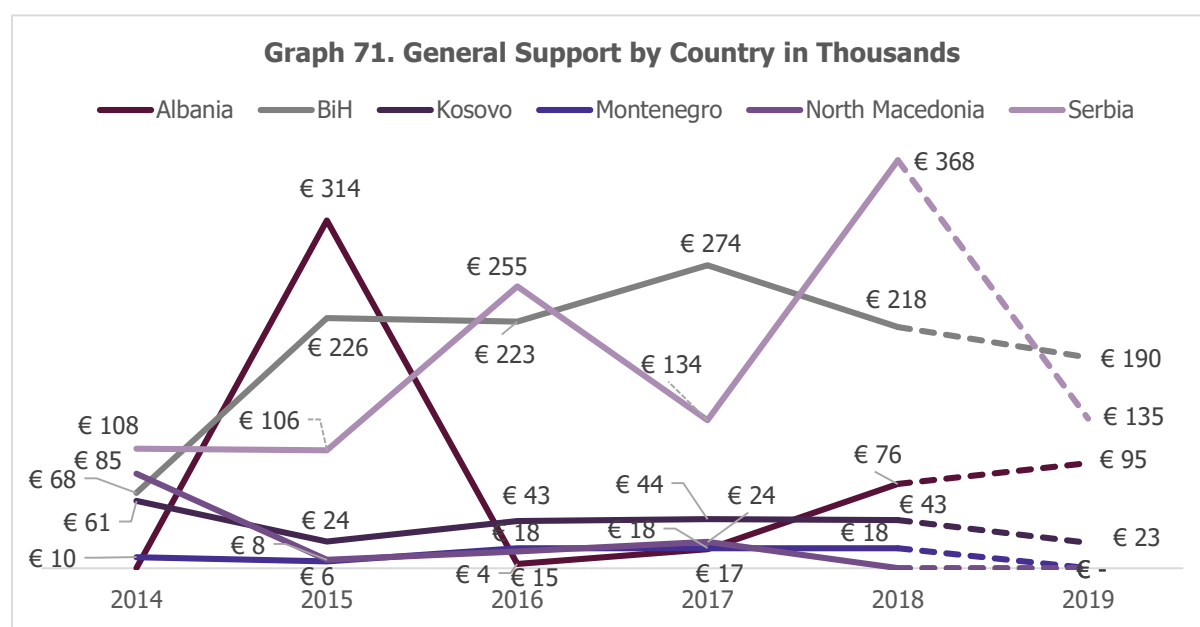


As noted, 14% of the funding that WCSOs reported receiving went to human rights. Such funding decreased in 2015-2016, but then increased from 2017 onwards. Funding for human rights decreased substantially in **BiH** after 2014, accounting for the overall decrease in funding. The increase occurred primarily due to a larger portion of funding granted in **Kosovo** in 2017, while the other countries received a somewhat similar amount over time. Overall, WCSOs in **BiH** received the most funding related to human rights, totalling nearly €3.4 million, followed by Kosovo (€1.6 million), North Macedonia (€1.1 million), and Serbia (just under €1 million).

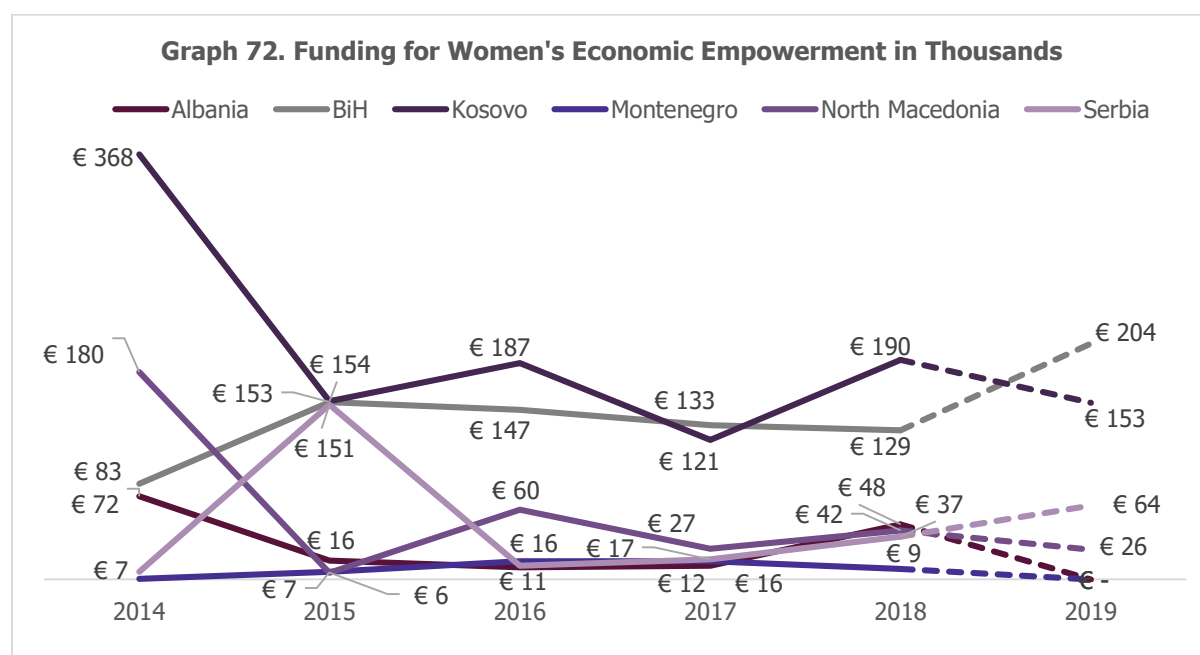


General organisational or institutional support to WCSOs accounted for **5%** of all funding distributed. By far, the most such funding was distributed in **BiH** (€1.2 million), followed by **Serbia** (€1.1 million). Other countries received less than half this amount.

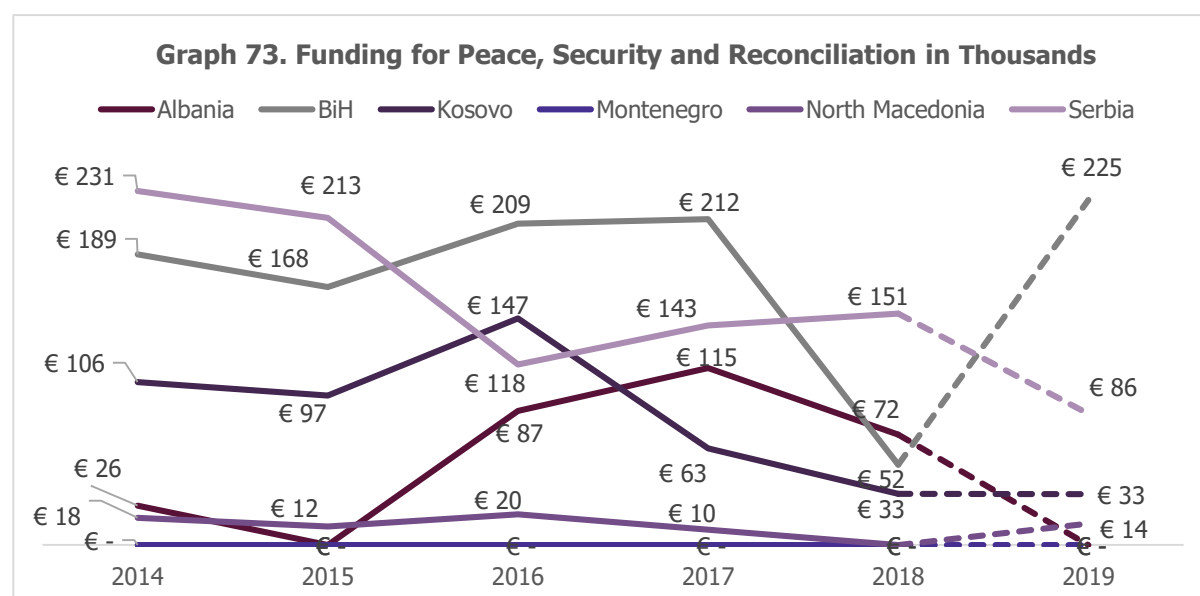
However, the possibility exists that some, additional general support was represented within the thematic area of addressing gender-based violence because general support enabled WCSOs to provide services to persons who had suffered violence. These differences were unclear in the data and thus could not be accurately represented here. While general support remained similar over time in **BiH** (Graph 71), it was rather sporadic in **Serbia** and **Albania**. Minimal support was provided in North Macedonia, Kosovo or Montenegro.



Economic empowerment, entrepreneurship, and employment also comprised a fairly large share of the support provided (4.7%). WCSOs in **Kosovo** received the largest portion of funding (€1.2 million), followed by those in **BiH** (€849,266). Overall, such funding seems to have decreased over time, particularly in Kosovo (Graph 72). Exceptionally, it has increased in **BiH**.

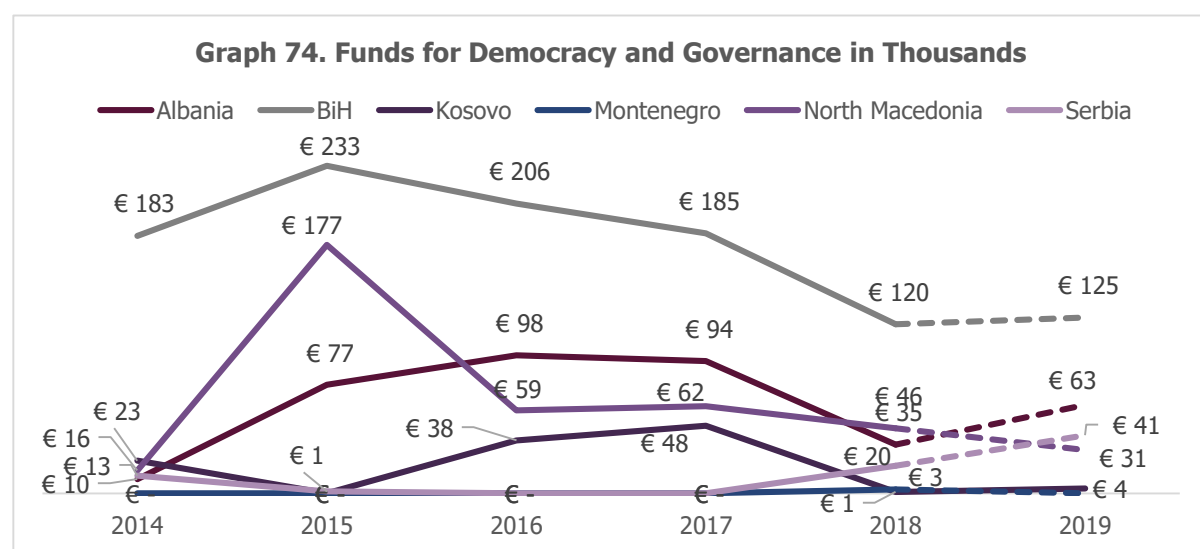


Funding for peace, security, and reconciliation accounted for nearly 5% of funding that WCSOs received. Again, WCSOs in **BiH** reported the largest portion of funding (€1.1 million), followed by **Serbia** at just under €1 million, **Kosovo** at under €0.5 million, and **Albania** at slightly more than €0.3 million. WCSOs in Montenegro did not report receiving any funding for this purpose, and very little was reported in North Macedonia. As Graph 73 illustrates, funding fluctuated over time, both overall and by country.



Funding for children's rights comprised an estimated 3% of all funding. Clearly other issues also relate to children's rights, such as early marriage and education, though represented separately and in addition to funding for children's rights. Substantially more funding went to WCSOs working on this issue in **Albania** than in other countries, with a total of €1.7 million reportedly spent overall.

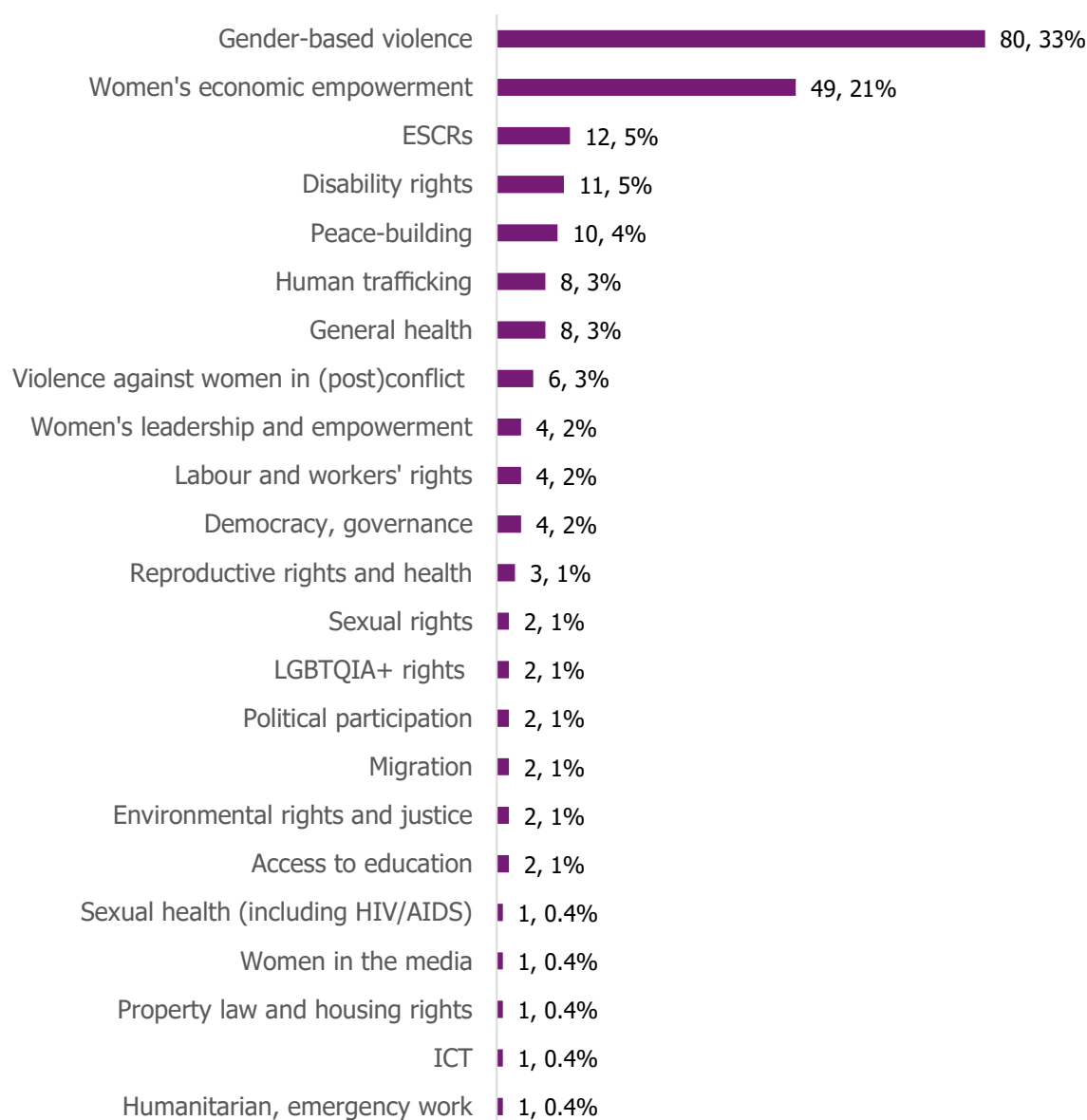
Approximately 3% of all known funding went to democracy and governance. WCSOs in **BiH** seem to have received the largest portion of these funds, amounting to €1.1 million, followed by **North Macedonia** and **Albania** with nearly €0.4 million each. Funding for democracy and governance also fluctuated over time (Graph 74). While funding in **BiH** and **North Macedonia** seems to have decreased, it seems to have increased slightly in **Serbia**.



Alignment of Sectors Funded with WCSO Priorities

The research sought to compare the extent to which sectors that received funding aligned with sectors that WCSOs considered priorities. Graph 75 illustrates the first priorities of WCSOs,¹⁶ whereas Graph 76 shows the top five priorities of WCSOs.¹⁷

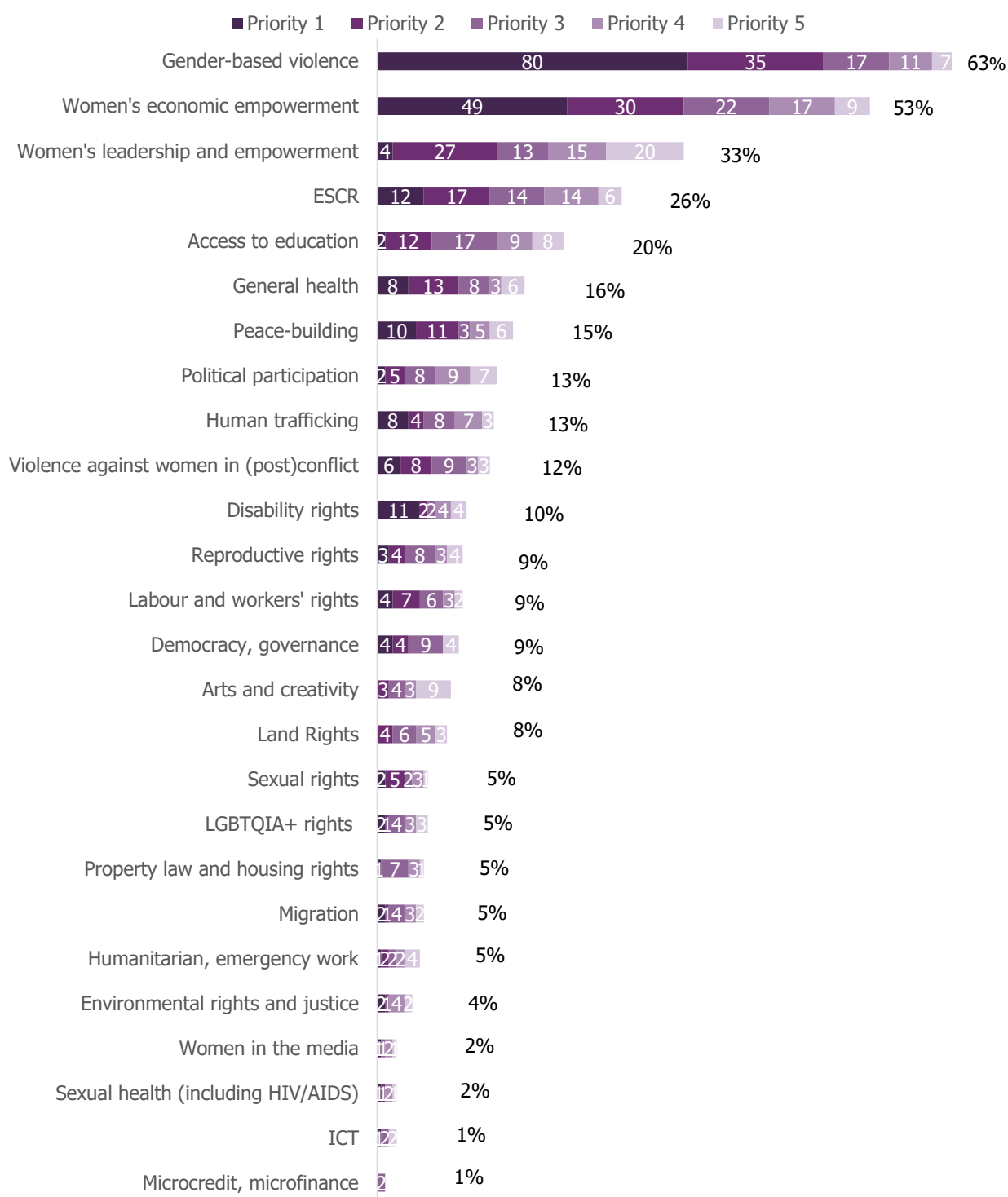
Graph 75. WCSOs' Priority Sectors (Number, Percentage of WCSOs)



¹⁶ This does not add up to 100% because 10% of respondents identified "other" sectors (n=239).

¹⁷ Notably, 72% of respondents identified "other" sectors (n=239).

Graph 76. Top Five Priority Sectors of WCSOs by Number of WCSOs



Most of the interviewed WCSOs consider addressing gender-based violence their main priority (33%) or among their top five priorities (63%);¹⁸ indeed, most funding provided to

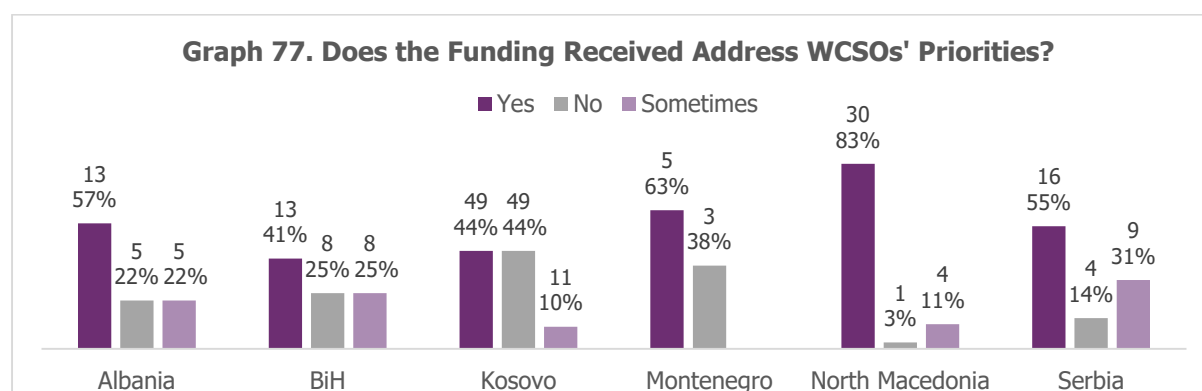
¹⁸ In all countries except Kosovo, most WCSOs considered addressing gender-based violence their top priority. Women's economic empowerment was a priority for most WCSOs in Kosovo and several in BiH, North Macedonia, and Serbia. Many in Kosovo, BiH, Serbia, and North Macedonia prioritised peacebuilding. ESCRs were a priority for some WCSOs in Kosovo, Serbia, North Macedonia, and Montenegro. Disability rights was a priority for some WCSOs in Kosovo, Albania, and Serbia.

WCSOs was for this sector. Women's economic empowerment was a top priority for the next highest percentage of WCSO respondents (21%), and among the five top priorities of 53% of WCSOs. Funding was available for women's economic empowerment (€2.9 million), albeit substantially less than for addressing gender-based violence. Although only 2% of WCSOs considered women's leadership and empowerment their top priority, 33% enlisted it among their top five priorities. Approximately 5% of respondents prioritised economic, social, and cultural rights (ESCRs), or disability rights. Substantially fewer funds seem to have been available for these specific areas (Graph 68). Peacebuilding was a top priority for 4% of WCSOs interviewed and addressing violence against women in conflict and post-conflict situations was a priority for 3%. Both of these areas did receive financing. Given that WCSOs are diverse, they identified several other priorities, most of which seem to have received funds.¹⁹



Several WCSOs work with people with different abilities, like the Organisation for Persons with Muscular Dystrophy in Prizren, Kosovo, pictured here. Several such WCSOs did not feel they had funding for their work.

For the most part, these findings suggest that the funding distributed to WCSOs in the region, illustrated in Graph 68, seems to have focused on issues that WCSOs also have tended to consider priorities. However, these findings do not necessarily indicate if WCSOs received *enough* funding for the areas that they prioritised. When asked explicitly, more than half of the interviewed WCSOs stated that the funding they received addressed their organisational priorities. Meanwhile, 15% stated that funding sometimes addressed their priorities, and **29%** said funding did not sufficiently address their priorities. Comparably fewer WCSOs felt funding addressed their priorities in **Kosovo** (44%) and **BiH** (41%).

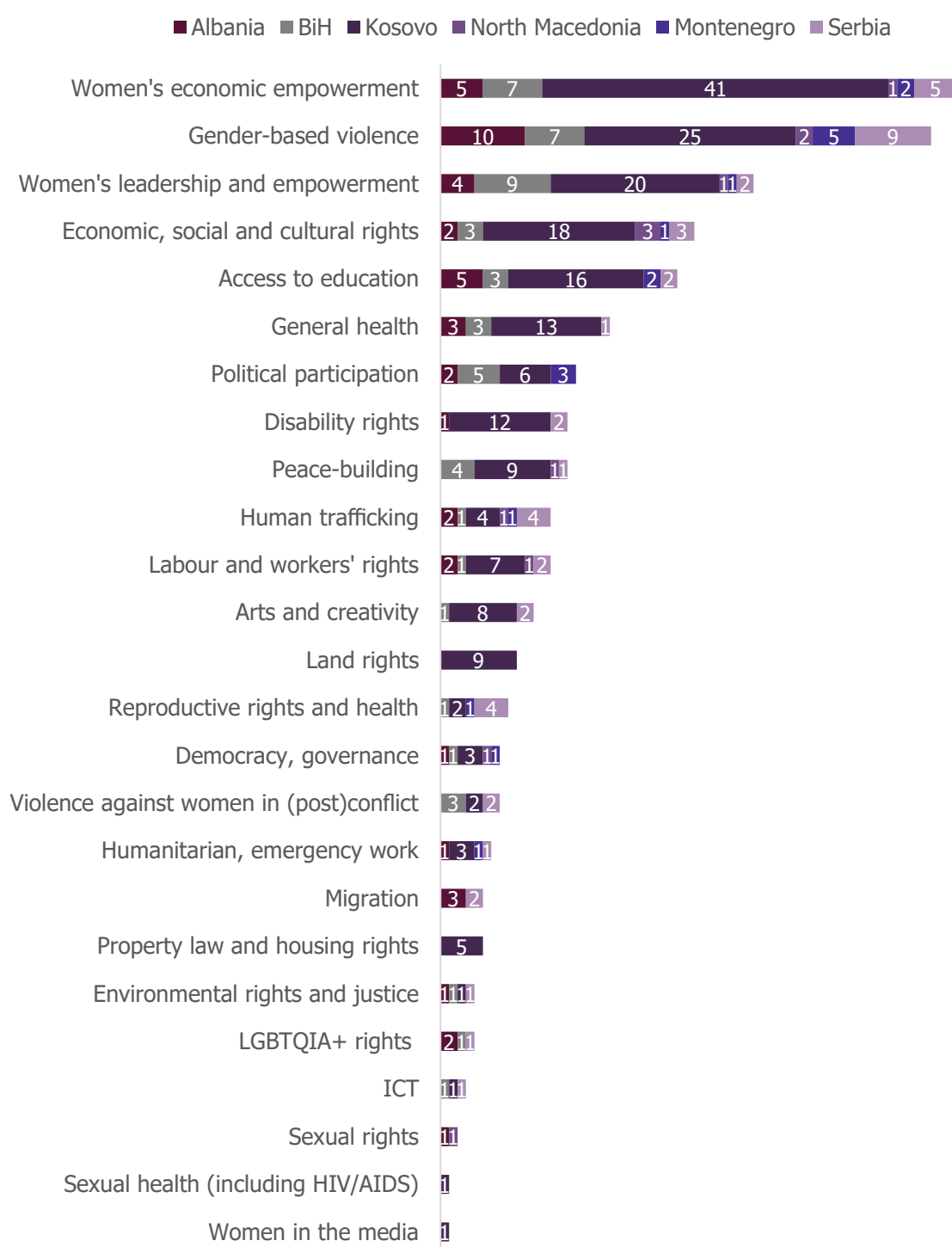


While in certain sectors like democracy and governance, environment, and gender-based violence some WCSOs said they had enough funding; other WCSOs working in the same sectors said that they did not. This suggests that no sectors were funded sufficiently. WCSOs that felt that **funding had not** met their needs worked in the sectors depicted in Graph 78.²⁰

¹⁹ Notably, 10% of the respondents identified "other" sectors not listed (n=23).

²⁰ N = 107.

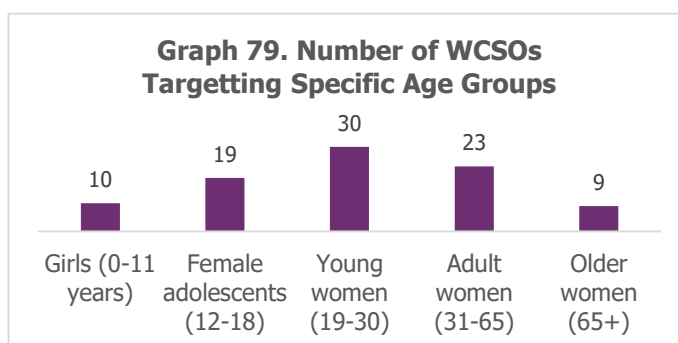
Graph 78. WCSOs Working in Underfunded Sectors by Country



Some WCSOs expressed concerns that sometimes funders pushed them to work in areas that they did not consider priorities. This sentiment was repeatedly heard in Kosovo; as a WCSO stated: "Funders with their policies want us to implement projects that they consider important, that they want. Not based on the needs of community and the knowledge of NGOs". WCSOs in **Kosovo** and **BiH** indicated that as a result of their financial dependency on external funders, they sometimes have to pursue the goals of funders. Funders and WCSOs in **Kosovo**, **North Macedonia**, and **Serbia** reported that there is a need for funding that addresses WCSOs' strategic plans and priorities.

Funding for Particular Target Groups

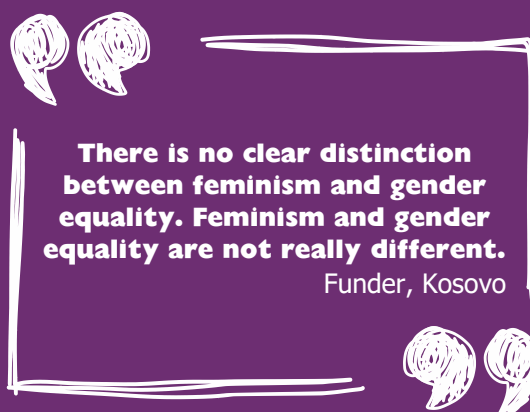
This section discusses the availability of funding for particular target groups. Few WCSOs reported receiving funding to support specific age groups of women (18%). Of the WCSOs that had dedicated funding for specific target groups, most had funding for young women ages 19-30 years old, adult women, and/or female adolescents (Graph 80).²¹



Some WCSOs expressed dissatisfaction with the unavailability of funding for specific target groups like women with different abilities. In **Albania**, WCSOs identified a need for additional funding to help young women in remote regions continue their education and avoid “violence or forced relations.”²²

Supporting “Feminist” Groups

Feminist movements are a driving force for economic and social empowerment.²³ However, historically, not all funders have recognised the role of feminist movements in bringing about social change. In prior years some WCSOs that identify as “feminist” said they faced challenges securing funding. Therefore, as part of this research, funders were asked if they would support explicitly “feminist” groups. Generally, funders stated that they would be willing to fund such organisations. A few funders expressed concerns about “extremist” or “fundamentalist” feminist groups. However, generally, funders tended to find the “feminist” distinction irrelevant. That funders tend to support ideas and proposals, rather than specific organisations, was a recurring theme. “We don’t have a specific rule or goal towards feminist groups”, one said. “We follow equal criteria for anyone that applies”.²⁴ Several funders indicated that they do not see much difference between “feminist” and other groups. This suggests that groups identifying as feminist may have improved abilities to access resources, compared to prior years. However, limited information existed relating to funding explicitly for “feminist” groups.



²¹ N = 43. Respondents could select more than one response.

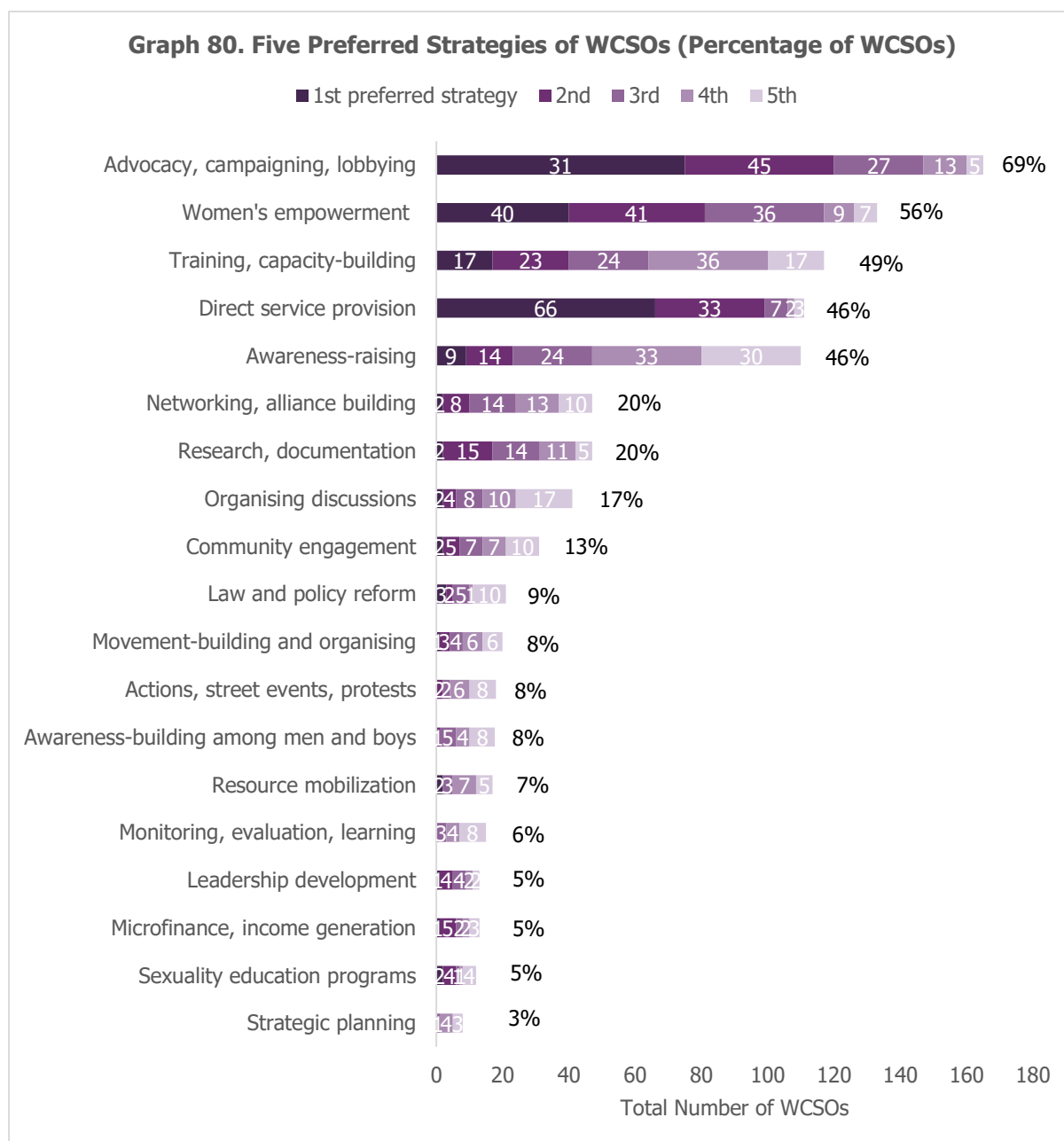
²² Interview, WCSO, Albania, 2019.

²³ Weldon, L. et al, *Handmaidens or Heroes? Feminist Mobilization as a Force for Economic Justice*, 2020.

²⁴ Interview, funder, Albania, 2019.

Funding for Particular Strategies

This section describes the types of strategies that WCSOs preferred using and discusses the extent to which enough funding has existed for those strategies.²⁵ As Graph 80 illustrates, most WCSOs in the region (69%) tend to prefer advocacy, campaigning, and lobbying as a strategy.



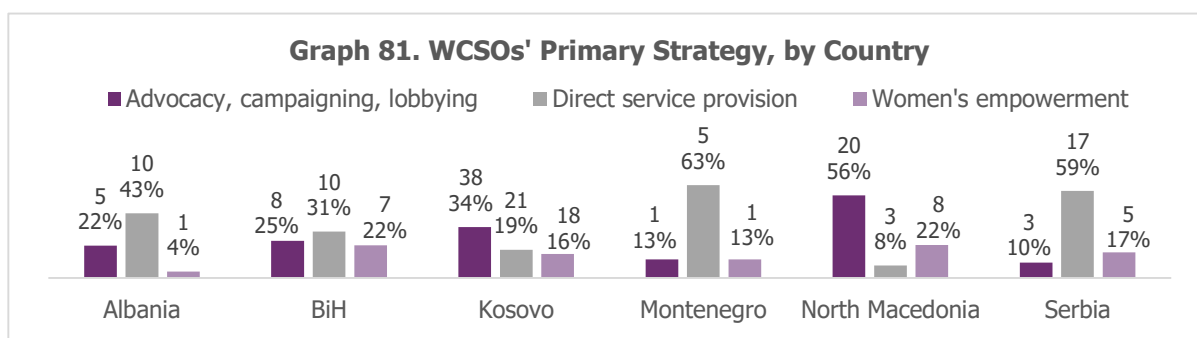
The second most commonly preferred strategy was women's empowerment (56%). WCSOs commented that empowerment is important for encouraging women to fight for themselves and for their rights.²⁶ Several WCSOs preferred training and capacity-building (49%), awareness-raising (46%), and direct service provision (46%). Indeed, direct service

²⁵ The research team borrowed the list of different types of potential strategies from AWID's *Where's the Money for Women's Rights* research. Research participants selected from this list or identified other priorities.

²⁶ Interview, WCSO, Serbia, 2019.

provision was the top priority for the second largest number of WCSO respondents (66), following advocacy (75). Other priority strategies mentioned included networking and alliance-building (20%), research and documentation (20%), organising discussions (17%), and community engagement (13%).

Among respondents in **North Macedonia** (56%) and **Kosovo** (34%), a higher percentage said they used advocacy as a primary strategy (Graph 81).²⁷ In **Kosovo**, WCSOs said they preferred this strategy because it led to changes, such as in laws, policies, and public awareness. In contrast, some WCSOs particularly in **Serbia** said that they did not prefer advocacy as a strategy because funders often favoured it; this detracted funding away from service provision, which they considered a priority.²⁸



In Montenegro (63%), Serbia (59%), Albania (43%), and BiH (31%), a comparatively higher percentage of WCSOs use service provision as a strategy. Historically, WCSOs have provided public benefit services in the absence of state services (see Box 2). Meanwhile, public benefit service provision, such as for persons who have suffered violence, also enables monitoring responsible institutions and holding them accountable. However, although funding for gender-based violence comprised the vast majority of all funding to WCSOs, this has proved insufficient for direct service provision, including social services for more vulnerable women and girls such as those who have suffered gender-based violence.²⁹ Respondents stated, “not enough funds are allocated for direct services” and there is a “lack of funding for direct services. It is too little, too short, and very abrupt”.³⁰

The seeming discrepancy between the fact that most funds went towards addressing gender-based violence and yet it remains underfunded, particularly related to service provision, can be attributed to several issues. First, violence against women remains widespread in the region.³¹ Second and related, addressing gender-based violence appropriately requires extensive expenses, including lawyers, security services, psychologists, emergency assistance, and rehabilitation

Direct services lack funding. We can't ask for funding in providing direct services for special beneficiaries because the donor would say that the state has emergency services and funding. Because our government really says this in their reports, but this is not true. They can't cover direct services for victims.

WCSO, Albania

²⁷ Notably, 27% of respondents identified “other” sectors (n=239).

²⁸ Interviews, WCSOs, Serbia, 2019.

²⁹ Interviews, WCSOs in BiH, Albania, Serbia, North Macedonia, 2019.

³⁰ Interviews, WCSOs in Kosovo, North Macedonia, Albania, 2019.

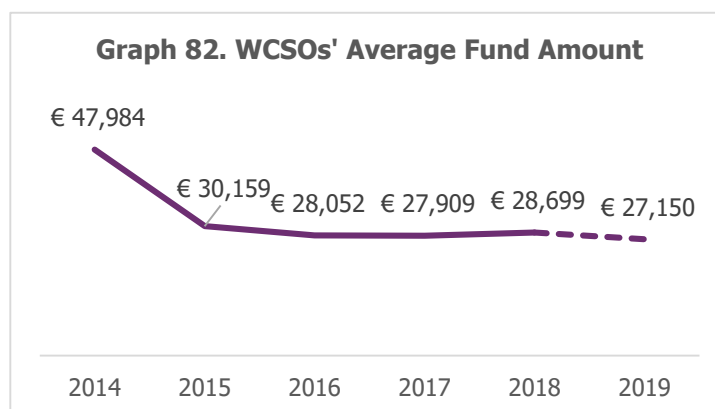
³¹ OSCE, *OSCE-led survey on violence against women: Main report*, 2019.

support, among other costs. Meanwhile, government services remain insufficient or absent, so countries lack financing for these services. They cannot be funded simply through ad hoc grants; for appropriate functioning they must have consistent funding, such as through cost-recovery. Governments have not budgeted appropriately for these services.

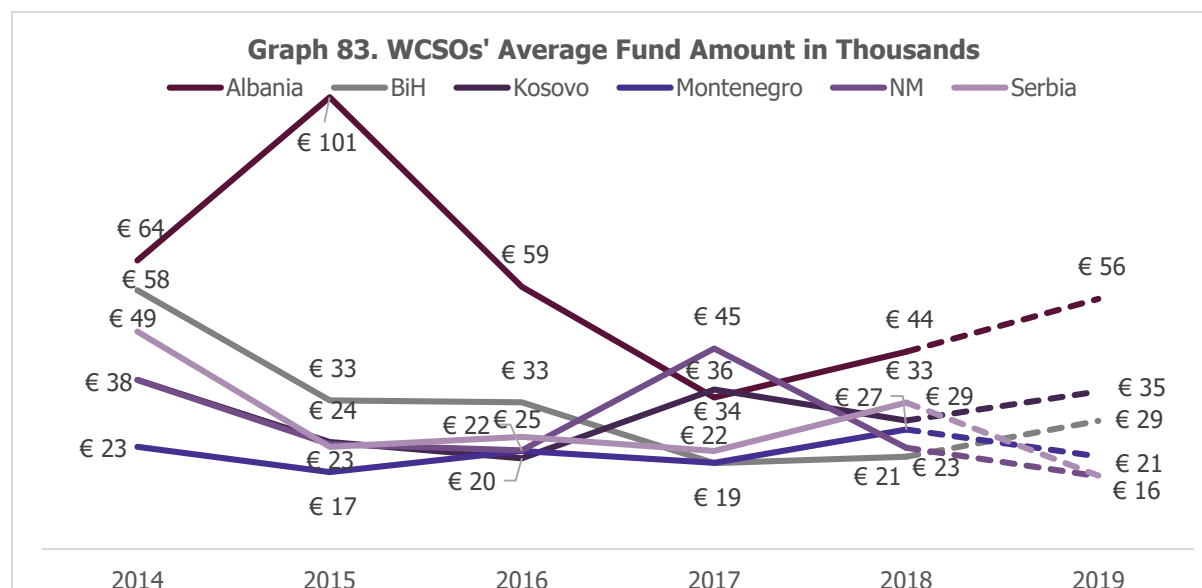
In all six WB countries, WCSOs emphasised the need for funds that support strategies like advocacy, research, legal services, and psychotherapy. Related to awareness-raising, WCSOs said they sometimes lacked resources, particularly for sex education or gender equality.³²

Funding Amounts

This section examines the amounts of funding available to WCSOs. Of the 1,963 grants, contracts, and donations that WCSOs reported receiving (hereafter “fund”), the average fund size was €31,685.³³ Funds ranged from a minimum of €9 to a maximum of €1,468,055. The average amount of funding received has decreased substantially since 2014 (Graph 82).



By country, on average, WCSOs in **Albania** tended to receive funds in amounts twice that of WCSOs in other countries, particularly due to several large funds that they received in 2015 (Graph 83). While average fund amounts have decreased in most countries, **Kosovo** and **North Macedonia** saw temporary increases in 2017. Most countries reported increases in 2018, except **North Macedonia** and **Kosovo**, which witnessed decreases.



³² Interviews, WCSOs, North Macedonia, 2019.

³³ Overall, the average fund size was €32,786. However, when divided by the year in which WCSOs received the funding, the average is less (€31,685). This is because, in some instances, WCSOs did not provide the year in which they received funding. Funding that did not have information regarding when WCSOs received it has been included in the overall average but not in the graph regarding averages by year.

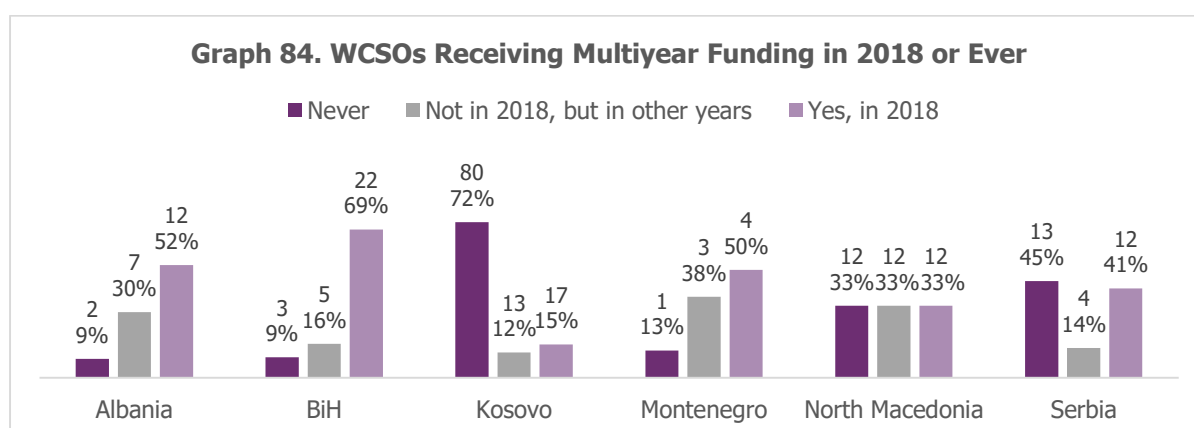
While these graphs illustrate overall trends, they can be somewhat misleading given the substantial differences that exist among WCSOs in the fund amounts they reported receiving, obscured within these averages.³⁴

The aforementioned approach of sub-granting can prove effective for reaching smaller WCSOs that cannot apply for larger grants.³⁵ For example, EU Civil Society Facility calls increasingly have encouraged or even required sub-granting in order to reach those organisations that cannot apply for or manage EU funds. While CSO applicants have some flexibility in proposing the subgrant amounts that they will deliver; often they must choose between providing several micro-grants that will benefit more organisations or a few, small grants that benefit fewer organisations, given the overall budget ceilings within calls for proposals. Regional Civil Society Facility actions in particular can pose challenges for CSOs in planning for distributing limited funds across several years, partner CSOs in multiple countries, and sub-grantees. This can make for difficult decisions in the programme design between long-term resourcing, and resourcing for movement-building among several actors. As a result, sometimes subgrants may be very small by the time they reach WCSOs, enabling only very small or short-term actions. Meanwhile, this can increase WCSOs' administrative costs by requiring an equal amount of paperwork for less funds, as they must secure more grants to meet their basic costs.

Funders have observed that a challenge to increasing grant sizes for some WCSOs has been their financial histories, as they have only managed smaller to medium-sized funds. To avert risk, funders usually require that organisations have experience managing funds of the same size or larger. While some WCSOs have the capacity to manage large funds, others may not. Again, the fact that WCSOs are diverse means that a broad spectrum of grant sizes and modalities for their distribution can meet the varying needs of different groups.

Funding Timeframes

This section discusses funding timeframes. Approximately half of the interviewed WCSOs had, at one point, received **multiyear funding (51%)**, and only one-third had multiyear funding in 2018.³⁶ Meanwhile, 46% had never had multiyear funding. A higher percentage of WCSOs from **Albania, BiH, and Montenegro** had received multiyear funding in 2018 (Graph 84). Rather exceptionally compared to other countries, 72% of WCSOs in **Kosovo** never had multiyear funding. This may be partially attributable to the rather large sample in Kosovo and the fact that WCSO research participants included several smaller, rural, and otherwise disadvantaged organisations.



³⁴ See also the summary Table 2 in [Who Funds Women's Rights?](#)

³⁵ See sections on [Women's Funds](#) and [local NGOs](#).

³⁶ An additional 1% were unsure (3) and 1% refused to respond (2).

WCSOs shared many reasons as to why multiyear support is important. Kosovar WCSOs explained: “We had more beneficiaries and we had more chances to implement activities within the community. There was also enough space to search for new long-term funds”.³⁷ In Montenegro, multiyear support from the Oak Foundation helped the Women’s Safe House stay active and follow its organisational priorities. They also supported the Women’s Rights Centre in furthering their organisational capacities for service provision. Issues related to shrinking space in some countries have been minimised thanks to multiyear funding.

As most grants require paperwork, longer-term grants also can enhance WCSOs efficiency by reducing administrative burdens, including substantial human resource time, required for fundraising and reporting. If WCSOs only manage one

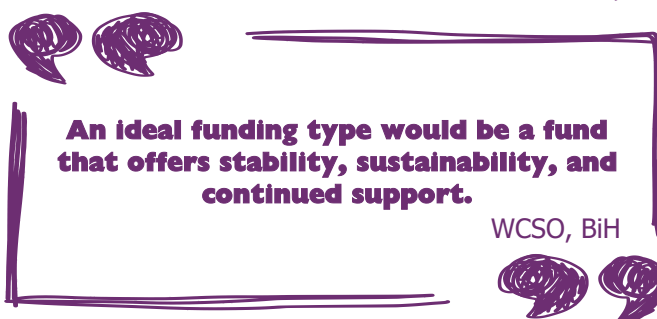
or two larger, long-term grants, they have less paperwork than several small grants, which means they can use their time and energies towards social change instead.

Short-term funds are difficult to use towards reaching long-term goals like reforming laws and policies.³⁸ Thus, long-term funding that covers operational costs was identified as both a funding preference and a need across the region. Existing research, funders, and WCSOs alike suggest that long-term funding offers stability and contributes to organisational sustainability. Long-term funding allows WCSOs to develop a strong organisational identity while building internal capacity and sharing knowledge.³⁹ Multiyear funding allows WCSOs to plan more strategically and enables “continuity, prosperity, and guaranteed good outputs”.⁴⁰ Such support enables WCSOs to have time to develop and implement strategies that can withstand or adapt to unexpected changes in political leadership and broader geopolitical turmoil. Constant changes in the region mean that WCSOs must continuously react to new, often unpredictable events. Preparing reactions and other advocacy to address unforeseen issues that arise in relation to their missions may not always be planned as part of their projects and can require substantial time. This means that it can take WCSOs a lot of time to accomplish basic tasks or activities towards achieving longer term priorities.⁴¹ Long-term funding enables flexibility in adapting to rapid changes occurring in the region, while still enabling WCSOs to make progress towards their long-term goals.



Multiyear funding has enabled us to position ourselves at a policy level [and] to completely change the organisational structure, [so we can] build our capacities from the inside, including communication strategies and the attainment of licensing for our work.

WCSO, Serbia



An ideal funding type would be a fund that offers stability, sustainability, and continued support.

WCSO, BiH

³⁷ Interview, WCSO, Kosovo, 2019.

³⁸ Interview, WCSO, BiH, 2019.

³⁹ Rönngren, J., 2011, p. 10.

⁴⁰ Interview, WCSO, BiH, 2019.

⁴¹ Various interviews, 2019.

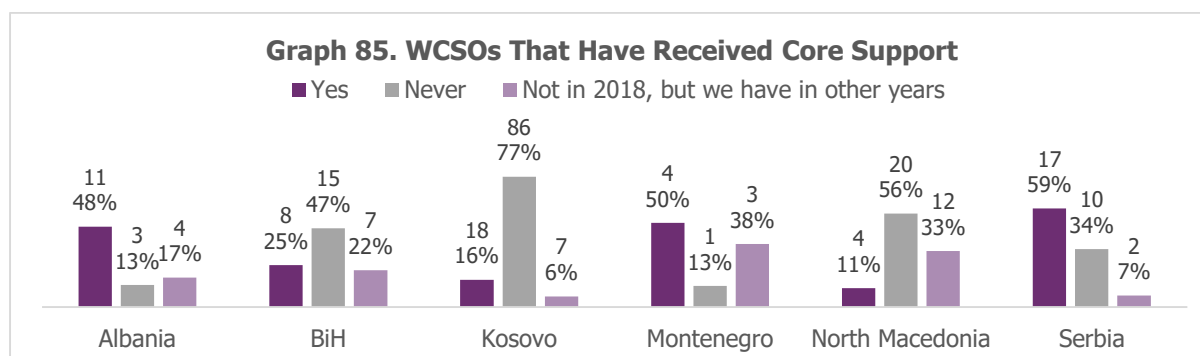
Funding Approaches and Issues

This research sought to identify which funding modalities and approaches work best for supporting WCSOs. Limited scientific evidence could be found regarding which funding modalities have the most impact. This is due in part to the general dearth of impact-level evaluations, or, their public availability. Despite the lack of official evidence, WCSOs throughout the region shared examples of what certain funding modalities and approaches have enabled them to do. The following subsections examine funding approaches and issues identified related to core funding, contracts versus grants, financial restrictions, human resource limitations, and cost share requirements.

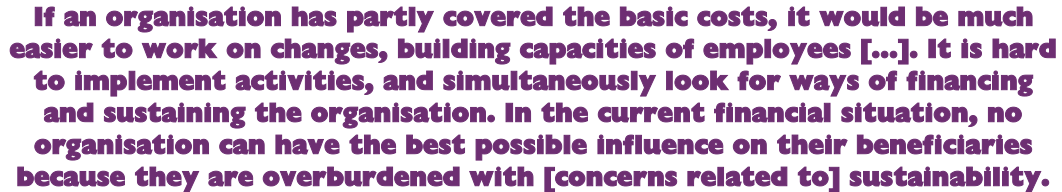

Core Funding

“Core funding” or “institutional funding” covers operational costs such as rent, utilities, and staff salaries. Among the WCSOs interviewed, 26% had received core support from funders in 2018, while 56% had not. Overall, 41% reported ever having received institutional support. The fact that Kosovo had more responses, from smaller organisations, potentially skewed the overall percentage of WCSOs that had ever had core support. Graph 85 illustrates that a higher percentage of WCSOs in Montenegro (88%), Serbia (66%), and Albania (65%) reported having received core support. Comparatively fewer in BiH (47%), North Macedonia (44%), and Kosovo (22%) had ever received core support.

Ideal financing covers costs such as staff, so no one would really struggle to ensure the salary for staff every single year: a financing which would pay the rent.
WCSO, Albania



Core support was mentioned repeatedly as an ideal funding type, enabling WCSOs to focus more on impact rather than mere survival. The time spent seeking to secure fragmented funds for basic operations, and reporting on the use of various piecemeal funds took time away from their work towards social change. WCSOs that had never had core support before said that if they received such support, they would be able to implement organisational strategies without being donor driven. As with multiyear support, they would have more internal stability and therefore be able to implement more sustained, rather than ad hoc, activities in their communities. WCSOs in BiH, Kosovo, and North Macedonia also indicated that core funding would help them react better to unforeseen political issues. For example, such funds would have “helped us [withstand] situations like the non-formation of the government nine months after the elections”, a WCSO from BiH said. Like multiyear support, core support is flexible to changing needs. Indeed, funders indicated that flexible funding is important because it allows for the shifting (or absence) of deadlines so that priorities can be updated if target groups, scope, and/or political circumstances change.

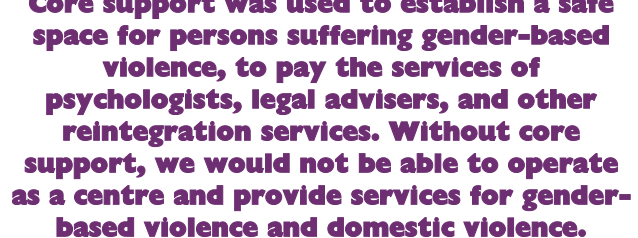



If an organisation has partly covered the basic costs, it would be much easier to work on changes, building capacities of employees [...]. It is hard to implement activities, and simultaneously look for ways of financing and sustaining the organisation. In the current financial situation, no organisation can have the best possible influence on their beneficiaries because they are overburdened with [concerns related to] sustainability.

WCSO, BiH

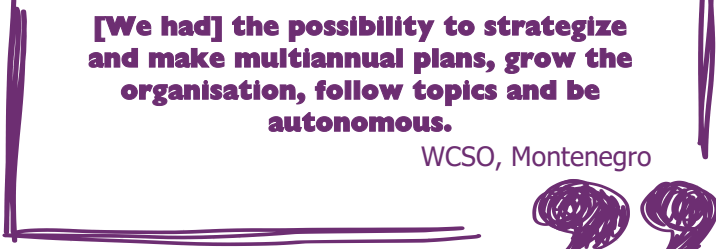



The WCSOs that have had core support shared multiple examples as to the changes they were able to achieve. Institutional support enabled the creation of an LGBT centre in North Macedonia and a shelter in Kosovo. WCSOs with this support said they created safe spaces for victims of gender-based violence as well as established expertise among psychologists and legal advisers who offer specialised services.⁴² Core support enabled them to retain staff and thereby build staff capacities over time, rather than losing already-trained staff due to funding shortages. WCSOs in North Macedonia similarly highlighted the importance of institutional support for achieving sustainability, employing a core team, and increasing their capacities. Organisations in Montenegro were able to strategize and independently create their own multiannual plan, based on needs. Other WCSOs in the region who received this kind of aid were able to create their own websites, conduct strategic planning processes, and attend events.⁴³ Thus, evidence suggests that core support has helped WCSOs design and implement organisational strategies, adapt to unforeseen social and political issues, further their internal organisational capacities, and enhance their staff's capacities.



Core support was used to establish a safe space for persons suffering gender-based violence, to pay the services of psychologists, legal advisers, and other reintegration services. Without core support, we would not be able to operate as a centre and provide services for gender-based violence and domestic violence.

WCSO, Kosovo



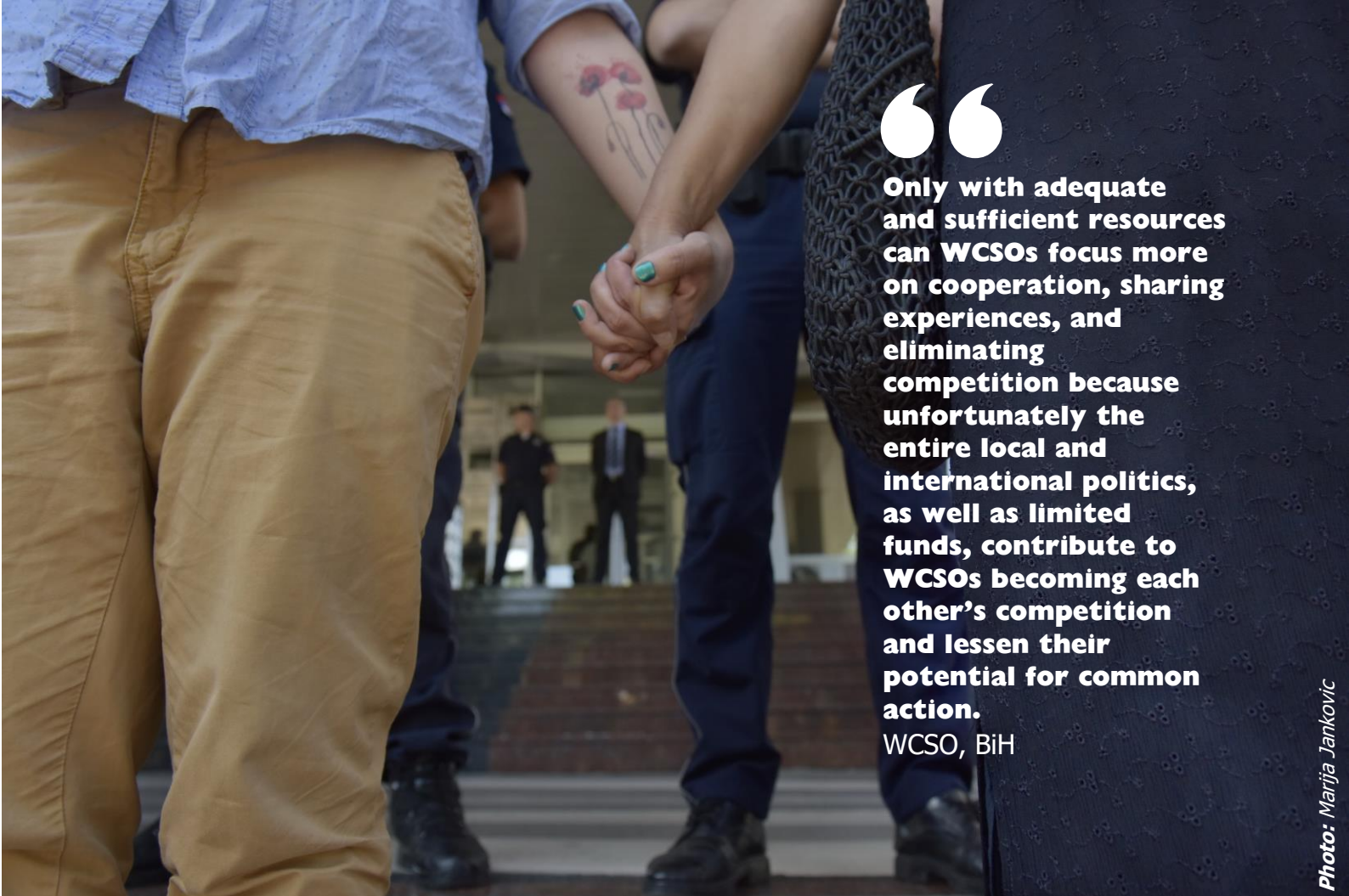
[We had] the possibility to strategize and make multiannual plans, grow the organisation, follow topics and be autonomous.

WCSO, Montenegro



⁴² Interview, WCSO, Kosovo, 2019.

⁴³ Interview, WCSO, North Macedonia, 2019.



Only with adequate and sufficient resources can WCSOs focus more on cooperation, sharing experiences, and eliminating competition because unfortunately the entire local and international politics, as well as limited funds, contribute to WCSOs becoming each other's competition and lessen their potential for common action.

WCSO, BiH

Photo: Marija Jankovic

Contracts versus Grants

A trend in funding approaches observed by WCSOs is the increasing use of contracts, rather than grants. Most multilateral funders, as well as some bilaterals and local foundations, use competitive tendering processes based on pre-determined funding areas. Grants tend to be more flexible than contracts, enabling WCSOs to address needs that they see as relevant, as well as to adapt to changing circumstances. In contrast, inflexible contracts can undermine WCSOs' abilities to realise their strategic priorities, particularly when their priorities may not align with those identified by funders. Dependency on resources can contribute to what has been called the "instrumentalization of WCSOs": "Instead of establishing an active partnership, an unequal or dependent one perceived as a 'child-parent relationship'" may be established, whereby funders use WCSOs solely for their interests, rather than building a vibrant, sustainable civil society."⁴⁴ This can undermine the long-term sustainability of civil society, including the women's movement. Thus, WCSOs expressed concern that they are increasingly seeing funders use contracts rather than grants.

Procurement processes for contracts and the accompanying competition over limited resources also can undermine solidarity among WCSOs and hinder the building of an effective women's movement. Funding approaches that support cooperation, rather than competition, can strengthen the movement by encouraging WCSOs to work together rather than to compete against each other.⁴⁵ In this sense The Kvinna till Kvinna Foundation's rather unique

⁴⁴ Simbi, M. and Thom, G. "'Implementation by Proxy': The Next Step in Power Relationships between Northern and Southern NGOs?" in Lewis, D. and Wallace, T., *New Rules and Relevance: Development NGOs and the Challenge of Change*, Bloomfield, Connecticut: 2000, p. 222, as cited in Laag, B., *Northern and Southern Non-governmental Organizations and the Development Cooperation of the European Union: Impacts of EU Co-Financing*, University of Twente, School of Management and Governance, p. 27.

⁴⁵ Interview, WCSO, Kosovo, 2019.

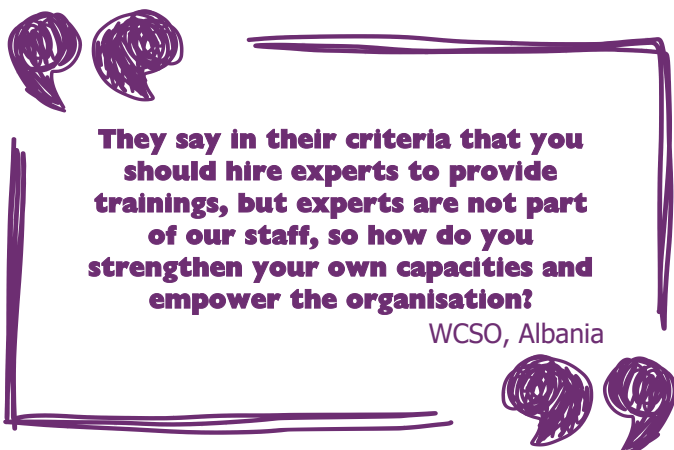
approach of long-term partnerships was identified as a best practice by the WCSOs interviewed.⁴⁶

While long-term core funding remains preferable for WCSOs to remain focused on their visions, in the present realities of the current funding context some WCSOs have selected to sign contracts as gender experts, tapping into the seemingly growing market for gender expertise. This can enable WCSOs to receive some compensation for their expertise. Given that contracting parties often prefer contracting individuals rather than organisations, it can be difficult to ensure that such resources support WCSOs. In addition, WCSOs must be careful that the added workload does not overload the organisation or lead it astray from work towards its mission. As long as WCSOs have organisational policies in place regarding this type of work, so that it is not used for personal gain but rather for the organisation, this form of income can support WCSOs in diversifying their funding. While potentially limiting programmatic flexibility and freedoms, contracts can enable some degree of financial flexibility in how funds are used.

Financial Restrictions and Limitations on Human Resource Costs

While grants can be quite flexible, depending on the funder, WCSOs have witnessed an increase in strict financial controls. Although most funders emphasise focusing on results, WCSOs observed that funders have become increasingly strict in controlling every cent spent for each activity and requiring reallocation requests for every small change made, even when not required by grant agreements. While transparency and accountability are essential, micromanaging finances overburdens WCSOs with administrative paperwork. This draws time away from their advocacy and other activities and thus results.

Some funders have strict rules regarding the percentage of funding that can be spent on human resources. Others do not have written rules, but unwritten guiding practices, which can make it very difficult for the funder to allocate enough funding to cover all human resource costs affiliated with a particular action. For some initiatives, such as furthering capacities of institutions, providing services to vulnerable groups, research, or advocacy, human resource costs are among the few expenditures required to realise the action's aims. WCSOs noted that they often struggle to ensure sufficient human resources to cover their costs. In order to reflect what perhaps should be a human resource cost as a programmatic expenditure, some funders have suggested that WCSOs hire experts rather than contract staff for this work. Contracting experts does not contribute to furthering the capacities of WCSOs or make use of the existing expertise that they have. Moreover, WCSOs find that contracting external experts can be more expensive and therefore a less efficient use of their limited resources.



They say in their criteria that you should hire experts to provide trainings, but experts are not part of our staff, so how do you strengthen your own capacities and empower the organisation?

WCSO, Albania

⁴⁶ Interviews, 2019.

Cost-share Requirements

Some funders require grant recipients to provide a “cost-share”, that is to contribute to the costs of the project. Amounts differ depending on the funder. WCSOs reported that securing funds for cost-share requirements has been challenging, as very few funders will provide support for this purpose. Funders’ differing policies, procedures, and timeframes make it difficult to coordinate financing among different funders, including cost-shares. Indeed, funders that only use open calls and procurement processes have extremely limited possibilities for ever contributing financing for cost-shares. As illustrated in prior sections, very few WCSOs have their own resources available to contribute to these types of requirements. While some funders allow well-documented, in-kind contributions to count towards required cost-shares, others do not. By allowing in-kind contributions, funders can enable WCSOs to draw from their own internal resources like staff time and voluntarism. Yet in-kind contributions involving significant voluntary work also can contribute to burnout with activists working significant overtime to fulfil their responsibilities and document their in-kind contributions, beyond time worked for their regular salary.

Future Funding Planned for the WB

The research sought to identify future funding trends towards contributing to discussions on potential coordination of resources. However, the diverse funders interviewed tended to have limited knowledge regarding their future funding plans, particularly in **Albania** and **North Macedonia**. Few funders could provide specific amounts or details on planned future funding for the WB or individual countries. Some, like the EU and Sida, were in the process of developing strategies for the next seven years. Meanwhile, although annual budgeting helps funders predict overall funding available, some said they cannot say which gender equality-specific programmes will be approved.⁴⁷ The fact that they cannot predict which organisations will win procurement processes also was a recurring theme. These findings suggest that very few donors have earmarked funds for gender equality or WCSOs, apart from women’s funds.

Generally, for those that had some information about their future funding plans, support in the next five years was projected to continue in a similar fashion as in the past. For the aforementioned funders that have policies and approaches involving the gender mainstreaming of programmes, this will continue in future years. The EU and Sida, through The Kvinna till Kvinna Foundation, will continue supporting a regional coalition of WCSOs working to mainstream gender in the EU Accession process, and to address gender-based discrimination related to labour, respectively. The EU will continue its support through UN Women to address gender-based violence as per the Istanbul Convention. ADA will continue supporting WCSOs to further gender-responsive budgeting and to address gender-based violence in their countries, respectively, through two regional WCSO networks.⁴⁸

At the country level, programmes targeting economic inclusion, women’s empowerment, micro-financing, and the development of philanthropic initiatives reportedly will continue in **Albania**.⁴⁹ In **BiH**, funders plan continued focus on youth, gender equality, democracy, reconciliation, and peacebuilding, together with WCSOs and women politicians.⁵⁰ In BiH, a funder plans to support a local NGO in organising an academy that will improve the political literacy of women. The ongoing development of justice-related mechanisms that

⁴⁷ Interview, funder, North Macedonia, 2019.

⁴⁸ Interview, funder, Kosovo, 2019.

⁴⁹ Interview, funder, Albania, 2019.

⁵⁰ Interview, funder, BiH, 2019.

increase women's employment and improve their access to justice remain agenda items in **Kosovo**. Funders in Kosovo also hope to increase women's participation in decision-making positions, as well as engage women in sustainable development and environment programmes.⁵¹ Funders in both **North Macedonia** and **Montenegro** will target priority areas like education, international cooperation, and economic development, which will include gender equality components.⁵² In **Serbia**, a funder planned to support WCSOs working to eliminate violence against women and to support the economic empowerment of women.⁵³

WCSOs stated that perhaps they could secure more and better quality resources if they had more opportunities to meet and cooperate with funders (76%); collaborate more with other WCSOs (62%); receive more information about resources and strategies from funders (59%); and engage in advocacy with other WCSOs for more, shared resources (52%). Additionally, 40% said that having more funding opportunities in their language could help, particularly in BiH (69%) and Montenegro (50%). Similarly, 41% expressed interest in identifying alternative and local funds.

Coordination meetings reportedly are held among funders in all six WB countries. However, these tend to involve the exchange of information rather than coordinated efforts on financing. For example, in North Macedonia, each organisation and country has its own internal and foreign policies, which has contributed to incohesive efforts.⁵⁴ Funders and WCSOs alike expressed concern about duplicating activities and funding. They saw more structured and frequent collaboration as an opportunity for avoiding overlap and making more efficient use of limited resources. While formal collaboration among funders and WCSOs alike remains somewhat lacking, funders across the WB indicated that they would be interested in new opportunities for collaboration among WCSOs and funders to create collective resource strategies and funding mechanisms. This would require, however, the somewhat daunting task of aligning bilaterals' foreign policies on international development funding with those of the EU, including the earmarking of funding for autonomous WCSOs. New planning cycles and strategies under way for the next decade provide opportunities for improving coordination, WCSOs and funders agreed.

Two-way communication between funders and WCSOs can better link global objectives with local needs and micro initiatives. WCSOs need financial support and international organisations require local expertise.⁵⁵ Thus, cooperation with WCSOs that vary in size, areas of expertise, capacity for outreach, geographic location, and thematic focus can establish a variety of partnerships able to meet a variety of needs.⁵⁶ Perhaps leading funders like the EU and Sida can consider initiating more expansive coordination efforts, so funders and WCSOs alike can collaborate in more efficient, effective, and impactful initiatives.

⁵¹ Interview, funder, Kosovo, 2019.

⁵² Interviews, funders, North Macedonia, Montenegro, 2019.

⁵³ Interview, funder, Serbia, 2019.

⁵⁴ Interview, funder, North Macedonia, 2019.

⁵⁵ Interview, funder, North Macedonia, 2019.

⁵⁶ [Rönngren, J., 2011](#), p. 8.

Conclusions: Funding Trends

Funders tend to lack systems for tracking funding for women's rights, gender equality, and WCSOs, respectively. The use of gender-mainstreaming complicates measuring funding allocated or spent. According to WCSO data, funding seems to have decreased from 2014 to 2016 but increased in 2017 and 2018. Even so, 35% of WCSOs did not meet their planned budget in 2018. Most (82%) have experienced periods in which they did not have enough resources, and 9% never received any funding, working voluntarily instead. Funding shortages led WCSOs to delay payments, have staff work without pay, cut programmes, and even close their doors. Less than half had contingency plans for if they lost funding.

By far, the most funded thematic area was addressing gender-based violence, accounting for at least 27% of all funding. Funding seems to have focused on issues WCSOs tend to consider priorities.

However, several areas appear underfunded (Box 7). Few WCSOs have received dedicated funding for specific target groups and funding for some marginalised groups like persons with different abilities or persons suffering violence may be insufficient. WCSOs tended to prioritise advocacy and service provision as strategies. The funding available for these strategies seems insufficient, as well as for research, legal services, and psychotherapy.

The fact that WCSOs are diverse suggests that a broad spectrum of grant sizes can best meet the varying needs of different groups. Multiyear funding and core support both seem to contribute to strategic actions, positive changes that require long-term engagement, flexibility amid shifting social and political situations, enhanced staff capacities, and organisational sustainability. The use of contracts, as opposed to grants, can contribute to the instrumentalization of WCSOs for donor interests and undermine cooperation towards social change. Limitations on human resource costs can undermine the capacity development and efficiency of WCSOs. Cost-share requirements can be very difficult for WCSOs to meet.

As AWID has emphasised, the most helpful modalities are those that allow for flexibility and for organisations to decide how best to spend funds. Findings suggest that "a cocktail of modalities" that include flexible funding, core support, multiyear project grants, and sub-granting for smaller initiatives can provide for a healthy funding "ecosystem" that supports the development of a diverse, multifaceted women's movement.

Aside from women's funds, funders tended not to have clear plans for future funding. Improving donor coordination and communication with diverse WCSOs about their needs could support the development of improved interventions in the region.

Box 7. Underfunded Thematic Areas

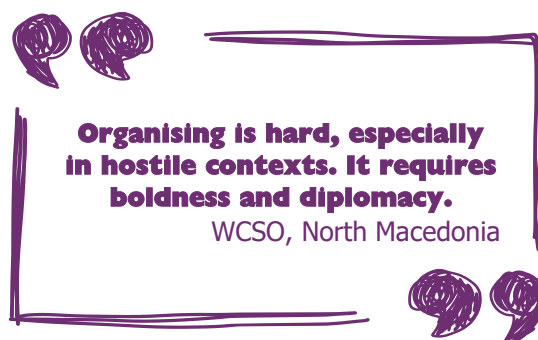
- ✓ Women's economic empowerment
- ✓ Addressing gender-based violence
- ✓ Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ESCR)
- ✓ Women's leadership, empowerment, and political participation
- ✓ Access to education
- ✓ Health
- ✓ Disability rights
- ✓ Peace-building
- ✓ Labour and workers' rights
- ✓ Human trafficking
- ✓ The arts
- ✓ Land, property, and housing rights
- ✓ Democracy and governance
- ✓ Humanitarian and emergency work
- ✓ Migration
- ✓ Environmental rights and justice
- ✓ LGBTQIA+ rights
- ✓ ICT
- ✓ Sexual or health rights
- ✓ Women in media

WHY SUPPORT WCSOS?

This chapter examines findings related to the research question: “What is the importance of supporting WCSOs and women’s movements, if any?” Beyond the policy or other commitments made by funders, presented in the [Introduction](#), it discusses reasons for supporting WCSOs, including towards establishing functioning democracies and human rights; addressing persisting gender inequalities in the WB; providing essential public benefit services; and fostering positive social changes. Then, based on the OECD DAC criteria, the chapter presents interviewed funders’ views of the relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact, and sustainability of WCSOs. A brief discussion on funding WCSOs, INGOs, multilaterals, and/or other organisations follows.

Bolstering Efforts towards Democracy and Human Rights

The political situation in the WB is contributing to shrinking space for WCSOs and activists, physically, politically, and financially.¹ Not only does growing conservatism involve threats against their work and wellbeing; it also means that several WCSOs struggle to access resources from the few local funders that exist in their countries, such as governments and citizens. The current political context makes it unlikely that newly elected parties in the region will direct substantial funding to civil society, including WCSOs. Therefore, despite efforts to diversify funding, WCSOs remain primarily reliant on foreign funding to support their efforts to further gender equality. Continued foreign funding may be essential to the survival of WCSOs, at least for the near future.



Supporting WCSOs in political contexts where democracy and human rights are under threat is important as WCSOs often are among the most active civil society groups that “push back” against growing nationalism and conservatism, as well as fight against shrinking space. Supporting WCSOs thus can contribute to bolstering efforts towards furthering good governance, fighting corruption, and promoting human rights, including women’s rights. Using advocacy, WCSOs have been effective in raising awareness about human rights violations and holding governments accountable to better address these.² In the context of EU Accession, supporting WCSOs thus can contribute to EU aims to support good governance and the rule of law,³ among the fundamental requirements for EU membership, set out in the Copenhagen Criteria.⁴

¹ See: [The Political Context](#).

² Interview, regional funder, 2019.

³ EC, “[Upholding the Rule of Law](#)”.

⁴ EC, “[European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations](#)”.



There are serious gender inequalities at every level, especially among marginalised groups.

WCSO, North Macedonia

WCSOs Address Persisting Inequalities and Injustices

Gender inequalities remain widespread in the WB.⁵ Women are under-represented at all levels of government and in decision-making processes.⁶ Women's labour force participation trails far behind men's participation.⁷ Women own significantly less property and fewer businesses than men.⁸ Gender-based discrimination related to labour is widespread.⁹ Violence against women remains concerningly prevalent.¹⁰ Roma women and women with different abilities, face double and triple discrimination.¹¹

These significant challenges require, ongoing, long-term, strategic engagement to bring about social change. WCSOs are experts with extensive experience in addressing such inequalities, including putting forth specific legal and policy changes to systematically challenge them.¹² Addressing these persisting inequalities towards an equal, just society, requires funding.¹³



Photo: Marija Jankovic

On 8 March 2015 in Belgrade, Roma women rights activists ask: "When will a better time for Roma women come?"

⁵ Kvinna till Kvinna, *Women's Rights in the Western Balkans*, 2019.

⁶ Ibid. The only exception is the government of Albania where women are represented equally (pp. 4, 9).

⁷ KWN, *Gender-based Discrimination and Labour in the Western Balkans*, Pristina: KWN, 2019.

⁸ For Albania, women own only 19% of property (State Cadastral Agency, cited by BIRN Albania, Sinoruka, F., *Lawlessness and Tradition Deny Women and Girls the Right to Property in Albania* (in Albanian), 6 August 2019; and owned 29.7% of businesses in 2017 (INSTAT, *Women and Men 2017*, INSTAT, 2018). In Montenegro, women own only 4% of houses, 8% of land and 14% of vacation houses; less than 10% of companies are owned by women, and women earn around 14% percent less than men doing jobs of equal value (Montenegrin Employers Federation and E3 Consulting LLC Report, *Women in Management in Montenegro*, February 2019, pp. 3, 5). In North Macedonia, accurate, representative data is lacking. For Serbia, see: Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia, *Women and Men in the Republic of Serbia*, 2017.

⁹ KWN, *Gender-based Discrimination and Labour in the Western Balkans*, 2019.

¹⁰ OSCE, *OSCE-led Survey on Violence Against Women: Main Report*, OSCE, 2019.

¹¹ See for Albania: EC, SWD, *Albania 2019 Report*, SWD (2019) 215 final, Brussels 2019. For Montenegro, "Ombudsman of Montenegro: The Social Exclusion of Roma Goes Unreasonably Long", *Portal Vijesti*, ANTENAM.NET, April 8, 2019 (in Montenegrin). For Serbia: Roma Centre for Women and Children DAJE, *Gender Based Violence against Roma Women and the Availability of Support Services*, Belgrade: 2019 (Serbian); Ombudsman of Serbia, *Ombudsman Special Report on the Reproductive Health of Roma Women, with Recommendations*, 2017; Ombudsman of Serbia, *Special Report of the Ombudsman in the Implementation of the Strategy for the Social Inclusion of Roma Men and Women, with Recommendations*, 2019; and Ombudsman of Serbia, *Special Report of the Ombudsman Accessibility for All*, 2018.

¹² Interviews, WCSOs, Albania, BiH, North Macedonia, 2019.

¹³ Interviews, WCSO, BiH, 2019.

WCSOs as Service Providers

Evidence exists of WCSOs' impact on political and social change worldwide, particularly relating to addressing violence against women.¹⁴ Similarly, WCSOs have contributed to several social changes in the WB, illustrated in this section, which evidences that supporting WCSOs means investing in social change. WCSOs have **provided services**, particularly in the absence of state services, and advocated concrete legislative and policy changes.¹⁵ Some have up to 30 years' experience providing services to

women and girls who have suffered violence. Across the region, they have empowered thousands of women to escape abusers, learn strategies for coping with trauma and, for many, to live autonomously. Moreover, assisting women directly through case management, psychological support and legal aid has enabled WCSOs to play an important watchdog role, monitoring how institutions treat cases, and holding institutions accountable to implementing existing legal frameworks. The expertise amassed through years of work also has made WCSOs well-placed to contribute to dozens of crucial legal and policy changes that have improved protections for persons who have suffered violence. This includes laws against domestic violence, such as domestic violence being a criminal offence within criminal codes, and establishing specific regulations for the appropriate treatment of persons suffering violence (see Box 8).

Related, WCSOs have been instrumental in **supporting vulnerable communities**, furthering women's rights and human rights.¹⁶ For example, in Serbia, WCSOs have provided services for minority populations, enabling them to play a watchdog role towards upholding human rights protections.¹⁷ In Montenegro, WCSOs provided shelter for refugees in the north of the country.¹⁸ They have supported the establishment of Roma women's networks.

WCSOs have contributed to **women's socio-economic empowerment**, such as by supporting start-up companies (BiH), providing vocational training, and enabling more women to open their own businesses (Kosovo and North Macedonia).¹⁹



¹⁴ Htun M. and Weldon, L.

¹⁵ In Albania and Kosovo, that the state does not yet have the capacity to respond appropriately to the needs of women was a recurring trend (interviews 2019).

¹⁶ Interviews, WCSOs, Albania, Kosovo, 2019.

¹⁷ Interview, WCSO, Serbia, 2019.

¹⁸ Interview, WCSO, Montenegro, 2019.

¹⁹ Interview, WCSO, 2019.

WCSOs as Change-makers

WCSOs have helped **put key issues on social change agendas**, such as women's property rights, domestic violence, sexual violence, and justice for survivors of war-time sexual violence. They have played a crucial role in bringing these hitherto ignored or taboo topics to the attention of politicians, decision-makers, and funders, spurring action to address these issues. In Montenegro, for example, the campaign “#Unwanted (#Nezeljena)” launched by the Women's Rights Centre, broke the informal code of silence surrounding gender-selective abortion, urging authorities to tackle this phenomenon.²⁰ In Kosovo, speaking about sexual violence perpetrated during the war was unheard of until activists sang emotional songs to survivors in the city centre on 8 March, to the tune of “We Shall Overcome”. This stirred immediate parliamentary and government response to an issue previously undiscussed in the public sphere.²¹ A sexual harassment video, and apps like “WalkFreely” designed by young women computer coders, brought public attention to this hitherto taboo topic. Similarly, in North Macedonia, the “Me Too” campaign spurred public discourse and ministries joined efforts condemning sexual harassment.²² WCSOs also put property and inheritance rights on the public agenda. In some countries, WCSOs have supported progress on LGBTQIA+ rights.

Women's activists are starting difficult conversations. #MeToo in [North] Macedonia brought up the issue of sexual violence and got support from the ministries. Public discussions began about taboo subjects, i.e. transgender, sexual violence, etc.

Funder, North Macedonia



A [video](#) about sexual harassment experienced by a young woman during a single day in Pristina led diverse citizens to stand up against the phenomena and opened the topic for discussion in public discourse.

²⁰ See: [Women's Rights Centre website](#).

²¹ See the [KWN demonstration](#) for survivors of sexual violence during the war.

²² The ministries of education and science, labour and social policy and of interior condemned it on their Facebook pages.



Photo: Marija Jankovic

Feminist activists Lepa Mladjenovic and Olja Ilkic protest against femicide in Belgrade 2017.

WCSOs have **furthered awareness** throughout the WB region. In Serbia, WCSOs have raised awareness about women's rights and gender sensitive language;²³ sexual harassment, especially demanding improved protection of female students from sexual harassment at universities;²⁴ and the fact that femicide is a sex-based hate crime.²⁵ In Kosovo, survey data suggests that WCSOs have contributed to enhancing knowledge regarding the importance of registering property in women's names,²⁶ as well as forms of domestic violence.²⁷ In Albania, WCSOs raised awareness about feminism and LGBTQIA+ rights.

WCSOs have contributed to social change by **strengthening the women's movement, and mobilising more people** to demand improved rights for women. Shifts in knowledge and accompanying civic engagement to further women's rights are observable in Kosovo and Albania. For example, KWN has organised demonstrations on International Women's Day (March 8) since



²³ Interview, WCSO, Serbia, 2019.

²⁴ [Media coverage](#) about the campaign (Serbian).

²⁵ The definition of femicide as "the intentional killing of females (women or girls) because they are females" was unknown, unaddressed, and invisible in Serbia until [WCSOs brought it to the attention](#) of society and decision-makers (in Serbian).

²⁶ Zeqiri, D., [Midterm National Survey on Property Rights](#), Tetra Tech, 2017.

²⁷ The increase in awareness is evidenced by household survey data by comparing KWN, [Security Begins at Home](#), Pristina: KWN, 2008; and in KWN's [No More Excuses](#), Pristina: 2015.

2000, bringing public attention to a specific violation of women's rights each year. While these began as protests involving a couple dozen committed activists, since 2014 they have grown to engage thousands of diverse demonstrators, including men, youth and children, marching in solidarity. The increasingly inclusive demonstration now involves signage in diverse languages and with messages carefully crafted by an array of voluntary organisers. Meanwhile, the spread of various demonstrations for women's rights to cities outside Pristina, evidences the growth of the movement. Similarly, in Montenegro, WCSOs have organised a steadily growing Women's March and debates on women's rights on International Women's Day.²⁸



Photo: KWN

"March, Don't Celebrate!" Diverse activists demonstrate on 8 March 2017 in Pristina, Kosovo.



Photo: National network to end violence against women

The Platform for Gender Equality organises a demonstration on 8 March 2020 in Skopje, North Macedonia.



Photo: AWEN

AWEN members, among others, demonstrate on 8 March 2020 in Tirana, Albania.

²⁸ [Montenegrin Women's March on International Women's Day](#) (Montenegrin).

WCSOs have provided expertise, **furthering the knowledge and capacities of government officials**, among others, related to gender equality. For example, in Serbia, WCSOs have helped train students and employees of state entities about the women's movement and gender equality,²⁹ as well as officials about domestic violence.³⁰ WCSOs in Kosovo have trained and mentored public officials in implementing gender-responsive budgeting. In Montenegro, WCSOs trained judiciary and public officials on how to implement standards of the Istanbul Convention and CEDAW in practice.³¹

Amid ethnic, religious, and national conflicts in the region, accompanied by extensive social, physical, and geographic barriers, WCSOs have **crossed borders and promoted peace**. During the 1990s, amid the wars in the WB, women throughout the region engaged in Women in Black, calling for peace.³² These efforts continued after the war with exchanges among WCSOs in the region, to discuss their personal experiences and to open discussions crucial for dealing with the past. Through the Women's Peace Coalition, Women in Black Network-Serbia, and KWN brought together Serbian and Albanian women to discuss their experiences. The first ever public apology for the crimes committed by Serbia in Kosovo was broadcast on Radiotelevision 21,³³ which many Kosovars identified as a crucial moment towards establishing a foundation for peace and dialogue. The Regional Women's Lobby for Peace and Security in South East Europe united WCSO activists and women politicians in drafting public statements towards peace on various issues in the region amid official negotiations between Kosovo and Serbia.³⁴ The Women's Court for the Former Yugoslavia united WCSOs in a restorative approach to justice related to

Women were the first catalysts in the peacebuilding process, even during the war and particularly after, and the peace movement in BiH can rightfully be called the women's peace movement.

Funder, BiH

We have contributed in peacebuilding, in dialog between different ethnic groups, and engaged our population. We organised conferences on reconciliation between communities.

WCSO, Kosovo

²⁹ Interview, WCSO, Serbia, 2019.

³⁰ Protector of Citizens, *Special Report of the Protector of Citizens on Training for Acquisition and Improvement of Knowledge and Competencies in the Prevention and Suppression of Domestic and Intimate Partner Violence and Protection of Women from Such Violence*, Belgrade, 2016, pp. 31, 37.

³¹ The Centre for Training in the Judiciary and the Public Prosecution Office, *Annual Report on the Work of the Centre for Training in Judiciary and State Prosecution for Year 2018*, Podgorica, 2019, p. 42.

³² For more recent evidence, see: Aljazeera Balkans, "[Žene u crnom' u Beogradu odale počast žrtvama genocida u Srebrenici](#)" [Women in Black in Belgrade Pay Tribute to the Victims of the Srebrenica Genocide], 2019 (in Serbian); and Balkan Insight, "[Srbija: Aktivisti za ljudska prava odali počast Albancima, ratnim žrtvama sa Kosova](#)" [Serbia: Human Rights Activists Pay Tribute to Albanians, Victims of War from Kosovo], 2019 (in Serbian).

³³ Women's Peace Coalition, *Through Women's Solidarity to a Just Peace*, 2007, p. 4.

³⁴ See for example KWN's "[Letter to Soren Jessen Petersen, Special Representative of the UN Secretary General in Kosovo](#)", 2005; KWN's "[Letter of Support for Activists in Serbia](#)", 2006; and KWN's "[Letter to Ahtisaari, UN Special Envoy for the future status process for Kosovo](#)", 2006.

sexual violence perpetrated in war.³⁵ KWN, Artpolis, and the Centre for Girls in Serbia have organised feminist summer schools and gatherings of young women in Kosovo and Serbia, breaking barriers among youth. Sandglass in Serbia and Mitrovica Women's Association in Kosovo have brought women and women politicians together to discuss negotiations between Kosovo and Serbia.³⁶ Open Door and Ruka Ruci have united Serbian and Albanian women within Kosovo, dialoguing on local needs. Since 2000, several formal and informal coalitions of WCSOs have been established in the region, building peaceful cross-border cooperation on issues including domestic violence, anti-trafficking, mainstreaming gender in the EU Accession process, addressing gender-based discrimination in labour, and gender-responsive budgeting.



Photo: Nicole Farnsworth

In 2007, members of the Women's Peace Coalition from Kosovo and Serbia united in a demonstration in Struga, then Macedonia, asking for peace.

³⁵ Amnesty International, *"Wounds that Burn Our Souls" Compensation for Kosovo's Wartime Rape Survivors, But Still No Justice*, Amnesty International, 2017, p. 48.

³⁶ For example, see: Sandglass website, *"Public Discussion on Women's Participation in the Belgrade - Pristina Negotiations in Kosovo Mitrovica"* (in Serbian), 2019.



Photo: Nicole Farnsworth

On 8 March 2006, activists tramp through the snow in Pristina, Kosovo, demanding women's participation in the negotiations between Kosovo and Serbia.

WCSOs have **helped women enter politics**.³⁷ They have engaged more women in decision-making processes at the local level, empowered women to participate and thereby contributed to democracy. In Kosovo, the Lobby for Gender Equality has impacted an increase in women entering politics at all levels. Through empowerment, training, advocacy for quotas, and promotion of diverse women candidates, WCSOs have contributed to increasing the number of women in politics and decision-making in their countries.³⁸

WCSOs have **contributed to several key legal and policy changes** in their countries (see Box 8).

³⁷ Interview, funder, Kosovo, 2019.

³⁸ On quotas, see Box 8.

Box 8. Legal Changes Attributable Partially or Entirely to WCSOs³⁹

Albania

- WCSOs pressured successfully for the inclusion of a gender quota in the Election Code.⁴⁰
- Initiated and affected the drafting of the Law on Measures against Domestic Violence in Family Relations and amendments to this law.⁴¹
- Initiated the drafting of and provided input on Law no. 8876 for Reproductive Health.
- Contributed to drafting and amending Law no. 10221 "On the Protection from Discrimination"; Law no. 10237 "On Health and Security at Work"; and Law no. 10295 "On Pardons".
- Informed the "National Strategy on Gender Equality and Action Plan 2016-2020".
- Contributed to and affected Law no. 9355 "On Social Assistance and Services".

BiH

- Initiated the establishment of gender equality committees in municipalities.⁴²
- Advocated for the Law on Gender Equality.⁴³
- Successfully fought for public budget financing for safe houses for victims of violence to be incorporated into entity laws on protection from domestic violence.⁴⁴
- Successfully called for the Law on Protection from Domestic Violence in Republika Srpska⁴⁵ and the Criminal Code of the Republika Srpska to be harmonized with international standards from the Istanbul Convention.
- Advocated for entity and cantonal laws on free legal assistance to recognise women survivors of violence as beneficiaries.⁴⁶
- Contributed to entity level strategies and action plans on combating domestic violence, informed by research of WCSOs throughout BiH.⁴⁷
- Successfully fought for the BiH Election Law to recognise the obligatory gender quota.⁴⁸
- Contributed to development of local protocols on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence throughout BiH that include WCSO providers of specialised services of support and assistance for women survivors.⁴⁹

³⁹ This list is not exhaustive; it was compiled based on interviews with and input from WCSOs, as well as a review of secondary sources where available.

⁴⁰ Articles explaining requests made by CSOs for a gender quota later incorporated in the Law on Gender Equality in the Society, No. 9970, 2008.

⁴¹ For the Law on Measures Against Domestic Violence in Family Relations, no. 9669, 2006, and Amendments of the Law on Measures Against Domestic Violence in Family Relations, 2018, evidence of WCSOs advocacy.

⁴² Law on Gender Equality in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Official Gazette of BiH No 16/03 and 102/09.

⁴³ WCSO Rights for All (then known as Global Rights) coordinated a coalition of around 200 different CSOs (including WCSOs) that advocated for the creation and adoption of the Law on Gender Equality (correspondence, Jan. 2020).

⁴⁴ Foundation United Women Banja Luka, *Financing of the Safe Houses in the Bosnia and Herzegovina, research and recommendations* (in B-H-S language) 2009.

⁴⁵ Proposal for Changes and Amendments of the Law on Protection from Domestic Violence in the Republika Srpska, 2019 (Bosnian).

⁴⁶ Foundation United Women, Proposal for Improving Access to Free Legal Assistance in the Republika Srpska, 2019 (Bosnian).

⁴⁷ Government of the Republika Srpska, Information on Implementation of the Strategy for Combating Domestic Violence in the Republika Srpska (2014 -2019) for 2015 and 2016, 2017 (Bosnian); and Gender Centre of Federation BiH Government, Information on Development of the Federation BiH Strategy on Prevention and Combating Domestic Violence (2013-2017) (Bosnian).

⁴⁸ Sarajevo Open Centre, 1995-2015: Women and Political Life in Post-Dayton Bosnia and Herzegovina, Chapter: 3.3 Introducing Women's Quota in 1998, 2015, p. 42 (Bosnian).

⁴⁹ See ije žene, *Protocol for Interventions in Cases of Domestic Violence for Canton Tuzla*, BiH and City of East Sarajevo, *Signed Protocol on Cooperation in Cases of Domestic Violence in Sokolac*, and CSSP, *Signed Protocol on Cooperation of Institutions and CSOs on Prevention and Combating VAW and Domestic Violence in Brcko*

Kosovo

- Fought for the Constitution to include gender equality and allow gay marriage.
- Advocated for local and central electoral laws to contain a gender quota.
- Influenced the Law on Gender Equality, placing the Agency for Gender Equality at the highest decision-making level and, later, for gender-responsive budgeting.
- Influenced the Law on Protection from Domestic Violence, as well as accompanying strategies and national action plans, informed by research.
- Called for amendments to the Law on the Status and Rights of Martyrs, Invalids, Veterans, Members of the Kosovo Liberation Army, Civilian Victims of War and Their Families to include pensions for survivors of sexual violence perpetrated in war.⁵⁰
- Supported the Ministry of Finance to introduce gender-responsive budgeting requirements in budget circulars.
- Called for continuous renewal of the Regulation on the Joint Registration of Property, creating incentives for women's increased property ownership.
- The Initiative for Justice and Equality expanded women's legal rights to property ownership by amending the Law on Family to clarify that spouses' contributions within the household will hold the same weight as financial contributions made by the other spouse.⁵¹
- Successfully called for the Criminal Code to include sexual harassment and domestic violence in accordance with the Istanbul Convention.
- Gender mainstreamed sections of the National Strategy on the Implementation of the Standardisation and Association Agreement.

Montenegro

- Influenced the Law on Protection from Domestic Violence, as well as accompanying bylaws, strategies, and national action plans, informed by WCSOs' data and practice.
- The Women's Rights Centre contributed to changing the definition of rape in the Criminal Code by proposing an amendment that offered a new definition based on the lack of consent, rather than solely on the use of force.
- Successfully called for amendments to the Criminal Code, Family Law, and Law on Mediation to align them with Istanbul Convention standards.
- Advocated for the electoral law to contain a 30% gender quota.
- Influenced the Protocol on the Treatment, Prevention, and Protection against Domestic Violence.
- Affected the Law on Social and Child Protection and accompanying bylaws.

North Macedonia

- Promoted the importance of and advocated for ratification of the Istanbul Convention.
- Advocated for adopting the first Law for Prevention, Protection, and Combating Domestic Violence.
- Contributed to developing a new Law on different forms of violence against women, including domestic violence, in line with the Istanbul Convention.
- Contributed towards improved legislation for social and child protection.
- Contributed to improvements in the Law for Free Legal Aid.
- Advocated for improvements in the Law for Antidiscrimination and Law for Equal Opportunities of Women and Men.

District, BiH, and Ministry of Education, Science, and Youth of Sarajevo Canton, Signed Protocol on Cooperation of Institutions in Cases of Domestic Violence in Canton Sarajevo.

⁵⁰ Amnesty International, *"Wounds that Burn Our Souls"*, p. 33.

⁵¹ WCSO interviews; United Nations Mission in Kosovo, *Gender Rights Researcher has Legal Success to Protect Women's Property Rights*, United Nations, 2019.

- Successfully advocated for and supported the working group drafting the new, progressive Law on Termination of Pregnancy / Law on Abortion.
- Developed protocols and referral mechanisms for victims of domestic violence.
- Developed minimum standards for specialised services for domestic violence.⁵²
- Contributed to the drafting of the National Action Plan on Gender Equality (2018-2020).
- Advocated successfully for an increase in the gender quota for the Parliament in the Electoral Law to 40%.

Serbia

- Advocated for and informed the Law on Prevention of Domestic Violence.⁵³
- Successfully advocated for the ratification of the Istanbul Convention.
- Successfully called for the introduction of Emergency Protection Orders into the Serbian legal framework.⁵⁴
- Advocated for and informed the amendment of the Law on Gender Equality.⁵⁵
- Advocated for and informed several other policies and laws, including the Criminal Code,⁵⁶ the Law on Public Order and Peace,⁵⁷ the Law on Asylum and Temporary Protection,⁵⁸ and National Strategy on the Rights of Victims and Witnesses of Crime.⁵⁹
- Successfully advocated for 18 May to be proclaimed the official Day of Remembrance for Murdered Women Victims of Violence.⁶⁰
- Successfully appealed to the Ministry of Interior regarding the standardisation of procedures and conduct of competent police officers in accordance with the Law on the Prevention of Domestic Violence and for forming a line of work for domestic violence.⁶¹
- Successfully provided proposals within the Draft Strategy for the Prevention and Protection of Children from Violence for the period 2018-2022.⁶²

⁵² Lindquist, W., Siminitz, J., Sumlinski, M., Petri, M., *Montenegro: Selected Issues*. IMF Country Report No. 17/277, International Monetary Fund, 2019; Ministry of Justice, *Public Discussion Report- Draft Law on Amendments the Criminal Law of Montenegro*, 2017, pp. 6-8; Ministry of Human and Minority Rights, *Decision on the formation of gender equality council*, 1/06/2016; Ministry of Interior, *The decision to select a candidate for a member of the Operational Team for Combating Domestic Violence and Violence Against Women*, 12/02/2018; Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare, *Decision on the Selection of Candidates for Members of the Working Group on the Drafting of the Protocol on the Treatment, Prevention and Protection against Domestic Violence*, 10/04/2018.

⁵³ Republic of Serbia, Parliament, Law on Prevention of Domestic Violence no. 94/2016, at: http://www.parlament.gov.rs/upload/archive/files/lat/pdf/predlozi_zakona/2675-16%20lat.pdf (in Serbian).

⁵⁴ Ising, *Public debate*, 2016 (in Serbian).

⁵⁵ Autonomous Women's Centre (AWC), *"Comments of the AWC on the Draft Law on Gender Equality"*, 2020.

⁵⁶ Ising, *"AWC's Proposals for the amendments to the Alterations and Modifications of the Criminal Code"*, Belgrade, 2016.

⁵⁷ AWC, *"WNAV appeal to Women's Parliamentary Network"*, 2016 (in Serbian).

⁵⁸ AWC, *"Ministry of Interior accepted the majority of comments that Autonomous Women's Centre had submitted to the Draft Law on Asylum and Temporary Protection"*, 2016.

⁵⁹ AWC, *"Comments on the working text of the National Strategy on the Rights of Victims and Witnesses of Crime"*, 2020.

⁶⁰ Government of the Republic of Serbia *"Day of Remembrance for Murdered Women Victims of Violence proclaimed"*, Belgrade, 2017 (in Serbian).

⁶¹ AWC, *"Ministry of Interior has accepted AWC's suggestions regarding the Law on the Prevention of Domestic Violence"*, 2017.

⁶² *Draft Strategy for the Prevention and Protection of Children from Violence* (in Serbian).

Monitoring and advocacy by WCSOs also contributed to **furthering the implementation of existing legislation**. For example, a coalition of WCSOs across the region are working to implement anti-discrimination legislation in their countries. WCSOs have been instrumental in monitoring and improving the implementation of legislation related to domestic violence, against trafficking, and establishing quality social services.

More specifically, WCSOs have **utilised international processes to further social change**. WCSOs throughout the region have used human rights mechanisms, such as the Universal Periodic Review, to further women's rights and regularly provide shadow reports for UN Treaty Bodies (e.g., CEDAW, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights), as well as to Council of Europe Expert Groups (e.g., on Action against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence, on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings). WCSOs have used UNSCR 1325 and the EU GAP II as platforms for furthering their priorities.⁶³

The organisation is working for the improvement and implementation of the law against domestic violence by closely working with institutions and the community.

WCSO in Albania



Activists utilise UNSCR 1325 on Women, Peace, and Security in calling upon the Kosovo government to ensure their participation in negotiations with Serbia. Activists often cite this Resolution, among others, when seeking to claim their rights.

⁶³ Interview, funder, Kosovo, 2019.

Related, WCSOs have **contributed to progress towards EU Accession** in the region, particularly by integrating a gender perspective into accession processes.⁶⁴ The EU Questionnaire for BiH encompassed feedback from WCSOs related to peace, reconciliation, and economic empowerment of women.⁶⁵ In Albania, Kosovo, North Macedonia, and Serbia, WCSOs have drafted recommendations for harmonising national legislation with the EU Gender Equality Acquis, and, in some cases, pushed forward their adoption.⁶⁶ In Kosovo and Montenegro, WCSOs have lent their expertise to the EUO, Delegation (EUD) and government officials, by integrating a gender perspective in Sector Planning Documents, Action Documents and Terms of Reference for IPA II programming. In all countries, WCSOs have provided regular input for annual EC country reports, contributing to better mainstreaming a gender perspective within these reports. Several programmes implemented by WCSOs have been deliberately structured to align with and further reforms in accordance with the EU Acquis.⁶⁷ Generally, WCSOs also have shared information about the EU accession process with diverse stakeholders often unreached by the EU and/or governments, “translating” the often seemingly obscure concepts and requirements of EU Accession so that the general population can better understand them. Such awareness-raising is crucial for contributing to the implementation of reforms by giving citizens knowledge and skills with which to monitor and push forward these reforms.

Thus, extensive evidence exists of WCSOs contributing to various social changes in their countries and the region. This evidence suggests that investing in WCSOs can be an effective means in contributing to social changes towards gender equality in the WB.



“Don’t be silent about violence!” AWEN staff, members, and volunteers prepare for the 3 September 2017 protest against femicide in Tirana, Albania.

⁶⁴ Interview, funder, BiH, 2019.

⁶⁵ Interview, WCSO, BiH, 2019. See: *Answers of the Civil Society Organisations to the Questionnaire of the European Commission for the Preparation of the Opinion on the Application of Bosnia and Herzegovina for Membership of the European Union*; and Catović, A., Idžaković, F., Šehić D. for Rights for All, *Women’s perspectives: Alternative Responses to the European Commission Questionnaire*, 2017.

⁶⁶ In Serbia, WCSOs participated in the National Convention for the EU working group for chapter 23. See also: KWN, *Kosovo’s Progress in Aligning its Laws with the European Union Gender Equality Acquis*, 2017.

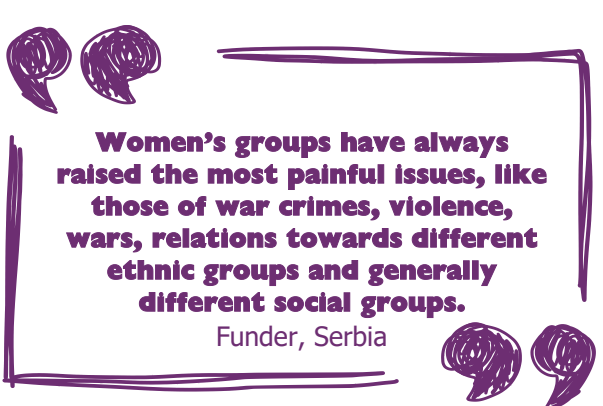
⁶⁷ Interview, WCSO, Albania, 2019. For example, Albanian WCSOs contributed to judicial reforms by providing recommendations for the Law of Free Legal Aid, preparing the Strategy of the Legal Education of the Public, and monitoring the implementation of the judicial reform in Albania. A regional coalition of WCSOs is working to implement legislation on gender-based discrimination against women related to labour, supported by the EU and co-funded by Sida.

Funders' Views of WCSOs' Relevance, Efficiency, Effectiveness, Sustainability, Impact

The OECD DAC criteria is broadly used to monitor, assess and evaluate change related to development assistance and investments. Critiques exist, such as concern over an intrinsic positive bias and the unlikeliness that consultants contracted for such evaluations would ever “bite the hands that feed them” with a negative evaluation.⁶⁸ The standardised questions may limit or “box-in” evaluations, preventing creative thinking “outside the box”.⁶⁹ Moreover, the criteria has been criticised as not being sensitive to interests of diverse stakeholders and contexts.⁷⁰

Feminist critics have observed that stringent measures may not capture social change, which can be convoluted, long-term, and difficult to measure or establish direct attribution. Thus, the OECD DAC criteria may not be the best approach for examining the complicated work of WCSOs. Nevertheless, while acknowledging these shortcomings, researchers framed their questions to funders regarding WCSOs' work using the OECD DAC criteria, as among the most commonly used criteria, by funders, for assessing relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact, and sustainability.⁷¹ Researchers hypothesised that if very diverse funders evaluated WCSOs' efforts positively, based on these widely accepted criteria, it would provide independent evidence as to why funders may wish to support WCSOs. While a comprehensive independent evaluation was beyond the scope of this research, these criteria were used to collect initial evidence from a diverse array of funders regarding their views of the relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact, and sustainability of WCSOs. Findings draw primarily from interviews with funders and existing independent assessments and evaluations.

A recurring response among interviewed funders was that **WCSOs have proven their relevance**.⁷² WCSOs have aligned their efforts with the political context and met the needs of their communities, they said. WCSOs' proximity to the people that they serve enables them to recognise issues and develop programmes that appropriately address needs. Evaluators have found WCSOs' work related to the EU accession process relevant because they actively advocate for the inclusion of gender equality and women's rights in this process.⁷³ Moreover, their work aligns with the EU accession framework, its mission to improve social reforms, and its aims to integrate all relevant actors in this process.⁷⁴ WCSOs' provision of detailed data to EU officials also strengthens gender equality visibility within the EU accession process.⁷⁵



Women's groups have always raised the most painful issues, like those of war crimes, violence, wars, relations towards different ethnic groups and generally different social groups.

Funder, Serbia

⁶⁸ KWN conversations with activists. On positive bias: Clemens, Paul, "[Improving Learning and Accountability in Foreign Aid](#)", *World Development* (125), 2019, p. 9.

⁶⁹ Interview, funder, Kosovo, 2019.

⁷⁰ Espinosa 2013 and Ligerio 2011, cited in Espinosa, J. *Gender Mainstreaming Approaches in Development Programming: Being Strategic and Achieving Results in an Evolving Development Context*, 2013.

⁷¹ Chianca, T., "[The OECD/DAC Criteria for International Development Evaluations: An Assessment and Ideas for Improvement](#)", *Journal of Multidisciplinary Evaluation*, Volume 5, Number 9, ISSN 1556-8180, 2008.

⁷² Relevance refers to the relevance of WCSOs' work to the political and social context, particularly their target groups' needs.

⁷³ Newkirk, J., Lidstrom, A., Popovicki Capin, A., Conflict Management Consulting, *Mid-term Review and Evaluation: The Kvinna till Kvinna Foundation's Western Balkan Regional EU Advocacy Programme*, 2017, p. 9.

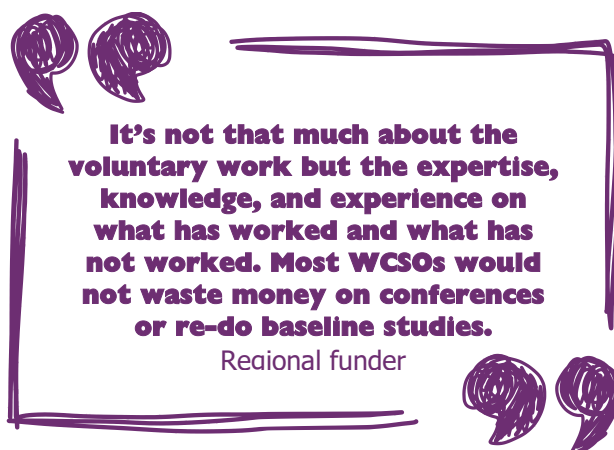
⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ Ibid, p. 10.

Funders tended to indicate that WCSOs have proven very **efficient**.⁷⁶ One funder observed that some WCSOs can still “spend more wisely”.⁷⁷ Opportunities exist for improving coordination among WCSOs, aligning strategies and dividing duties to make more efficient use of limited resources. Nevertheless, funders tended to agree that, considering the difficult circumstances and deeply entrenched patriarchal structures, WCSOs have done well with the limited resources they have had. Since WCSOs work on-the-

ground, they can efficiently disseminate information and respond quickly to issues, funders said. Their proximity to and knowledge about their beneficiaries enhances efficiency in timing and resources, reaching target groups such as women from minority ethnic groups and/or in rural areas. “WCSOs are efficient in providing specialised services and at a local level”, a funder observed, but with the caveat that: “They are not efficient on a wider level”.⁷⁸ This funder observed that WCSOs may not be able to distribute funds efficiently beyond the local level. However, examples of networks and women’s funds efficiently distributing funds to WCSOs at national and regional levels do exist.⁷⁹ Some funders emphasised that WCSOs have significantly lower operational and programmatic costs than INGOs and multilaterals. A comparison of overhead, daily rates or salaries clearly evidences the efficiency of WCSOs. One funder has concluded: empowering civil society and WCSOs has proven to be a “powerful multiplier of sustainable development” and can in turn ensure the continued efficiency of WCSOs in their ability to network and utilise limited resources.⁸⁰

WCSOs have been **effective** in achieving several legal and political changes.⁸¹ While continued research, advocacy, and implementation are needed, several laws across the region are more gender sensitive thanks to WCSOs’ efforts. WCSOs also have learned to better “package” data and arguments within the context of the EU accession process and chapters, which has contributed to their effectiveness in meeting local and regional equality objectives.⁸² They have established “a dense associational life, in which people voluntarily join together to handle common grievances [which] generates a civic spirit that in turn facilitates economic and political effectiveness”.⁸³ Such effective mobilisation of people lends to more effective laws and policies that better meet people’s needs. WCSOs’ role as watchdogs also has been effective in holding governments accountable.⁸⁴ They effectively fulfilled important service delivery functions.⁸⁵



Regional funder

⁷⁶ Efficiency refers to the cost-effectiveness of development interventions, whether interventions use the least costly resources possible to achieve the desired results.

⁷⁷ Interview, funder, Kosovo, 2019.

⁷⁸ Interviews, funders, BiH, Serbia, North Macedonia, 2019.

⁷⁹ For example: the Kosovo Women’s Fund, Women’s Reconstruction Fund in Serbia, Autonomous Women’s Centre, Lara Foundation in BiH, and AWEN in Albania all efficiently distribute funds to WCSOs. For example, KWF was evaluated as effective and efficient tool (Mainlevel Consulting, *External Evaluation of the Kosovo Women’s Network, its Strategy for 2015-2018 and Key Programs Contributing to this Strategy*, 2018, p. 11).

⁸⁰ Austrian Development Agency, *Making Budgets Gender-Sensitive: A Checklist for Programme-Based Aid*, 2009, p. 3.

⁸¹ See the specific examples in the last [sub-section, Box 4](#).

⁸² Newkirk, J. et al, p. 13.

⁸³ Landau, D., Uggla, F., *Mapping Assignment for Continued Swedish Support to Human Rights Defenders in Kosovo*, 2018, p. 4.

⁸⁴ See the specific examples in the last [sub-section](#).

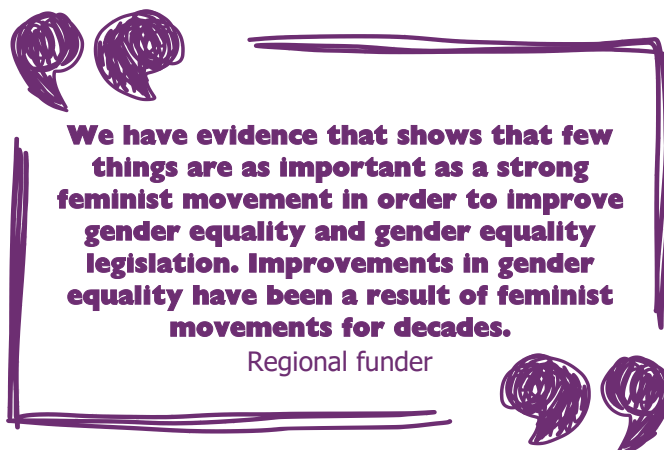
⁸⁵ See examples in the last [sub-section](#).

Meanwhile, WCSOs have been somewhat effective in contributing to changes in social norms and relations, funders suggested. They have mobilised people to take actions in addressing previously taboo topics.⁸⁶ However, the broader political context often has created several challenges for WCSOs, contributing to semi-effective work, such as shifting social norms. A funder observed that perhaps their effectiveness could be enhanced through further broadening target groups to effect additional changes in social norms.⁸⁷

WCSOs' most notable **impact**⁸⁸ has been the changes they have triggered in laws and policies.⁸⁹ These laws have established new social protections for vulnerable groups, as well as promoted gender equality. For example, the Gender Equality Law in Albania, influenced by WCSOs, has led to more women being represented at all political levels. The impact of WCSOs in peacebuilding also was recognised, especially in BiH and Kosovo.⁹⁰ Even considering political and social challenges, WCSOs have impacted some lasting changes in attitudes and awareness, particularly relating to gender-based violence. Funders cited the women's march on International Women's Day as a key indicator of impact, emphasizing that the protest has grown over the last decade, demonstrating social change. Though difficult to attribute change to any one effort, WCSOs' dissemination of information has undoubtedly contributed to increased and lasting awareness of women's rights, funders said.⁹¹

The work of WCSOs in the WB is generally **sustainable**, the interviewed funders said. Responses indicated that fundamental attitudes about women's rights are changing and this shift will be difficult to reverse, despite patriarchal backlash to such changes. A funder observed, "when you have women in public spaces you can't go back".⁹² While several impacts of their efforts may be sustained, concerns exist over the sustainability of WCSOs themselves.⁹³ Beyond financial sustainability, some funders expressed concerns about activists' sustainability, due to interrelated issues of professional stress, burnout, low salary levels, and insufficient resources for personal care.⁹⁴

In conclusion, the diverse funders interviewed tended to find WCSOs' work very relevant, as well as fairly efficient and effective, with suggestions provided for improvement. Evidence also exists of their effectiveness and impact, though these depend on factors outside WCSOs' control, in their operating environments. The changes they have brought about seem sustainable, but concerns exist over the sustainability of WCSOs and activists themselves.



⁸⁶ See the last [sub-section](#).

⁸⁷ Interview, funder, Kosovo, 2019.

⁸⁸ Impact can be defined as long-term changes occurring as a result of WCSOs' work.

⁸⁹ See the specific examples in the last [sub-section](#).

⁹⁰ Interviews, funders, BiH, Kosovo, 2019.

⁹¹ Interviews, funders, Kosovo, 2019.

⁹² Interview, funder, Kosovo, 2019.

⁹³ Landau, D., Uggla, F., 2018, p. 4.

⁹⁴ [Wassholm, C.](#), Interviews, regional funders, 2019.

A Delicate Balance: Financing WCSOs, INGOs and Multilaterals

The pros and cons of supporting INGOs and multilateral organisations,¹ in comparison to supporting local WCSOs that perform similar work, was a recurring theme that arose throughout the research. This section presents these research findings towards fostering reflection and discussion on these issues.

Multilaterals like UN agencies have a mandate to further gender equality, including to make progress towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.² Given their mandates and work in several countries, multilaterals often have broad experience, action plans, and policy development tools that enable them to bring a global perspective to their work at the country level.³ This can enable strategy and idea-sharing across countries, though such ideas often require adaptation to the local context. Multilaterals can promote, support, and encourage the ratification of international conventions and other legislation at the national level.⁴ Multilaterals typically have negotiating power and ties with high-level stakeholders, which can contribute to their effectiveness, particularly in contexts where WCSOs have limited space to operate and thus influence governments.⁵ In hostile political environments, “international organisations like the UN have greater authority” and government counterparts may more readily accept their initiatives due to their size and reputation.⁶ Multilaterals can utilise this authority to recognise and showcase the expertise of local WCSOs, supporting improved relations between WCSOs and government officials.

Additionally, given their financial management systems, some funders see multilaterals⁷ and INGOs as the simplest choice for the distribution of large funds, such as through sub-granting.⁸ Funders stated that it can be easier for them to directly award larger grants to multilaterals or to INGOs for administration, particularly in contexts where funders lack human resources to manage large calls for proposals, or to monitor the implementation of several small CSO projects.⁹ Some funders believe that multilaterals’ and INGOs’ systems and substantial annual turnover make them less “risky” than local CSOs for distributing larger funds.¹⁰ In unstable and insecure situations, funders sometimes find it safer to distribute funds through INGOs and multilaterals to avert potential risk of unintentionally supporting unknown grassroots groups that may have uneasily detectable religious or political leanings.¹¹

INGOs and multilaterals also can provide initial support that helps initiatives get started. Even so, some funders said that it is important that such international actors do not “hold hands” indefinitely and that they eventually hand leadership over to local stakeholders. Local groups must become confident to work independently, so they can support social change and democracy as it relates to the local context.¹²

¹ For an explanation of the use and differentiation of the terms INGOs and multilaterals, see the [Glossary](#).

² United Nations Office for Partnerships, [Sustainable Development Goals](#).

³ Interview, funder, Kosovo, 2019.

⁴ Interview, funder, Kosovo, 2019.

⁵ Interviews, funders, 2019.

⁶ Interviews, funders in BiH, North Macedonia, Serbia, 2019.

⁷ While representatives of UN agencies explicitly stated that they are not donors, per se (interviews, 2019), they do distribute funding to WCSOs.

⁸ Interview, funder, Kosovo, 2019.

⁹ For example, the EC foresees the use of “direct award” grants without calls for proposals in situations of de facto monopoly or technical specialisation ([PRAG, 6.4.2.](#)).



¹⁰ Interview, regional funder, 2019.

¹¹ Interview, funder, Kosovo, 2019.

¹² Interview, funder, Kosovo, 2019.



If INGOs and multilaterals aim to support CSOs' development and sustainability, they need vigilant attention to their relative position of power compared to the CSOs they seek to support, activists emphasised. WCSOs expressed concern that INGOs and multilaterals are encroaching on their work by taking on issues that WCSOs historically have led, thereby monopolising already limited funding. "Very often international organisations compete with local organisations and take an implementing role", a WCSO in Albania said. A bilateral funder agreed: "We have seen examples of UN agencies competing for small funds that could go to CSOs, or UN agencies taking over the coordination of CSOs and having too much influence on them".¹³ Activists in several WB countries described personal experiences of UN agency representatives hindering their participation in decision-making processes or undermining their access to resources. In other situations, some WCSOs reported having positive relations with UN agency representatives.

Some funders observed that working through local CSOs can contribute to cost-effectiveness and efficiency, particularly important pertaining to the use of taxpayer money. International organisations generally have higher salaries and overheads than local WCSOs. However, these differences should be reflected upon in the context of equal pay for equal work. Activists expressed concerns that international actors sometimes receive up to ten times the income of local experts, including in situations of equal work. Activists similarly expressed





International and multilateral organisations are complex systems that are slow and have great administrative expectations from the organisations they provide support to. This makes the situation easier for governments or institutions which distribute funds through them to women's groups and movements, but, at the same time, it hinders access to funds for organisations.

Funder, Serbia



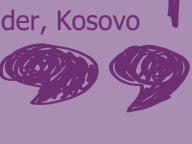

We have seen examples of UN agencies competing for small funds that could go to CSOs, or UN agencies taking over the coordination of CSOs and having too much influence on them.

Bilateral funder



We have seen examples of UN agencies competing for small funds that could go to CSOs, or UN agencies taking over the coordination of CSOs and having too much influence on them.

Bilateral funder



They are very efficient when compared to UN, UNDP, OSCE, particularly when you compare budgets.

Funder, Kosovo

¹³ Interview, bilateral funder, 2019.

concerns of INGOs and multilaterals absorbing most of the funds while asking activists to do most of the work, without fair and equal compensation. An activist commented, “international organisations take the meat and leave us the bones”.¹⁴

Given their size, overhead, and access to resources, multilaterals and INGOs usually have comparatively more human and financial resources than WCSOs, which enables them to negotiate for resources like direct funding. In some cases, negotiating direct funding can contribute to unfair competition, particularly in contexts where local WCSOs have capacities to perform similar tasks. For example, the EU allows for providing direct awards to INGOs and multilaterals without open competitive calls for proposals in certain situations like de facto monopolies, technical specialisation, or emergency situations.¹⁵ Moreover, the EU is mandated by EU MSs to work through UN agencies as part of a coordinated approach in reaching global objectives, including those related to gender equality.¹⁶ For this reason, the EU has provided direct awards to UN agencies in the WB on various occasions.

However, considering the EU’s commitment to fair competition,¹⁷ in the present WB context where several local CSOs have capacities to manage large funds, providing such direct awards seems increasingly difficult to justify. The entire aim of the EU pre-accession process is to prepare beneficiaries, including CSOs in those countries, for eventual EU Accession. More specifically, given the Civil Society Facility’s purpose to further the capacities of civil society,¹⁸ it should be used to support civil society groups. Beyond capacity-building such as training, direct investments in civil society are necessary to further their abilities for managing EU funds. While perhaps not the main aim of the Facility, this can be important for building their financial track record so that eventually they are positioned to manage larger EU funds, including upon eventual EU Accession. Thus, some activists have interpreted the regional Civil Society Facility financing of multilaterals and INGOs as an inconsistency in the pre-accession logic. In the WB, given the unique nature of EU pre-accession funding, EU rules would allow the EU to limit eligibility to apply for Civil Society Facility funding so that only local CSOs may apply, towards contributing to the EU pre-accession aims of developing civil society.¹⁹

Investing directly in local WCSOs can have added value in terms of sustained action, a funder observed. Funders noted that local WCSOs: “know the mentality [and] will continue to stay in the country.”²⁰ “Grassroot organisations are more effective” and “better suited to reach women [because they are] grounded in their communities [and] will not leave when

¹⁴ Interview with WCSO, Kosovo, 2019.

¹⁵ PRAG. Additionally, multilaterals, agencies form EU MSs, and INGOs that have passed the so-called EC “pillar assessment”, meaning the EC may entrust them with budget implementation tasks, also implement EU financial assistance via indirect management. In such instances, their rules, templates, and modalities to manage the funds are applicable. The EU uses this approach sometimes in IPA sector support, for example. Again, if an aim is to further local capacities, qualified local CSOs should have the opportunity to undergo the pillar assessment and to demonstrate their ability to handle EU funding.

¹⁶ [The Treaty of Lisbon](#), Article 188, Paragraph 1. “The Union shall establish all appropriate forms of cooperation with the organs of the United Nations and its specialised agencies, the Council of Europe, the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe and the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development.” UNDP, for example, has a [MoU](#) with the EC. UN Agencies are funded either by voluntarily contributions or assessed contributions, which count towards the dues countries pay to be a member of the UN ([UN, Funds, Programmes, Specialized Agencies and others](#)). Each of the UN organisation’s 193 members is required to pay a percentage of both the UN’s regular operating budget and the peacekeeping budget (Amanda Shendruck, [How is the UN funded? A simple explanation of a complex system](#), QUARTZ).

¹⁷ PRAG.

¹⁸ EP, [Regulation No 231/2014](#) of the European Parliament and of the Council on Establishing an Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA II), 2014, Article 2.1(a)(viii) and Article 5.6. See also: Aets Apave for the European Commission, [Mid-Term Evaluation of the Civil Society Facility for the Western Balkans and Turkey](#), 2017, p. 17.

¹⁹ PRAG, [2.3.9.b](#), citing Article 8(7) CIR, Article 1(8)(9) of Annex IV to the Cotonou Agreement and Article 89(1)(f) of the Overseas Association Decision.

²⁰ Interview with funder, Kosovo, 2019.

the project concludes”; therefore, investing in WCSOs means investing in sustainability.²¹ Supporting WCSOs means investing in their capacities, which they can continue to use in the future. Concerns existed that “international organisations are lacking the direct connection with the communities and beneficiaries.”²²

In conclusion, WCSOs, multilaterals and INGOs all can have an important role to play in furthering gender equality. Support to INGOs, multilaterals and WCSOs should not necessarily be an either-or funding decision. Indeed, examples exist of the successful “triangle” of cooperation among WCSOs, government and UN agencies contributing to substantial legal and policy changes toward furthering gender equality in the WB. The challenge, it seems, is to find the right balance and approach in a given context. Findings seem to suggest that thorough assessment of existing actors, capacities and experience in a given context is crucial for selecting the appropriate funding approach and modality. More specifically, logic suggests that the EU Civil Society Facility should give local CSOs the opportunity to apply through calls for proposals with eligibility limited to organisations registered in the target country and with a track record working there, in order to help further the aims of the EU Accession process for these countries.

Support to Other Organisations

As part of general support towards furthering human rights, WCSOs have observed a growing trend to fund human rights groups that focus on several issues, including gender equality. Research participants discussed the pros and cons of supporting organisations that do not identify explicitly as WCSOs to work on women’s rights issues.

Funders tended to observe that there is usually so much work that needs to be done towards women’s rights that it is important to support any and all organisations, though it depends on the organisation. Moreover, women’s rights should be a priority in every democracy, thus it should be addressed by anyone able and willing to work on it.²³ Non-WCSOs can promote women’s rights as part of their attention to all human rights, making women’s rights issues relevant to all of their work.²⁴ People often get involved with projects because they are passionate about the subject, a funder said. If men are committed to pushing women’s rights forward, it can be beneficial to let them work on these issues.²⁵ However, it is important that organisations do not work in a vacuum and collaborate closely with WCSOs, some funders observed.

Shortcomings of supporting non-WCSOs to work on women’s rights issues include that they may not understand fully the needs of target groups or be able to secure target groups’ trust. For example, survivors of male violence may not feel comfortable receiving legal and psychological counselling services from men. Some funders emphasized that it is crucial for women’s rights be addressed by experts in the field, usually women.²⁶ Lack of expertise concerning gender inequalities, root causes, and appropriate approaches can contribute to harm, even if unintentionally. Concerns existed that some organisations may not be committed to furthering women’s rights, but rather only “check a box to meet funding requirements” or to “chase funds”. Funders pointed to the importance of critically examining CSOs’ strategies and experience to ensure that they are truly dealing with gender equality and women’s rights

²¹ Interview with funder, Kosovo, 2019.

²² Interviews with funders in Serbia and Albania, 2019.

²³ Interview, funder, North Macedonia, 2019.

²⁴ Interview, funder, Kosovo, 2019.

²⁵ Interview, funder, North Macedonia, 2019.

²⁶ Interviews, funders, Kosovo, 2019.

before allocating funding for such work.²⁷ As long as projects are based on gender analysis, have a gender component, and the CSO has a confirmed history of work with proof of results related to gender equality, funders generally indicated that they would be willing to support such groups to work on women's rights issues.²⁸

Conclusion: Why Support WCSOs?

Several reasons exist for financing WCSOs. As described in the [Introduction](#), policy commitments, like those in EU GAP II and the EU Strategic Approach, recognise the significant role of WCSOs in delivering on gender equality objectives and call for EU funding for gender equality, including support for WCSOs. Some MSs and other funders have policies requiring gender mainstreaming of all programmes and encouraging support of gender equality focused programmes, which WCSOs can be well-placed to support. In the current WB political context, WCSOs are among the leading voices demanding good governance and promoting human rights, particularly for vulnerable groups. Gender inequalities clearly remain widespread in the WB, and WCSOs are well-placed to address these. Evidence suggests that WCSOs have contributed to several social changes in the WB, and thus are well-suited to build on these accomplishments, contributing to further social change. They can continue to inform, advocate for, and monitor the implementation of laws and policies, including related EU Accession. Independent evidence exists of WCSOs' relevance and efficiency. While they have been effective and impactful in bringing about several key changes, the political situation, patriarchal backlash, and poor access to resources may impinge on their lasting effectiveness and impact. Although the impact of several of their efforts may be sustained, such as successfully advocating for laws and raising public awareness, concerns exist over the sustainability of WCSOs themselves.



Women's rights activists use the occasion of International Women's Day, 8 March, to raise various women's rights issues throughout the WB, from reproductive rights, to ending all forms of violence against women, to equal pay for equal work, to stopping multiple forms of discrimination.

²⁷ Interview, funder, Serbia, 2019.

²⁸ Interview, funder, Serbia, 2019.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations derive from the research findings. Addressed to the various stakeholders, WCSOs, funders including the EU specifically, and WB governments, the recommendations seek to foster discussion and joint action towards improving the funding ecosystem for WCSOs in the WB and contributing to gender equality and women's rights.

For WCSOs

- **Share power. Share resources.** Actively support and advocate for funding that promotes **solidarity**, rather than competition. Larger WCSOs should recognise their relative position of power compared to smaller WCSOs, identifying ways to support their peers towards strengthening the movement.
- **Advocate jointly for improved resourcing**, including for self-care for women's rights activists and WCSOs, towards sustaining the movement.
- **Further improve coordination** of programmes among WCSOs, aligning strategies and dividing duties to make even more efficient use of limited resources.
- **Strategically expand the movement's support base.** Counter conservatism and anti-gender movements by better tailoring messages to diverse groups, particularly in rural areas, effectively changing social norms. In addition to engaging more supporters in furthering women's rights, community support can be transformed into financial support as well. Identify potential individual supporters and build a fundraising strategy around them and their interests. Utilise the vast array of existing fundraising resources.
- **Further improve transparency among all WCSOs**, strongly encouraging the publishing of annual expenditures and, where financially feasible, audit reports. Budget for auditing as part of projects and contracts. Support smaller organisations in further enhancing their financial management systems.
- Where they do not exist, consider establishing **stronger monitoring and evaluation strategies** for tracking changes in relation to organisational strategies, donor-funded programmes, and long-term impact, respectively. This can help build a stronger body of evidence regarding the changes that WCSOs have made.
- For larger WCSOs, work to better understand global funding trends and how to influence them; collaborate with broader, diverse coalitions of organisations engaged in **influencing funding trends globally**.

For Funders

- Support the development of a comprehensive, dynamic "**funding ecosystem**" that meets the needs of diverse WCSOs. Investing in such an ecosystem could significantly increase WCSOs' political and social influence and counteract the current climate of shrinking space.
- **Collaborate more with women's funds** to distribute grants to smaller WCSOs, based on identified best practices in sub-granting. Strongly encourage and support the use of granting in local languages, towards reaching otherwise marginalised smaller organisations.
- Foster **deeper dialogue** with WCSOs about their funding needs, best ways to address their needs, and best methods for furthering gender equality.

- **Earmark future funds** specifically for furthering gender equality and, where possible, explicitly for WCSOs, prioritising funds to address significant inequalities identified through gender analysis.
- Continue funding WCSOs, particularly through **multiyear support, core funding, grants, and more flexible funding**. Allocate financing for supporting WCSOs with **cost-shares**. Allow well-documented in-kind contributions to contribute to cost-shares.
- **Improve donor coordination** and joint strategizing to further gender equality.
- **Simplify application and reporting procedures**, thereby reducing time spent by funders and WCSOs on administration, so that more time can be spent on the actions themselves. Where possible, **use pooled funding** and **joint reporting** with other funders, towards minimising administrative burdens and contributing to more efficient time use for WCSOs.
- Require obligatory **ex ante gender analysis** and the appropriate **gender mainstreaming of all programmes** based on best practices of funders like ADA or Sida, requiring gender analysis and attention to gender inequalities in all programmes.
- **Require government beneficiaries** to gender mainstream programmes financed through funders' support, particularly when such funding is incorporated into policy, such as by states' adoption of IPA-financed programmes.
- **Improve systems for tracking spending** on gender equality, women's rights, women and girls, and direct support to WCSOs, respectively. Using best practices in gender-responsive budgeting, improve measures of funds allocated and spent, including when using gender mainstreaming.
- Politically encourage and support more meaningful, research-informed discussion among foreign funders, governments, and WCSO experts on the **appropriate design of permanent funding** for civil society, such as normative funding, for experienced non-governmental service providers working to address gender-based violence. Government funding must which consider the sensitive, crucial issues of CSO autonomy and procurement of quality services from experienced providers.
- **Consider supporting programmes** in the following under-supported areas:
 - Strategies like service provision, advocacy, research, legal services, and psychotherapy;
 - Retreats, psychotherapy, and other forms of self-care identified by activists, towards preventing activist burnout;
 - Initiatives to address gender inequalities and their root causes, particularly in rural communities;
 - Women's empowerment, leadership, politics, democracy, and governance;
 - Core funding for WCSO service providers that provide direct services to persons who have suffered gender-based violence, including legal and psychotherapy services, housing for beneficiaries, and free health visits until clear, sustainable, autonomous funding has been allocated by governments;
 - Various forms of violence against women, including addressing root causes, based on needs identified with WCSOs specialising in this area;
 - ESCRs, employment, women's economic empowerment, labour and workers' rights, ICT, and property and housing rights;



- Education, particularly investing in early education towards transforming traditional, socialised gender roles, enabling more women to work, creating jobs, and improving children's educational outcomes, as recognised by the EU Barcelona Objectives;¹
- Humanitarian assistance, emergency work, and support related to migration;
- Environmental rights and justice;
- Sexual rights and reproductive health;
- Disability rights and work with women with different abilities;
- Attention to the inclusion of men and non-binary groups; LGBTQIA+ rights;
- Women in media; and
- Further research on opportunities for developing philanthropy and local giving specifically for women's rights and gender equality; support pilot programmes to test potential innovative solutions identified through research.
- As part of support, consider including funding for capacity-building to assist WCSOs in creating **contingency plans** for situations in which they lack funding.
- Consider funding a comprehensive independent study on the **impact of gender equality interventions** in the region over time to identify best approaches, funding modalities, and practices that have contributed to social change, towards learning and informing future investments in change.

For the EU

- As recommended by the European Institute for Gender Equality, introduce "an obligation for **spending on gender equality**, capacity-building among relevant officials for **mainstreaming gender in the MFF and the budgetary processes** and conducting **gender budget analysis** of all funding programmes to analyse their impact on gender equality".²
- Establish **stronger, binding requirements for furthering gender equality via external funding** by ensuring that both the IPA III and the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument regulations are gender mainstreamed.³ Within these regulations:
 - Require **ex ante gender impact assessments** for all actions; and that these analyses inform clear objectives, indicators, and targets towards gender equality;
 - **Earmark funding for gender equality** like that set aside for the environment;
 - Make **gender-responsive budgeting** obligatory;
 - Require that **all evaluations examine effects on gender equality**; and
 - Require **regular tracking and reporting on actual expenditures** on gender equality, women and girls, and WCSOs, respectively.
- Towards effectively and sustainably building the capacities of (W)CSOs within IPA beneficiary countries, include **conditionalities in the eligibility criteria of all EU Civil Society Facility** support, ensuring that these funds only support local organisations registered in beneficiary countries with established experience working in these countries.
- **Earmark future funds** specifically for furthering gender equality and, where possible, explicitly for WCSOs, prioritising funds to address significant inequalities identified through gender analysis.
- Towards ensuring gender mainstreaming of all programming in accordance with GAP II (and potentially GAP III), establish more standardised procedures and processes of

¹ EC, *Barcelona Objectives: On the development of childcare facilities for young children with a view to increase female labour participation, strike a work-life balance for working parents and bring about sustainable and inclusive growth in Europe*, 2018.

² EIGE, 2018, p. 20.

³ See Farnsworth, N. and Rashiti, V. for KWN, "Following through on EU Commitments: Recommendations for Gender Mainstreaming IPA III", 2020.

gender equality quality review of all programmes at the EUD and EC levels, requiring that certain standards be met and data relevant to gender equality in programming is entered in EU data management systems.

- As part of **direct budget support to beneficiary governments, always require at least one indicator related to furthering gender equality**, identified based on gender analysis and discussions with WCSOs and national gender equality mechanisms. As part of political dialogue and financial support to beneficiary countries, this can encourage progress on gender equality in the country.
- Annually monitor and report in a standardised manner on the **situation of WCSOs in country reports**, including violence against women human rights defenders and shrinking space.
- Through political dialogue related to the EU Accession process, **encourage government action to improve gender equality**, including through the appropriate allocation of resources for this purpose.
- Towards implementing CEDAW, the Istanbul Convention, and other relevant national legislation, **facilitate meaningful discussion** that draws from international research and experience, accurate in-country costing exercises,⁴ and engages the expertise of WCSOs on *how specifically* to **design implementable, sustainable quality normative social welfare services**, particularly for persons who have suffered violence. The EU Accession process, including accompanying sector support to establishing functioning social welfare systems, could provide an opportunity for such discussions and for monitoring developments, such as through country reports. An enabling, beneficiary-focused normative regulatory environment could allow for licenced, capable service providers, run by civil society actors or others, to access funding on a performance basis (e.g., cost-recovery schemes) and not necessarily in the form of ad hoc CSO funds.
- Within GAP III, enhance commitments to **strategic donor coordination** towards gender equality in close cooperation with national gender equality mechanisms and WCSOs.
- **Promote the involvement of civil society actors** in the realisation of equality between women and men, as called upon by the European Council under the review of the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action in EU MSs.⁵
- **Involve WCSOs more in the EU Accession process**, building on clear progress and good practices achieved to date. Additional strategies and initiatives that integrate gender equality into diverse sectors could help WCSOs strengthen their involvement in this process, “translate” the process to stakeholders and beneficiaries in their communities, and subsequently improve efforts towards EU Accession.

For Governments

- **Implement commitments to gender mainstreaming** laws, policies, programmes, and budgets, including appropriate use of gender-responsive budgeting. In doing so, **engage WCSOs**, providing them with sufficient funding and compensation for their expertise.
- **Improve legal frameworks and enabling environments for CSOs to fundraise** from individuals and businesses, as well as to be paid for their expertise.

⁴ For an example, albeit outdated, see: Farnsworth, N., Qosaj-Mustafa, A., Ekonomi, M., Shima, A., and Dauti-Kadriu, D. for KWN, *At What Cost? Budgeting for the Implementation of the Legal Framework Against Domestic Violence in Kosovo*, UNDP: Pristina, 2012.

⁵ EIGE, “*Beijing + 25: the fifth review of the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action in the EU Member States*”, 2019.

- **Establish sustained funding**, such as normative funding, through a permanent budget line to support cost recovery for public benefit services provided. Allocate resources for autonomous WCSOs, particularly public benefit service providers with expertise related to addressing gender-based violence, towards ensuring sustained resources for these essential services foreseen by the Istanbul Convention.
- **Allocate funding** for research, including *ex ante* gender analysis, gender expertise, independent monitoring, and evaluation by (W)CSOs.
- Ensure **transparent and fair provision of funds**. Establish safeguards to mitigate risks of misuse, such as use of open calls with clear selection criteria, independent evaluators, and functioning complaint mechanisms.
- Make data regarding **expenditures provided to civil society publicly accessible**. Publicise online the names, amounts, and actions of WCSOs funded, towards transparency.
- **Reach out to more, diverse WCSOs to increase their participation** in public consultations, including related to the EU Accession process. Consider their level of awareness, expertise, access to transportation, and time required for participating in these processes in order to encourage, appropriately plan for, and support their improved participation.
- Increase political and **financial support for national gender equality mechanisms**. Set aside resources for strengthening their capacities and ensuring that they collaborate closely with diverse WCSOs.

For Coordination

- Initiate a coordinated effort **to hold all funders more accountable** to collaborating in joint planning of support to gender equality. Seek to **reduce duplication and improve the efficient, effective and impactful** use of limited resources. Perhaps funders like the EU and Sida can consider initiating more expansive coordination efforts, so funders and WCSOs alike can collaborate in more efficient, effective, and impactful initiatives.
- Identify opportunities for improved use of **pooled funding and joint reporting**, towards more efficient use of human resources for funders and WCSOs alike.



Photo: Marija Jankovic

Activists form a peace sign in support of women in Kurdistan in Belgrade in 2016.

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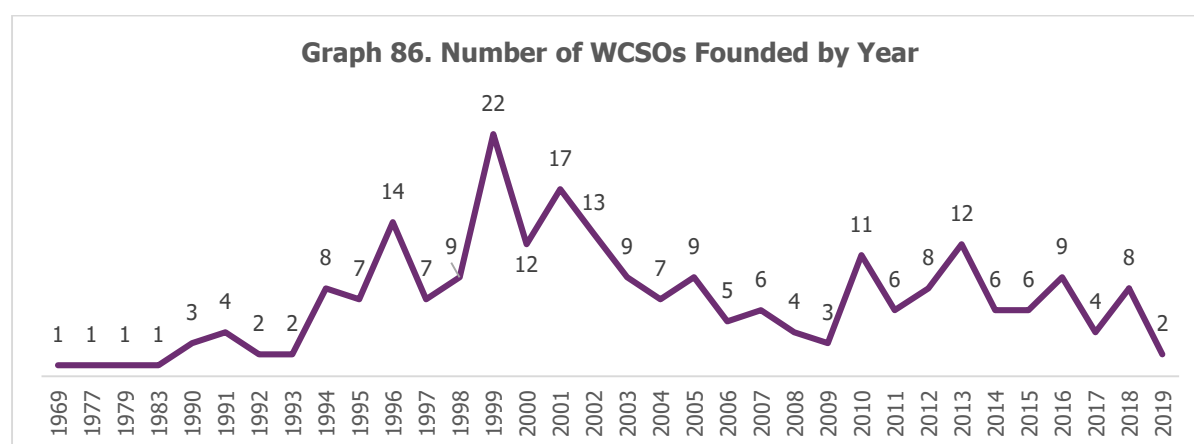
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ANNEXES

Annex 1. Sample Descriptives and Other Data

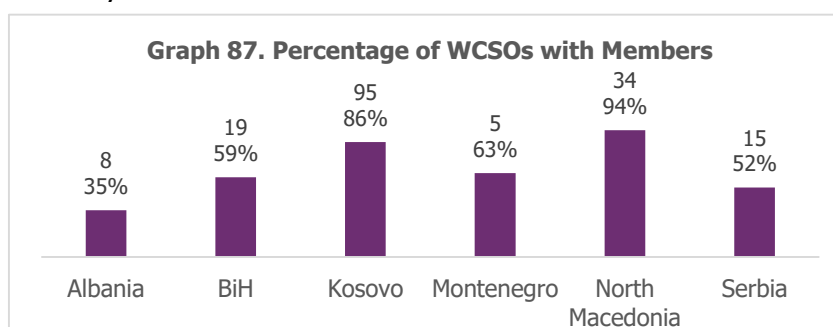
Most of the WCSOs interviewed were associations or organisations (81%), followed by centres (6%), foundations (6%), and informal groups (6%). Only 10 were networks (4%). The women's networks surveyed were in Kosovo, Albania, and North Macedonia. Informal groups were in Kosovo, Montenegro, and North Macedonia. WCSOs said they focused on gender equality (58%), women's empowerment (57%), and promoting women's rights (55%). A third stated that they have feminist aims. Meanwhile, 49% said they worked on a range of issues, including but not solely focused on women's rights, gender equality, and/or empowerment.

As Graph 86 illustrates, most WCSOs were founded between 2000 and 2010 (96).⁶ Several existed previously, but not all were registered officially. The large spike in new organisations in 1999 is attributable primarily to the establishment of new organisations to assist with the distribution of humanitarian aid in immediate post-conflict Kosovo.



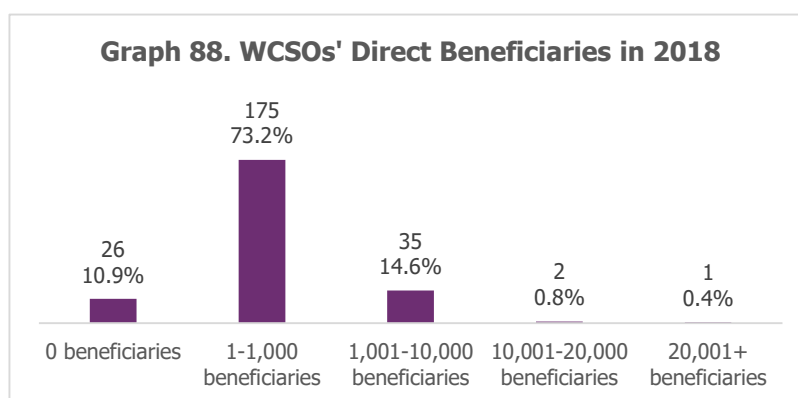
Most WCSOs said that they worked at a national level (133), local level (112), provincial/regional level (67), and WB regional level (66). Meanwhile, 22 WCSOs said that they work internationally (9%). A comparatively higher percentage of WCSOs worked locally in Serbia (83%), BiH (72%), and Montenegro (63%). A comparatively higher percentage of WCSOs worked nationally in Albania (87%), Montenegro (88%), BiH (81%), and Serbia (62%). In BiH, given its unique political structure, more WCSOs worked at a provincial or regional level within their country (69%). A higher percentage of WCSOs from BiH (25%) and Serbia (24%) worked internationally.

Most WCSOs have members (74%). A higher percentage of organisations from North Macedonia (94%) and Kosovo (86%) were membership-based than those in other countries (Graph 87).

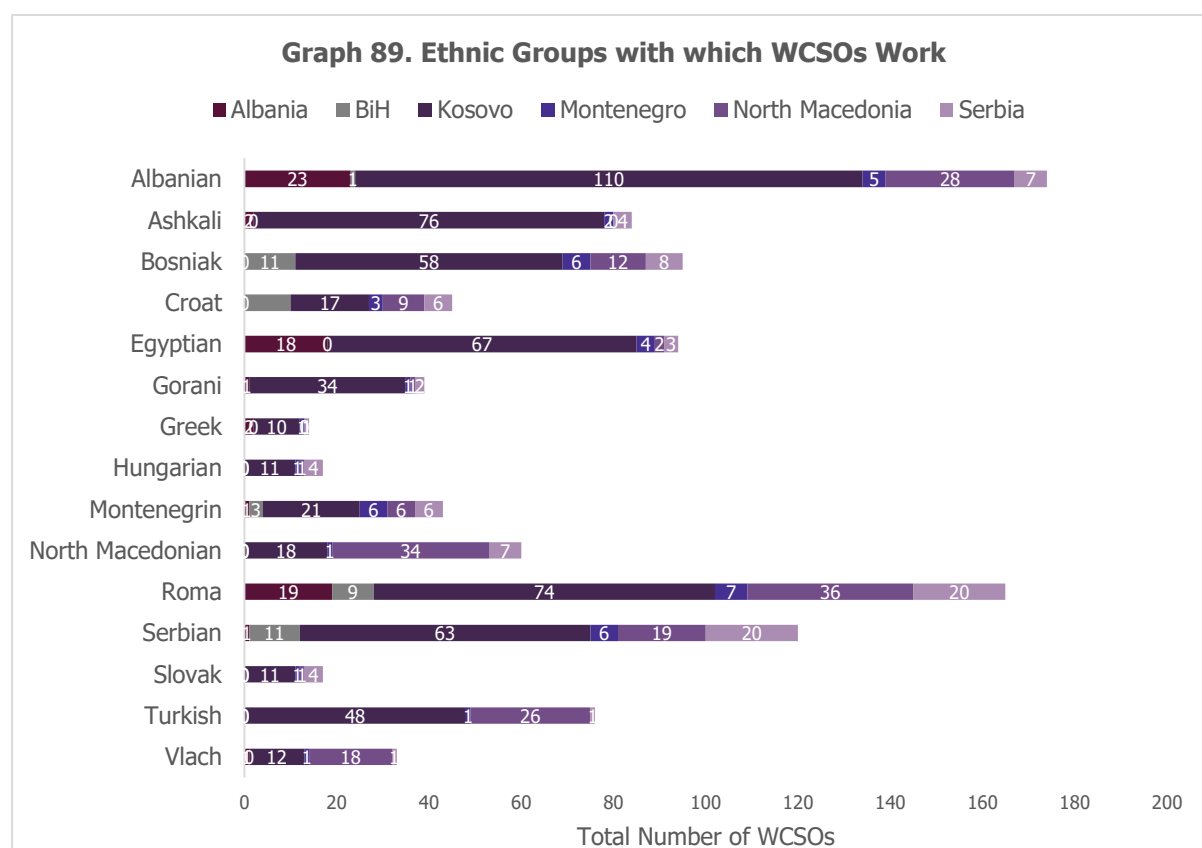


⁶ The graph refers to the date founded and not the date registered.

Most of the surveyed WCSOs (175) reported that they had up to 1,000 beneficiaries in 2018, whereas 35 had between one and ten thousand beneficiaries (Graph 88). Two WCSOs reported having more than 20,000 direct beneficiaries. Altogether, WCSOs reported having more than 233,333 direct beneficiaries and **5.6 million** indirect beneficiaries in 2018 alone.⁷



Regarding ethnic groups, since most WCSO respondents were in Kosovo, most WCSOs said they work with Albanians (174). WCSOs also stated that they work with Roma (165), Serb (120), Bosniak (95), Egyptian (94), Ashkali (84), Turkish (76), and Macedonian (60) ethnic groups, among others. Graph 89 displays the number of WCSOs in each country that stated they work with each ethnic group.



Approximately 41% of the WCSOs interviewed said they have a formal monitoring and evaluation strategy to track progress on the changes that they aim to achieve; 21% have an informal strategy. Meanwhile, 36% do not have any such strategy.

⁷ Direct and indirect beneficiaries may include double counting of the same beneficiaries as it was not possible to tell if WCSOs had the same or different beneficiaries.

Annex 2. Research Participants

Funders

Regional Level Funders

1. EC, Directorate-General for European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations (DG NEAR)
2. Rockefeller Brother's Fund
3. Sida
4. The Kvinna till Kvinna Foundation
5. USAID
6. World Bank

Funders in WB Countries

Albania

7. Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands
8. EU Delegation in Tirana
9. IOM Tirana
10. Partners Albania
11. Sida
12. UNDP
13. US Embassy
14. UN Women
15. Albanian Women's Empowerment Network

BiH

16. Agency for Gender Equality of BiH
17. Delegation of the European Union to Bosnia and Herzegovina
18. Embassy of the Kingdom of Sweden
19. Embassy of Switzerland
20. Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung
21. Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung
22. The Kvinna till Kvinna Foundation
23. Open Society Fund
24. Sarajevo-Centar Municipality
25. Sarajevo-Stari Grad Municipality
26. UN Women

Kosovo

27. Austrian Development Agency
28. Advocacy Training and Resource Centre
29. Embassy of Italy
30. EU Office in Kosovo
31. Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung
32. GIZ
33. Kosovo Civil Society Foundation
34. Kosovo Foundation for Open Society
35. Kosovo Women's Network Kosovo Women's Fund

36. Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports
37. Ministry of Trade and Industry, Kosovo Investment and Enterprise Support Agency
38. Municipality of Pristina
39. Municipality of Ferizaj
40. Municipality of Junik
41. Olof Palme International Centre
42. Swiss Development Cooperation
43. Sida
44. UN Women
45. UN Kosovo Team (including representatives of UNDP, UNICEF, UN Habitat, UNFPA, UN Women)
46. United Nations Mission in Kosovo

Montenegro

47. FAKT
48. Ministry of Human and Minority Rights
49. Ministry of Public Administration
50. City of Podgorica

North Macedonia

51. City of Skopje
52. Embassy of Switzerland
53. EU Delegation to North Macedonia
54. Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung
55. Ministry of Labour and Social Policy
56. Open Society Foundation Macedonia
57. We Effect

Serbia

58. EU Delegation to the Republic of Serbia
59. Embassy of Canada
60. Embassy of Switzerland, Swiss Cooperation Office
61. Embassy of the Kingdom of Sweden
62. Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands
63. GIZ - Regional Project on Social Rights for Vulnerable Groups
64. Kvinna till Kvinna Foundation
65. OSCE Mission to Serbia
66. Provincial Secretariat for Social Policy, Demography, and Gender Equality
67. Rosa Luxemburg Foundation - Office for Southeast Europe
68. TRAG Foundation (with information from Oak Foundation)
69. UN Women
70. Reconstruction Women's Fund

WCSOs

#	Country	WCSO [Original Name in Local Language]
1	Albania	Agritra Vizion
2	Albania	Albanian Association of People with Disabilities [<i>Shoqata shqiptare e personave me aftësi të kufizuara</i>]
3	Albania	Albanian Women Empowerment Network
4	Albania	ARSIS
5	Albania	Association "Jona" [<i>Shoqata Jona</i>]
6	Albania	Association of women with social problems [<i>Shoqata e Grave me probleme sociale</i>]
7	Albania	Centre "Today, for the Future" [<i>Qendra Sot për të Ardhmen</i>]
8	Albania	Centre for Citizens Legal Initiatives [<i>Qendra për nisma ligjore qytetare</i>]
9	Albania	Centre for the Protection of the Rights of Children [<i>Qendra për mbrojtjen e të drejtave të fëmijëve</i>]
10	Albania	Centre of Services for Women and Social Services Kukes [<i>Qendra e shërbimit të grave dhe shërbimeve sociale Kukës</i>]
11	Albania	Christian Association of Albanian Women [<i>Shoqata Kristiane e Grave Shqiptare</i>]
12	Albania	Different and Equal [<i>Të ndryshëm dhe të barabartë</i>]
13	Albania	Free Legal Aid [<i>Shërbimi Ligjor Falas</i>]
14	Albania	Gender Alliance for Development Centre [<i>Qendra e Aleancës Gjinore për Zhvillim</i>]
15	Albania	Hand to Hand against Nation Apathy
16	Albania	Mary World Loreto Foundation
17	Albania	Me, Woman [<i>Une grua</i>]
18	Albania	National Association of Social Workers [<i>Shoqata Kombëtare e Punonjësve Socialë</i>]
19	Albania	Partners for Children [<i>Partnerë për fëmijët</i>]
20	Albania	Psychosocial Centre Vatra [<i>Qendra psiko-sociale Vatra</i>]
21	Albania	The shelter for women and girls [<i>Strehëza për gra dhe vajza</i>]
22	Albania	Women and Girls Advisory Line [<i>Linja e Këshillimit të grave dhe vajzave</i>]
23	Albania	Women's Forum in Elbasan [<i>Forumi i Gruas Elbasan</i>]
24	BiH	Association "Roma Girl - Romani Cej" Prnjavor [<i>Udruženje "Romska djevojka - Romani Cej" Prnjavor</i>]
25	BiH	Association of women returnees "Podrinjka" Srebrenica [<i>Udruženje žena povratnica "Podrinjka" Srebrenica</i>]
26	BiH	Association Women from Una [<i>Zene sa Une</i>]
27	BiH	Association Women's Vision [<i>Ženska vizija</i>]
28	BiH	Better Future [<i>Bolja budućnost</i>]
29	BiH	Centre for Education and Research - NAHLA [<i>Centar za edukaciju i istraživanje – NAHLA</i>]
30	BiH	Centre for Education, Therapy and Democratic Development "SEKA" [<i>Centar za edukaciju, terapiju i demokratski razvoj Kuća "SEKA" Goražde</i>]
31	BiH	Centre of Women's Rights [<i>Centar ženskih prava</i>]
32	BiH	CURE Foundation [<i>Fondacija CURE</i>]
33	BiH	Foundation of Local Democracy [<i>Fondacija lokalne demokratije</i>]
34	BiH	Future [<i>Budućnost</i>]
35	BiH	Helsinki Citizens' Assembly [<i>Helsinski parlament građana</i>]
36	BiH	Horizons [<i>Horizonti</i>]
37	BiH	Jadar
38	BiH	Lara Foundation [<i>Fondacija Lara</i>]
39	BiH	Maja Kravica Women's Association [<i>Udruženje žena Maja Kravica</i>]
40	BiH	Medica
41	BiH	New Women's Initiative [<i>Nova ženska inicijativa</i>]
42	BiH	One World Platform [<i>Fondacija Platforma jedan svijet</i>]
43	BiH	Rights for All [<i>Prava za sve</i>]
44	BiH	The Power of Women [<i>Snaga zene</i>]
45	BiH	United Women Foundation [<i>Fondacija Udružene Zene</i>]
46	BiH	Viva zene
47	BiH	Voice of Woman [<i>Glas zene</i>]
48	BiH	Woman [<i>Zena BiH</i>]
49	BiH	Women's Association "Derventa" [<i>Udruženje žena Derventa</i>]
50	BiH	Women's Association "Nera" [<i>Udruženje žena "Nera"</i>]
51	BiH	Women's Association Bridge [<i>Udruženje žena Most</i>]
52	BiH	Women's Association Grahovo [<i>Udruženje žena Bosansko Grahovo</i>]

#	Country	WCSO [Original Name in Local Language]
53	BiH	Women's Centre [<i>Zenski centar</i>]
54	BiH	Women's Empowerment Foundation [<i>Fondacija za osnaživanje žena</i>]
55	BiH	Women's Forum [<i>Forum žena</i>]
56	Kosovo	Action for Mother and Children [<i>Aksioni për Nëna dhe Fëmijë</i>]
57	Kosovo	Active Women of Gjakova [<i>Femrat Aktive të Gjakovës</i>]
58	Kosovo	Albanian Tradition [<i>Tradita Shqiptare</i>]
59	Kosovo	Alma
60	Kosovo	Arta
61	Kosovo	Artpolis
62	Kosovo	Ashkali Woman for Ashkali Women [<i>Gruaja Ashkane për Gratë Ashkanlike</i>]
63	Kosovo	Association "The Legend" [<i>Legjenda</i>]
64	Kosovo	Association for Education and Family Care [<i>Shoqata për Edukim dhe Përkujdesjen e Familjes</i>]
65	Kosovo	Association of Deaf Women [<i>Shoqata e Femrave të Shurdhëra</i>]
66	Kosovo	Association of Women Farmers "Krusha e Vogël" [<i>Shoqata e Grave Fermere "Krusha e Vogël"</i>]
67	Kosovo	ATO
68	Kosovo	Aureola
69	Kosovo	Blind Women's Committee [<i>Komiteti i Grave të Verbëra të Kosovës</i>]
70	Kosovo	Bliri
71	Kosovo	Business Women's Association [<i>Udruzenja poslovnih žena</i>]
72	Kosovo	Centre for Legal Aid and Regional Development
73	Kosovo	Centre for Promotion of Healthy Family [<i>Qendra për Promovimin e Familjes së Shëndoshë</i>]
74	Kosovo	Centre for Promotion of Women's Rights [<i>Qendra për Promovimin e të Drejtave të Grave</i>]
75	Kosovo	Centre for Protection of Victims and Prevention of Trafficking in Human Beings [<i>Qendra për mbrojtjen e viktimave dhe parandalimin e trafikimit të qenieve njerëzore</i>]
76	Kosovo	Centre for Protection of Women and Children [<i>Qendra për Mbrojtjen e Grave dhe Fëmijëve</i>]
77	Kosovo	Centre for Training and Gender Studies [<i>Qendra për Trajnime dhe Studime Gjinore</i>]
78	Kosovo	Centre for Women and Children's Protection "Raba Voca" [<i>Qendra për Mbrojtjen e Gruas dhe Fëmijës "Raba Voca"</i>]
79	Kosovo	Centre for Women's Protection and Rehabilitation "Freedom" [<i>Qendra për Mbrojtjen dhe Rehabilitimin e Grave dhe Fëmijëve "Liria"</i>]
80	Kosovo	Collective for Feminist Thought and Action [<i>Kolektivi për Mendim dhe Veprim Feminist</i>]
81	Kosovo	Contemporary Woman [<i>Gruaja Bashkëkohore</i>]
82	Kosovo	Dardana's Eagles [<i>Shqiponjat e Dardanës</i>]
83	Kosovo	Dita
84	Kosovo	Divine Woman [<i>Gruaja Hyjnore</i>]
85	Kosovo	Down Syndrome Kosova
86	Kosovo	Educational Centre for Children with Special Needs [<i>Qendra Edukative për Fëmijët me Nevojat e Veçanta</i>]
87	Kosovo	Eliona
88	Kosovo	Era Fruit
89	Kosovo	Fana
90	Kosovo	Farmer Women [<i>Gruaja Fermere</i>]
91	Kosovo	Flaka
92	Kosovo	Flori
93	Kosovo	Girls Coding Kosova
94	Kosovo	Hand in Hand [<i>Dora Dorës</i>]
95	Kosovo	Hand in Hand [<i>Ruka Ruc</i>]
96	Kosovo	HANDIKOS - Women with Disabilities [<i>HANDIKOS, Femrat me Aftësi të Kufizuara</i>]
97	Kosovo	Handikos Mitrovica
98	Kosovo	Hendifer
99	Kosovo	Hope and Homes for Children [<i>Shpresa & Shtëpitë e Fëmijëve</i>]
100	Kosovo	Independent Blind People's Initiative [<i>Iniciativa e Pavarur e të Verbërve</i>]
101	Kosovo	Independent Women's Association "Hareja" [<i>Shoqata e Pavarur e Gruas "Hareja"</i>]
102	Kosovo	Initiative for Community Integration [<i>Iniciativa për Integrim të Komuniteteve</i>]
103	Kosovo	INJECT - Initiative for Justice and Equality [<i>INJECT - Iniciativa për Drejtësi dhe Barazi</i>]

#	Country	WCSO [Original Name in Local Language]
104	Kosovo	Institute of Applied Psychology "Alpha" [<i>Instituti i Psikologjisë Aplikative "Alpha"</i>]
105	Kosovo	Kosovar Gender Studies Centre [<i>Qendra Kosovare për Studime Gjinore</i>]
106	Kosovo	Kosovar Rehabilitation Centre for Torture Victims [<i>Qendra Kosovare për Rehabilitimin e të Mbijetuarve të Torturës</i>]
107	Kosovo	Kosovo Centre for Development and Multicultural Integration [<i>Qendra e Kosovës për Zhvillim dhe Integrim Multikulturore</i>]
108	Kosovo	Kosovo Women's Network
109	Kosovo	Lawyers Association "NORMA" [<i>Shoqata e juristeve "NORMA"</i>]
110	Kosovo	Life [<i>Vita – Jeta</i>]
111	Kosovo	LIRA
112	Kosovo	Lulishtja
113	Kosovo	Malësorja
114	Kosovo	Medica Kosova
115	Kosovo	Miner's Wives [<i>Gratë e Minatorëve</i>]
116	Kosovo	Mitrovica Women's Association for Human Rights [<i>Shoqata e Grave të Mitrovicës për të Drejtat e Njeriut</i>]
117	Kosovo	Moravski Biser
118	Kosovo	Network of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian Women's Organisations of Kosovo [<i>Rrjeti i Organizatave të Grave Rome, Ashkali dhe Egjiptase të Kosovës</i>]
119	Kosovo	NGO Drugëza [OJQ Drugëza]
120	Kosovo	NGO Orchid [OJQ Orkidea]
121	Kosovo	Non-Governmental Organisation for the Care of Repatriated Women "Amza" [<i>Organizata Joqeveritare për Përkujdesje ndaj Grave të Riatdhesuara "Amza"</i>]
122	Kosovo	Open Door [<i>Dera e Hapur</i>]
123	Kosovo	Operation Recovery [<i>Operacioni i Mëkëmbjes</i>]
124	Kosovo	Opportunity [<i>Mundësia</i>]
125	Kosovo	Optimistic Women's Centre [<i>Qendra e Grave Optimiste</i>]
126	Kosovo	Organisation of Persons with Muscular Dystrophy of Kosovo [<i>Organizata e Personave me Distrofi Muskulare e Kosovës</i>]
127	Kosovo	Our Home [<i>Nas Dom</i>]
128	Kosovo	Our Luck [<i>Fati Jonë</i>]
129	Kosovo	Our Paradise [<i>Parajsa Jonë</i>]
130	Kosovo	Precious Hands "Dora" [<i>Duart e Vjera "Dora"</i>]
131	Kosovo	Psychotherapists in Action [<i>Psikoterapeutet në Veprim</i>]
132	Kosovo	Rikotta
133	Kosovo	Rona
134	Kosovo	Safe House [<i>Shtëpia e Sigurtë</i>]
135	Kosovo	Social Development Foundation [<i>Fondacioni për Zhvillim Social</i>]
136	Kosovo	Svet Andjel
137	Kosovo	The Cradle of the Smile [<i>Djepi i Buzëqeshjes</i>]
138	Kosovo	The Inter-municipal Organisation of the Blind and Partially Sighted [<i>Organizata Ndërkomunale e të Verbërve dhe me të Pamurit e Dobësuar</i>]
139	Kosovo	The Kosovo Midwives Association [<i>Shoqata e Mamive të Kosovës</i>]
140	Kosovo	The Nest [<i>Foleja</i>]
141	Kosovo	Top Radio
142	Kosovo	United Women's Association
143	Kosovo	Valbona
144	Kosovo	Violet [<i>Violetë</i>]
145	Kosovo	Visionary Women of the XXI Century [<i>Femra Vizionare e Shekullit XXI</i>]
146	Kosovo	Vizionida
147	Kosovo	Wheelchair Basketball Club "Marsi" [<i>Klubi i Basketit me Karroca "Marsi"</i>]
148	Kosovo	Women 4 Women Kosova
149	Kosovo	Women's Alliance for Integration [<i>Aleanca e Grave për Integrim</i>]
150	Kosovo	Women's Association "Arlinda" [<i>Shoqata e Gruas "Arlinda"</i>]
151	Kosovo	Women's Association "Gruri" [<i>Shoqata e Gruas "Gruri"</i>]
152	Kosovo	Women's Association "Medica Gjakova" [<i>Shoqata e Grave "Medica Gjakova"</i>]
153	Kosovo	Women's Association GORA [<i>Shoqata e Grave GORA</i>]
154	Kosovo	Women's Centre for Rural Development [<i>Qendra e Grave për Zhvillim Rural</i>]
155	Kosovo	Women's Centre Mami [<i>Qendra e Gruas Mami</i>]
156	Kosovo	Women's Democratic Forum [<i>Forumi Demokratik i Gruas</i>]

#	Country	WCSO [Original Name in Local Language]
157	Kosovo	Women's Empowerment Centre [<i>Qendra për Fuqizimin e Gruas</i>]
158	Kosovo	Women's Entrepreneurial Association SHE-ERA [<i>Shoqata Afariste e Gruas</i>]
159	Kosovo	Women's Initiative Association [<i>Shoqata Iniciativa e Grave</i>]
160	Kosovo	Women's Initiative Kosovo [<i>Iniciativa e Femrës Kosovare</i>]
161	Kosovo	Women's Rights [<i>Zensko Pravo</i>]
162	Kosovo	Women's Tradition in Kosovo [<i>Tradita e Gruas në Kosovë</i>]
163	Kosovo	Women's Welfare Centre [<i>Qendra për Mirëqenien e Gruas</i>]
164	Kosovo	Women's Will [<i>Vullneti i Grave</i>]
165	Kosovo	Youth Centre - Lipjan
166	Kosovo	Youth Initiative for Integration [<i>Iniciativa Rinore për Integrim</i>]
167	Montenegro	ANIMA
168	Montenegro	Bona Fide
169	Montenegro	Centre for Roma Initiatives [<i>Centar za romske inicijative</i>]
170	Montenegro	Montenegrin Spark [<i>Crnogorska Iskra</i>]
171	Montenegro	SOS Niksci
172	Montenegro	SOS Podgorica
173	Montenegro	Women's lobby [<i>Centar za zenski lobj</i>]
174	Montenegro	Women's Safe House [<i>Sigurna zenska kuca</i>]
175	NM	Action [<i>Akcija Zdruzenska</i>]
176	NM	Association "Women's Forum" Tetovo [<i>Zdruzenie "Zenski Forum" Tetovo</i>]
177	NM	Association for Equal Opportunities "Ezerka" Struga [<i>Zdruzenie za ednakvi moznosti "Ezerka" Struga (ZEM Ezerka)</i>]
178	NM	Association for Equal Opportunities SEMPER Bitola [<i>Zdruzenie za ednakvi moznosti SEMPER Bitola</i>]
179	NM	Association for local rural development – Kamenjanje [<i>Zdruzenie za lokalen i ruralen razvoj – Kamenjane</i>]
180	NM	Association of Albanian Women – Kicevo [<i>Zdruzenie na albanska zena Kicevo</i>]
181	NM	Association of Citizens for Promotion of Women Activiti Tiit Ink [<i>Zdruzenie na gragani za promocija na zenskata aktivnost Tiit Ink (Tiit Ink Skopje)</i>]
182	NM	Association RADIKA DE [<i>Zdruzenie RADIKA DE (Radika DE)</i>]
183	NM	Coalition "Sexual and Health Rights of Marginalized Communities" MARGINI [<i>Koalicija za seksualni i zdravstveni prava na marginalizirani zaednici MARGINI</i>]
184	NM	Crisis Centre NADEZ [<i>Krizen centar NADEZ (KC Nadez)</i>]
185	NM	Educational humanitarian organisation ECHO - Stip [<i>Edukativno humanitarna organizacija EHO – Stip</i>]
186	NM	H.E.R.A. Health Education and Research Association [<i>Asocijacija za zdravstvena edukacija i istrazuvanje HERA</i>]
187	NM	Helsinki Committee for Human Rights of the Republic of Macedonia [<i>Helsinki komitet za covekovi prava vo Republika Makedonija</i>]
188	NM	Humanitarian Association MOTHER [<i>Humanitarno zdruzenie MAJKA</i>]
189	NM	Lesbian Feminist Activist Group LEZFEM [<i>Lezbejsko feministicka aktivisticka grupa LEZFEM</i>]
190	NM	Macedonian Women's Lobby [<i>Makedonsko zensko lobj</i>]
191	NM	Multi-ethnic Association "Florence Nightingale" [<i>Multietnicko zdruzenie "Florens Najtingejl"</i>]
192	NM	National Council for Gender Equality [<i>Nacionalen sovet za rodova ramnopravnost</i>]
193	NM	National Network Against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence
194	NM	NGO TAKT Together Advancing Common Trust [<i>Zdruzenie za unapreduvanje na megusebnata doverba TAKT</i>]
195	NM	One can
196	NM	Pic Pric
197	NM	Reactor – Research in Action [<i>Reaktor - Istrazuvanje vo akcija</i>]
198	NM	Roma Women and Youth Association "Luludi" [<i>Romska Asocijacija na zeni i mladi "Luludi" Skopje (RAZM Luludi)</i>]
199	NM	The Organisation of Women of the Municipality of Veles [<i>Organizacija na zeni na opstina Veles (OZ Veles)</i>]
200	NM	VIOR - Kumanovo
201	NM	Women's Action [<i>Zenska Akcija</i>]
202	NM	Women's Association "Kumanovka" [<i>Zdruzenie na zeni "Kumanovka" (OZ Kumanovka)</i>]
203	NM	Women's Association AUREOLA Struga [<i>Zdruzenie na zeni AUREOLA Struga</i>]

#	Country	WCSO [Original Name in Local Language]
204	NM	Women's Association SIRMA – Kumanovo [<i>Zdruzenie na zeni SIRMA – Kumanovo</i>]
205	NM	Women's Civic Initiative KLEA Bitola [<i>Zenska graganska inicijativa KLEA Bitola</i>]
206	NM	Women's Civic Initiative Sveti Nikola [<i>Graganska inicijativa na zeni Sveti Nikole</i>]
207	NM	Women's organisation [<i>Organizacija na zeni Radika (OZ Radika)</i>]
208	NM	Women's Organisation "Vision" Kavadarci [<i>Organizacija na zeni "Vizija" Kavadarci</i>]
209	NM	Women's Organisation in Skopje [<i>Organizacija na zeni na grad Skopje</i>]
210	NM	Women's organisation of the Municipality of Sveti Nikola [<i>Organizacija na zeni na opština Sveti Nikola</i>]
211	Serbia	Alternative Centre for Girls
212	Serbia	Alternative Circle
213	Serbia	Association Ž kao Žena i kao Župa [<i>Ž kao Žena i kao Župa</i>]
214	Serbia	Astra
215	Serbia	Atina
216	Serbia	Autonomous Women's Centre
217	Serbia	Centre for Girls
218	Serbia	Centre for Women's Support
219	Serbia	DAJE Roma Centre for Women and Children
220	Serbia	From Circle - Belgrade [<i>Iz Kruga – Beograd</i>]
221	Serbia	From Circle Vojvodina – Organisation Providing Support to Women with Disabilities [<i>Iz Kruga Vojvodina – Organizacija za podršku ženama s invaliditetom</i>]
222	Serbia	Kaliopa
223	Serbia	LABRIS
224	Serbia	Oasis of safety [<i>Oaza sigurnosti</i>]
225	Serbia	Phenomenon [<i>Fenomena</i>]
226	Serbia	Reconstruction Women's Fund
227	Serbia	Roma Association of Novi Becej
228	Serbia	Roma Women's Centre Bibija
229	Serbia	Romani cikna
230	Serbia	ROZA
231	Serbia	Sandglass [<i>Peščanik</i>]
232	Serbia	SOS for women and children victims of violence Vlasotince
233	Serbia	SOS Women's Centre Novi Sad
234	Serbia	Una
235	Serbia	Victimology Society of Serbia
236	Serbia	Women for Peace [<i>Žene za mir</i>]
237	Serbia	Women in Black
238	Serbia	Women's Centre [<i>Ženski centar Užice</i>]
239	Serbia	Women's Forum Prijepolje [<i>Ženski forum Prijepolje</i>]
240	Serbia	Women's Peace Group Pancevo
241	Serbia	Women's Research Centre [<i>Ženski istraživački centar</i>]

Key Informants

EC Centre of Thematic Expertise, DG NEAR

Annex 3. Detailed Methodology

This annex provides further details regarding the methodology, not already described in the Introduction. As per best practices in social research, the research aimed to contribute to knowledge by providing information about funding trends and needs. It also sought to have social significance by proposing evidence-based policy recommendations for improving access to funding for diverse WCSOs.

Research Questions

Each of the aforementioned key research questions included sub-questions:

- What contextual issues, including laws, policies, and/or operating environments support or hinder the work of WCSOs?
- What are the funding needs of WCSOs and movements?
 - Which types of funding modalities best meet WCSOs' needs? (e.g., institutional/project support, short/medium/long-term, flexible funding)
 - To what extent do the types of funding available meet the areas that WCSOs perceive as priority areas in need of funding?
 - What evidence exists of the need and benefits or added value of having the types of funding that WCSOs seek?
- What is the importance of supporting WCSOs and movements, if any?
 - What evidence exists of the effectiveness of WCSOs and movements?
 - What evidence exists of the impact of WCSOs and movements' work over time?
 - For example, and more specifically, how have WCSOs contributed to progress and positive reforms towards gender equality as part of the EU Accession process to date?
 - What role do different funders believe WCSOs and movements have in social change processes?
- What funding has been available for the period of 2014 to 2019 for WCSOs, women and girls, and gender equality, respectively (by type, sector, funder, amount)?
 - How and why do different funders support WCSOs and movements or not?
 - What broader external and internal funding trends are impacting funders' funding decisions to support WCSOs and movements, or not?
 - How if at all has the EU's Comprehensive Approach to 1325 and/or EU GAP II influenced funding decisions?
 - For what reasons do they or do they not support WCSOs and/or movements?
 - What types of funding do they have available now and have they planned for the future (2019-2022)? (e.g., which sectors, types, amounts, timeframes, gender mainstreaming, and/or gender equality-specific programming)
 - Why do they choose the approaches they choose?
 - What opportunities exist for collaboration among WCSOs and funders to create collective resource mobilisation strategies and funding mechanisms (fund disbursement) that better support WCSOs and movements?

Literature Review

KWN prepared a general literature review regarding global and regional issues related to the research questions, whereas partners in each country prepared literature reviews focused solely on their countries. Literature reviews aimed to:

- Collect and synthesise any existing research, data, and publications related to the research questions;

- Identify funding trends related to WCSOs and movements, including existing publications on this theme;
- Identify any existing literature evidencing the effectiveness and/or impact of funding WCSOs and movements;
- Map the findings of any internal studies or published research that funders have already done in relation to the research questions;
- Map other studies already existing on funding for civil society in general and for women's rights, gender equality, and/or feminist organisations, more specifically; this included both publicly available studies and those carried out by funders for internal purposes;
- Identify all legal and policy documents at the local, country, regional, and international level that included arguments and/or statements related to funding WCSOs, movements, gender equality, and/or feminist organisations (e.g., EU parliament resolutions; national legislation that hinders the work of CSOs);
- Identify the funding available for supporting WCSOs and movements in the WB and funders' funding priorities/strategies;
- Identify funders providing support, their funding strategies/approaches, priorities, and funds spent/available for WCSOs, women/girls, gender equality, and movements during the period of 2014-2022; and,
- Highlight gaps in this published research, towards requesting additional information from funders.

Sources of information for the literature review included but were not necessarily limited to:

- Funders' websites;
- Funders' strategies;
- Funders' annual reports;
- Any research conducted by funders on the topic or related to it;
- Online resources;
- Relevant academic articles, journals, and books; and
- Relevant legal frameworks in each country.

Research Methods

This research utilised a methodology similar to the one employed by AWID, for their research: "Where's the Money for Women's Rights?", adapted to the WB context and aims of this research. All research respondents who agreed to face-to-face interviews were given a consent form that transparently explained the research, its aims, and their rights as research participants (available upon request). For funders, the questions focused on: 1) the amount of funding that the funder has given to WCSOs, women and girls, and gender equality in recent years in comparison to other funds distributed; 2) the types of issues funded; 3) their future plans through 2022 (as far as they were aware); 4) any policies that guide their funding decisions (e.g. GAP II, the EU Comprehensive Approach to 1325); and 5) whether they engage in any funder collaboratives to improve, increase, and strengthen their funding. Funders were selected using variation sampling, seeking to collect information from a diverse array of potential funders. This included funders that have supported WCSOs, as well as those hypothesized not to have supported WCSOs.

The research team sought to conduct face-to-face interviews with the entire population of women's rights groups in the six WB countries that have been active, with or without funds, in the last five years. [Table 1](#) in the Introduction illustrates the planned and completed interviews with WCSOs and funders. Some did not reply following several requests or they refused interviews. In BiH, some WCSOs were no longer active and could not be interviewed. In total, 240 WCSOs (an estimated 70% of the population) and 71 funders were

interviewed. Additionally, data from two WCSOs was included, though they were not interviewed.

The research involved both open and closed-ended questions. The second half of the interview with WCSOs also involved oral history techniques. Minimal written evidence exists of the contributions of WCSOs to social change processes. Given the prevalent use of storytelling among activists, the oral history section of interviews sought to better understand the role of WCSOs in social change processes and their needs. Researchers used a free electronic survey tool, Kobo Collect, to record the quantitative data. KWN created the survey tool, which partners tested before and during the researcher training. Researchers conducted interviews in local languages, using a survey tool previously used by AWID, but adapted to the context (available upon request). In some cases, the interview guide was sent in advance to help WCSOs collect necessary information and prepare for interviews. Interviews were conducted in the respondent's office or in a location where they could access records. For remote areas where time and cost needed to be balanced with available resources, alternative solutions for conducting interviews were used, such as interviews via phone or internet. The team believes that using face-to-face interviews was beneficial because it improved the overall response rate; reduced error as researchers were able to explain questions to respondents; and allowed for "performance" in gathering rich description of prior WCSOs' initiatives via oral history methods.

Data Analysis

Quantitative data were produced through interviews with WCSOs, as well as data requested in Microsoft Excel from WCSOs and funders regarding the funds they had received and given, respectively. KWN cleaned all data sets with support from researchers. KWN analysed the quantitative data using Excel and SPSS, as per the research questions.

The research team asked interviewed WCSOs and to complete an Excel form with information about the funding they received or distributed (respectively) between 2014 and 2019. Funders provided very little information, so researchers could not make sensible comparisons with other data received. Therefore, the team used information from funders for case studies. Table 4 summarises the responses received from WCSOs. The data represented approximately 59% of the total population of WCSOs estimated to be operating in the WB. Some countries had a higher response rate than others. The research team hypothesises that most of the organisations not responding were smaller and had fewer resources. However, it must be observed that the information on funding is not comprehensive as data from several WCSOs was missing. Therefore, as said, it should be treated as illustrative of trends rather than exhaustive of all funding.

Country	Total Estimated Population of WCSOs	# Interviewed	% of Population Interviewed	# that Provided Income Data	# that Never Had Funding	Estimated % of Population that Provided Data
Albania	50	23	46%	16	3	38%
BiH	68	32	47%	26	2	41%
Kosovo	140	111	79%	80	16	69%
Montenegro	10	8	80%	6	0	60%
North Macedonia	40	36	90%	29	1	75%
Serbia	40	30	75%	26	0	65%
Total	348	240	69%	183	22	59%

Amounts were listed by year and broken down by sector or thematic area. If a project or funding initiative covered multiple sectors, the most overarching one was applied. For example, an educational programme for survivors of sexual violence would be categorised as

“survivors of sexual violence”. Similarly, if a project description included a target group, e.g. “economic empowerment of Roma women”, the sector was listed, e.g., “economic empowerment”, and not the target group. For ambiguous project descriptions like “support for cooperation” or “fairs”, sectors were assigned after additional research and confirmation of the type of WCSO and their type of work. When a particular initiative could have multiple codes, the seemingly most prominent and specific was selected. For example, if a WCSO had an initiative for “human rights – property rights”, it was encoded as property rights as the more specific sector.

The data supplied by funders and WCSOs had different currencies.¹ KWN calculated averages of annual averages of currency exchange rates to euros for the period of 2014 to 2019 to enable comparisons. If two WCSOs reported the same grant, such as a local women’s fund or women’s network receiving funding that they then passed on to another WCSO, the researchers removed the second, smaller occurrence of funding to avoid double representation of the same funding. For grants or funds lasting multiple years, reported in the full amount without specifying the amount give for each year, KWN divided the grant equally across the years for analysis of funding over time. All of these decisions taken related to data analysis could allow for some error.

Qualitative data were collected through desk research and interviews with funders and WCSOs. Researchers coded qualitative data in reference to the research questions. Codes were updated using an iterative process, wherein new codes were added based on research findings. The team kept interview notes and coding documents in a shared database so country and regional trends could be identified. At least two persons participated in coding all interviews, towards triangulation of researchers. KWN analysed the data with reference to the research questions and subsequently drafted the report. The report was reviewed by research team members.

Limitations and Delimitations

Looking at funders’ revenues, particularly through a feminist lens, is quite important but was beyond the scope of this research. A potential limitation was that the sampling strategy may have left out groups that research team did not know. Research team members have experienced in the sector, having worked for several years with WCSOs in their countries. Therefore, the likeliness that they did not know groups was fairly low. The team sought to reduce this risk through snowball sampling (asking other WCSOs interviewed) to identify groups that the researchers may not know.

Another limitation that researchers observed was that some women’s rights activists struggled to find the words to express the work that they do. This potentially limited the information that they provided, which could contribute to insufficient information on the effectiveness and impact women’s rights activists.

As mentioned, the lack of data or availability of only poor-quality data, particularly from funders, presented a significant limitation.² The quantitative data received in Microsoft Excel spreadsheets sometimes lacked details, such as funding amounts, funder names, and/or information about the projects funded. Some WCSOs and funders submitted data that was not disaggregated by year or by sector. Sometimes multiple funders were listed for a single project, so it was not possible to determine how much funding each funder gave. Sectors were assigned based on project title, so unclear titles may have contributed to error in this regard. Researchers emailed WCSO and funder respondents to try to collect missing

¹ Currencies included: ALL, BAM, MKD, RSD, SEK, USD, CAD, CHF and GBP.

² For an example of the poor quality data, see the case study on the Kosovo Aid Management Platform.

information but received few responses. These issues could contribute to error in the quantitative data analysis.

Case Study: The Government of Kosovo Aid Management Platform

Through the Ministry of European Integration, the Government of Kosovo manages an online "Aid Management Platform". The platform aims to serve as a tool for the government and donors to track and share information related to aid-funded activities. As of May 2020, the platform had 3,532 entries, starting from 2005. Each project has information on dates, beneficiary, donor agency, planned disbursement, and actual disbursement. While promising in terms of transparency, the platform has several shortcomings that make it difficult to analyse data for this study. First, the platform only includes the title of the action, from which researchers struggled to assess whether the project targeted gender equality. Thus, only projects that specifically mention women or gender equality in their title could be identified; several others that target gender equality without mentioning it in their title could not. As a result, the amount of funding disbursed for gender equality or women's rights could not be accurately assessed. Second, beneficiaries are not always enlisted by name, so the platform does not provide sufficient information to evaluate the percentage of funding reaching WCSOs. Third, approximately 500 projects in the database lack accurate dates (14%), posing challenges for analysis over time. As per the Law on Gender Equality, the Ministry should have the ability to track all data disaggregated by gender; additional indicators on funding for gender equality would be required to fulfil this legal obligation.

Validity and Reliability

Triangulation of methods, data, and researchers, as well as participant checks, were used towards enhancing the validity and reliability of the findings. For example, where possible data from WCSOs was cross-checked with data received from funders. Both qualitative and quantitative analysis involved multiple researchers, towards validating findings.

The team holds the view that all research involves some subjectivity, as it is conducted by people who have particular socialised worldviews. Clearly, as women's rights activists working for WCSOs, the research team had the inherent "bias" of seeking to provide evidence as to why funders should consider funding WCSOs. Nevertheless, the research team sought to be transparent about this potential bias with research participants, as well as to actively ask for counter-evidence related to the research team's hypotheses. For example, researchers transparently explained to funders the potential bias and asked for direct input regarding the relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact, and sustainability of WCSOs, based on funders' opinions, as well as any written documentation they had (e.g., project evaluations). Variation sampling also sought to ensure inclusion of diverse views and evidence.

The researchers also employed reflexivity, seeking to document transparently any potential bias. Research team members were asked to reflect on interviews in their notes, reporting any bias they may have introduced into the interviews, even unintentionally. For example, the authors note that the fact that they all live in Pristina and have knowledge of the context may have contributed to more examples from Kosovo being included in this publication. Nevertheless, examples also arose from interviews and desk research. The authors sought to collect additional information and examples from other countries, as well, throughout the research process. In this publication, the authors have tried to estimate error, report and discuss differences in opinions and experiences, and portray contradictions that arose in the research.

Annex 4. Funders from which WCSOs Reported Receiving Funding

Government Bodies

Albania

- ✓ Albanian Agency for the Support of Civil Society
- ✓ Agency of Administration of Sequestered and Confiscated Properties
- ✓ Ministry of Environment
- ✓ Ministry of Finance
- ✓ Ministry of Social Welfare and Youth

Municipalities

- ✓ Durres
- ✓ Roskovec
- ✓ Tirana

BiH

- ✓ Agency for the Prevention of Corruption and Coordination of the Fight against Corruption
- ✓ Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees
- ✓ Ministry of Security

At the federal level (FBiH):

- ✓ President
- ✓ Institute for Public Health
- ✓ Employment Service
- ✓ Ministry of Agriculture, Water Management, and Forestry
- ✓ Ministry of Culture and Sports
- ✓ Ministry of Education and Science
- ✓ Ministry of Finance
- ✓ Ministry of Labour and Social Policy

Within Republika Srpska:

- ✓ Gender Centre
- ✓ Ministry of Administration and Local Government
- ✓ Ministry of Education and Culture
- ✓ Ministry of Environmental Protection
- ✓ Ministry of Family, Youth, and Sports
- ✓ Ministry of Health and Social Welfare
- ✓ Ministry of Labour, War Veterans, and Disabled Persons' Protection

BiH cantons:

- ✓ Bosnian-Podrinje
- ✓ Zenica-Doboj
- ✓ Sarajevo (the Tourist Community of Sarajevo)

Municipalities:

- ✓ Bratunac
- ✓ Derventa
- ✓ Modrica
- ✓ Novi Grad
- ✓ Tesanj

Cities

- ✓ Banja Luka
- ✓ Bihac
- ✓ Bijeljina
- ✓ Gorazde
- ✓ Mostar
- ✓ Tuzla
- ✓ Trebinje
- ✓ Zenica

Montenegro

- ✓ Commission for the Allocation of Part of the Revenue from Lottery¹
- ✓ Ministry of Finance
- ✓ Ministry of Health
- ✓ Ministry of Human and Minority Rights
- ✓ Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare, including through Niksic hospital
- ✓ Ministry of Interior
- ✓ Ministry of Public Administration
- ✓ Municipality of Berane
- ✓ Municipality of Kotor
- ✓ Secretariat for Social Welfare in Podgorica

¹ The President and members of the Commission are appointed by the Government, on the proposal of the Ministry of Finance. The Commission has a president and 14 members, comprised of representatives of seven different ministries and seven NGO representatives (Official Gazette of Montenegro, Regulation on the Criteria of and the Method of Distribution of the Part of the Profits from the Lottery, No. 42 of 15 August 2011). Notably, the Commission no longer exists as every Ministry now has its own call for proposals for NGOs, pursuant to Article 32b, paragraph 3 of the Law on Non-Governmental Organisations (Official Gazette of Montenegro 39/11 and 37/17) in relation to the Decision on identifying priority areas of public interest and the amount of funding for the projects and programs of non-governmental organisations in 2020 (Official Gazette of Montenegro, No. 57/19).

Kosovo

- ✓ Office of the Prime Minister
- ✓ Agency for Gender Equality
- ✓ Ministry of Agriculture
- ✓ Ministry of Communities
- ✓ Ministry of Diaspora
- ✓ Ministry of Economic Development
- ✓ Ministry of Education, Science and Technology
- ✓ Ministry of European Integration
- ✓ Ministry of Health
- ✓ Ministry of Innovation
- ✓ Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare
- ✓ Ministry of Local Public Administration
- ✓ Ministry of Trade and Industry
- ✓ Ministry of Youth, Culture and Sport
- ✓ Parliament

Municipalities:

- ✓ Gjakova
- ✓ Gjilan
- ✓ Mitrovica
- ✓ Pristina
- ✓ Prizren
- ✓ Rahovec
- ✓ Skenderaj

North Macedonia

- ✓ Ministry of Culture
- ✓ Ministry of Finance
- ✓ Ministry of Labour and Social Policy
- ✓ General Secretariat to the Government²

Municipalities:

- ✓ Bitola
- ✓ Gazi Baba
- ✓ Karpoš
- ✓ Veles

Cities

- ✓ Bitola
- ✓ Debar
- ✓ Skopje
- ✓ Sveti

Serbia

- ✓ Ministry of Justice
- ✓ Ministry of State Administration
- ✓ Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veteran and Social Policy
- ✓ Ministry of Construction, Transport and Infrastructure
- ✓ Serbian Business Registers Agency
- ✓ National Employment Service
- ✓ Office for Human and Minority Rights
- ✓ Sandžak Board for the Protection of Human Rights and Freedoms (supported by EIDHR)

Municipalities:

- ✓ Aleksandrovac
- ✓ Arilje
- ✓ Čajetina
- ✓ Kraljevo
- ✓ Mediana
- ✓ Novi Becej
- ✓ Nova Varoš
- ✓ Priboj
- ✓ Prijepolje
- ✓ Savski Venac,
- ✓ Vlas
- ✓ Vlasotince

Provincial Government of the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina secretariats:

- ✓ Culture and Public Information
- ✓ Economy, Employment and Gender Equality
- ✓ Health Care, Social Policy and Demography
- ✓ Science and Technological Development
- ✓ Sports and Youth

Cities:

- ✓ Brus
- ✓ Čićevac
- ✓ Kragujevac
- ✓ Krusevac
- ✓ Leskovac
- ✓ Novi Sad: Administration for Culture, Administration for Health, and Administration for Social Protection, Children and Family Welfare
- ✓ Pancevo
- ✓ Užice
- ✓ Locally funded out-patient clinics of the municipalities of Vrnjacka Banja and Trstenik

² In North Macedonia, the Law for Games of Chance states that 50% of the annual profit should go to Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, which then distributes these funds to CSOs supporting people

with disabilities, who have suffered domestic violence and the Red Cross through an open call for applications (Law on Games of chance and games for entertainment no.65/2016, Art. 16).

INGOs From Which WCSOs Reported Receiving Funding

Albania

- ✓ Arise Foundation
- ✓ Balkan Public Policy Fund¹
- ✓ CIVICUS
- ✓ Community of Anti-Drug Coalitions of America
- ✓ Connecting Nature Values and People
- ✓ East West Management Institute
- ✓ EKO Destination
- ✓ Fafo Foundation
- ✓ Freja Forum
- ✓ Helsinki Committee
- ✓ Italian-Albanian Debt for Development Swap
- ✓ Kulture Austria
- ✓ Muslim World League
- ✓ Pro Victims Foundation
- ✓ Regional Environmental Centre
- ✓ Regional Youth Council
- ✓ Renovabis
- ✓ Terre des Hommes

BiH

- ✓ Catholic Relief Services
- ✓ European Forum of Muslim Women
- ✓ Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers
- ✓ Internet Governance Forum Support Association
- ✓ Madre Teresa
- ✓ Muslim Aid
- ✓ Oxfam Italy
- ✓ Regional Internet Registry for Europe (RIPE Network)
- ✓ TRIAL International
- ✓ VHS International
- ✓ Welfare Association
- ✓ Women Basketball Hall of Fame
- ✓ World Day of Prayer

Kosovo

- ✓ Balkan Green Foundation
- ✓ International Art & Music Foundation
- ✓ Helvetas
- ✓ Finnish Church Aid
- ✓ Church of Sweden
- ✓ Reggio Terzo Mondo
- ✓ Swiss Tropical and Public Health Institute
- ✓ Terre Des Hommes
- ✓ Danish Refugee Council
- ✓ PEN International
- ✓ Women for Women International
- ✓ Cultural Heritage without Borders

North Macedonia

- ✓ European Centre for Not-for-Profit Law
- ✓ FARE - against football racism in Europe
- ✓ International Planned Parenthood Federation
- ✓ National Democratic Institute
- ✓ Schüler Helfen Leben

Serbia

- ✓ A.J. Muste Memorial Institute
- ✓ Institute for Sustainable Communities
- ✓ La Strada International
- ✓ Mental Disabilities Rights International

¹ While some of these have “fund” or “foundation” in their names, a review of their websites suggested that they are INGOs more so than foundations.

Foundations from which WCSOs Reported Receiving Funding

Private foundations

- ✓ Bayern Foundation
- ✓ C&A
- ✓ Charles Stewart Mott Foundation
- ✓ George Soros' Open Society Foundations
- ✓ IKEA Foundation
- ✓ Petrović Njegoš Foundation in Montenegro
- ✓ Porticus (funded through the Brenninkmeijer family entrepreneurs)
- ✓ Rockefeller Brothers Fund
- ✓ Sigrid Rausing Trust
- ✓ Sparkasse
- ✓ Telekom
- ✓ Vodafone Foundation

Political Foundations

- ✓ Emilia Romagna Institute for International Cooperation and Solidarity
- ✓ Friedrich Ebert Stiftung
- ✓ Heinrich Böll Foundation
- ✓ Konrad Adenauer Stiftung Foundation
- ✓ Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung

Local Foundations

- ✓ Albanian Local Capacity Development Foundation (Albania)
- ✓ IN Foundation (BiH)
- ✓ Mozaik Foundation (BiH)
- ✓ Muharem Berbić Foundation (BiH)
- ✓ Tuzla Local Foundation (BiH)
- ✓ Advocacy Training and Resource Centre (Kosovo)¹
- ✓ Community Development Fund (Kosovo)
- ✓ Kosovo Civil Society Foundation in (Kosovo)²
- ✓ Fund for Active Citizenship (Montenegro)
- ✓ Foundation for Sustainable Economic Development – PREDA Plus (North Macedonia)
- ✓ Trag Foundation (Serbia)
- ✓ Slavko Ćuruvija Foundation (Serbia)

Other Foundations

- | | |
|---|-------------------------------|
| ✓ Alkhaira Qatar Charity | ✓ One World Foundation |
| ✓ Altrusa | ✓ Our Children's Trust |
| ✓ Balkan Trust for Democracy ¹ | ✓ Tides Foundation |
| ✓ Bernard van Leer Foundation | ✓ Trace Foundation |
| ✓ German Foundation Remembrance | ✓ Rahma Mercy United Kingdom |
| ✓ Responsibility and Future (EVZ) | ✓ Roma Education Fund |
| ✓ Global Albanians Foundation | ✓ Swedish Postcode Foundation |
| ✓ Foundation Jelena Santic | ✓ World Wide Web Foundation |
| ✓ King Baudouin Foundation | |
| ✓ Medicor Foundation | |
| ✓ National Endowment for Democracy | |
| ✓ Network for Social Change | |

¹ It is primarily financed by USAID.

² It distributes funds pooled from the EU, Switzerland and Sweden.

¹ It is financed by the German Marshall Fund of the United States, USAID and the Mott Foundation.

Local NGOs from which WCSOs Reported Receiving Funding

Albania

- ✓ Albanian National Training and Technical Assistance Resource Centre
- ✓ Albanian Women Empowerment Network
- ✓ Assist Impact
- ✓ Association for Integration of Informal Areas
- ✓ Coalition for Free and Fair Elections and Sustainable Democracy
- ✓ *Leviz Albania*
- ✓ Refleksione
- ✓ Protection and Preservation of Natural Environment in Albania

BiH

- ✓ Afilias
- ✓ Anti-corruption Network of Civil Society Organisations (ACCOUNT)
- ✓ Association for Progressive Communities
- ✓ Centre for Advanced Studies
- ✓ Centre for Citizen's Cooperation
- ✓ Centre for Legal Assistance to Women Zenica
- ✓ Centre for Promotion of European Values
- ✓ Civil Society Promotion Centre
- ✓ CORE Association
- ✓ Foundation Local Democracy
- ✓ Infohouse
- ✓ Institute for Youth Development
- ✓ Long Live Women (*Vive Zena*)
- ✓ Media Centre
- ✓ Network Foundation
- ✓ Otaharin
- ✓ Prevention Network¹
- ✓ *Pro Buducnost*
- ✓ Regional Commission Tasked with Establishing the Facts about All Victims of War Crimes and Other Serious Human Rights Violations Committed on the Territory of the Former Yugoslavia (RECOM)
- ✓ Rights for All
- ✓ Secure Network (*Sigurna Mreze*)
- ✓ Transcultural Psychosocial Educational Foundation
- ✓ United Women
- ✓ Youth Communicative Centre
- ✓ Women's Centre Trebinje

Kosovo

- ✓ Community Building Mitrovica
- ✓ European Centre for Minority Issues Kosovo
- ✓ Eye of Vision (*Syri i Vizionit*)
- ✓ Integra

- ✓ Kosovo Democratic Institute
- ✓ Kosovo Centre for Rehabilitation of Torture Victims
- ✓ Kosovo Education Centre
- ✓ Kosovo Centre for Gender Studies
- ✓ Mother Teresa Association
- ✓ Open Data Kosovo
- ✓ Regional Centre for Family Businesses
- ✓ Security Policy Research Centre
- ✓ Termokiss

Montenegro

- ✓ Centre for Civic Education
- ✓ Network for Affirmation of the NGO Sector
- ✓ Women's Safe House

North Macedonia

- ✓ *Akcija Zdruzenska*
- ✓ Association for Emancipation, Solidarity and Equality of Women – ESE
- ✓ Centre for Economic Analysis
- ✓ Infocentre
- ✓ Institute for Democracy *Societas Civilis* Skopje
- ✓ Macedonian Centre for European Training
- ✓ Macedonian Centre for International Cooperation
- ✓ Ohrid institute
- ✓ Open Gate - La Strada Macedonia
- ✓ Rural Development Network
- ✓ Centre for Freedom (*Zivika Mobilitas*)

Serbia

- ✓ Autonomous Women's Centre²
- ✓ Belgrade Open School
- ✓ Bibija Roma Women's Centre
- ✓ Centre for Policy Research and Creation
- ✓ Centre for Research, Transparency and Accountability
- ✓ Centre for Social Policy
- ✓ Coalition Equality STEP
- ✓ European Movement in Serbia Leskovac
- ✓ Group 484
- ✓ International Women's Club of Belgrade
- ✓ Korak
- ✓ LABRIS
- ✓ Lawyers Committee for Human Rights YUCOM
- ✓ Mountaineering Ski Association *Železničar*
- ✓ Porta - Association for Action Against Violence and Trafficking in Persons
- ✓ Roma Researchers – Zabalj
- ✓ Serbian Association for Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights

¹ In Bosnian, *Razvoj i profesionalizacija prevencije ovisnosti u BiH* (RIPPO).

² WCSOs in BiH and Montenegro also reported receiving support from AWC.

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1. Farnsworth, Nicole 2. Guri, Nerina 3. Morina, Donjeta
4. Kohnen, Taya

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Improvements in gender equality have been a result of feminist movements for decades.

Regional funder

Very often women's rights organisations are underfunded and do a lot of work on a voluntary basis [....]. It creates vulnerability and stress.

Regional funder

There is a very small part of the total aid that goes to the women's rights movement and feminist movements. So, we would really like to see a much bigger part of development aid supporting the work of WCSOs.

Regional funder

ISBN 978-9951-737-34-0



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Photo: Nicole Farnsworth