



**KCSS**  
Kosovar Centre for Security Studies

# **ANNUAL REPORT 2022**

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# INTRODUCTION

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The Kosovar Centre for Security Studies (KCSS) is an independent and non-governmental organization with a focus on the democratization of the security sector in Kosovo and the Western Balkans, which fosters independent research and advocacy.

Through its research, events, training, advocacy, and direct policy advice, the KCSS's main objective is to increase the effectiveness of security sector reform. The center places a priority on innovation and advancement in new ideas and methodologies. Annually, the KCSS publishes numerous reports, policy analysis, and policy briefs, and holds over 200 public events, such as conferences, roundtables, debates, and lectures, both in Kosovo and in collaboration with regional and international partners.

KCSS aims to achieve its goals by:

- Providing an alternative and impartial expertise in Kosovo and beyond
- Advocating for good governance in institutions, with a particular focus on the security sector.
- Being a relevant and reliable reference for policy makers, academic community, students, and citizens.
- Developing creative research and advocacy tools to effectively communicate our findings.
- Broadening collaborations on a national, regional, and international level.

The work of the organization is divided into various programs to ensure an inclusive and effective approach. The programs of the organization include:

- Good Governance in the Security Sector
- Resilient Communities/Prevention and Countering Violent Extremism (P/CVE)
- Emerging Threats
- Foreign Policy and Regional Security Cooperation
- Western Balkans Security Barometer (WBSB)
- Gender and Security.

# 2022 IN FIGURES

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18

Reports, policy briefs and analysis produced

19

Projects implemented

50

Local conferences organized

2

Regional conferences organized

50

Advocacy activities

40

Trainings organized

30

Representation in International and regional activities

# GOOD GOVERNANCE IN THE SECURITY SECTOR

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The Good Governance in the Security Sector program at KCSS is dedicated to promoting democratization and growth within the security sector in Kosovo. This comprehensive program encompasses a range of security-related issues, including human rights, rule of law, minority integration, gender issues, parliamentary oversight, integrity building, and the relationship between civil society and security institutions. The program adapts to new institutional integrity challenges and remains at the forefront of KCSS's mission.

KCSS demonstrated its commitment to good governance in 2022 by initiating, continuing, or completing 18 projects. Additionally, the organization produced 15 reports, policy analyses, and policy briefs, and held over 50 meetings with top government officials, international organizations, and other key stakeholders to present research results and advocate for the implementation of recommendations. Furthermore, 60 public events such as conferences, workshops, and focus groups were organized, attracting over 1000 participants, to disseminate research findings and further extend advocacy efforts.

KCSS provides ongoing monitoring and support to the security sector. KCSS was part of the selection committee for selecting the General Director of the Kosovo Police and was part of the working groups for the drafting of the new law for the Kosovo Police and the National Strategy Against Violent Extremism and Terrorism. KCSS representatives also contributed in the working group reviewing the sectoral risk for the financing of terrorism. Additionally, the monitoring teams monitored all sessions of the Parliamentary Committees for Security, Defense, and Foreign Affairs.



Publication of Western Balkans Security Barometer report on Citizens' perceptions of integrity of public institutions in Kosovo



Publication of "Public perception on Trust, Corruption and Integrity of Public Institutions in Kosovo" Report

# RESILIENT COMMUNITIES/PREVENTION AND COUNTERING VIOLENT EXTREMISM (P/CVE)

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The Prevention and Countering Violent Extremism (P/CVE) program is a crucial component of KCSS's efforts, encompassing a comprehensive range of research and advocacy efforts at the national, regional, and international levels. This program has had a significant impact on Kosovo's policy and legal framework in P/CVE and serves as a cornerstone of KCSS's work, attracting a wide reach globally.



Field Researchers conducting the FIERC field survey

In the framework of this program, KCSS has produced four research reports. These reports examine the factors of community vulnerability and community resilience to religiously inspired and ethno-political radicalization, taking into account multiple angles and related factors. During the year, KCSS implemented seven projects in the margins of the program. Three of these projects are implemented in wide international consortiums in the framework of EU Commission's Horizon 2020 fund scheme.

KCSS has also made a direct contribution to enhancing the capacities of institutions in Kosovo in this topic, with a particular focus on reintegration and rehabilitation, by organizing 30 trainings for local security mechanisms, such as Municipal Councils for Community Safety, and justice and security institutions such as the Probation Service of Kosovo and the Correctional Service of Kosovo.

In our efforts in building community resilience, through advocacy and engagement, capacity building and research and analysis, KCSS has aimed to build a stronger cooperation between Kosovar Albanians and Kosovar Serbs in multi-ethnic municipalities. To achieve the mentioned components, KCSS has assessed the perception of citizens in said municipalities and has initiated the creation of Community Forums for Public interest which aspire to serve as mechanisms which trigger inter-ethnic activism for the greater good for both communities.

# EMERGING THREATS

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The Emerging Threats program emerged as a response to the changing domestic, regional, and global security threats. The goal of the program is to have a better understanding of new security threats that go beyond traditional security challenges. This program focuses on building internal capacities to provide evidence-based expertise in response to emerging cybersecurity and disinformation threats.

The efforts of KCSS in this direction during 2022 are focused on two main topics: Critical Infrastructure and Disinformation. In this regard, KCSS has published a research report that offers a comprehensive look into the protection of critical infrastructure in Kosovo, making it the first publication in this area from a non-governmental organization.



KCSS: Critical Infrastructure in Kosovo is still vulnerable

The second report within the Emerging Threats program has tackled the issue of disinformation, with a focus during national and global emergencies such as the COVID-19 pandemic. The report provides an overview of instances of disinformation and political polarization related to the pandemic in Kosovo and examines their impact on public perceptions and management of the pandemic.

KCSS also carried out a successful social media awareness campaign aimed at combating disinformation related to public health issues and promoting the importance of relying on credible sources for information about COVID-19 and other health matters. The campaign reached a large audience, with 476,417 accounts on Facebook and Twitter alone, and the videos produced as part of the campaign were viewed 133,660 times on these social media platforms.

# FOREIGN POLICY AND REGIONAL SECURITY COOPERATION

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The Foreign Policy and Regional Security Cooperation Program encompasses a variety of themes, including disputes between Kosovo and Serbia, transitional justice and reconciliation, public diplomacy, disinformation campaigns, security cooperation, conflict resolution and peacebuilding, and migration. This program is central to KCSS's goals, addressing topics that are both crucial for serving the public interest and expanding the organization's research footprint.

KCSS organized the first Kosovo Peace and Democracy Summit (KPDS) in cooperation with two civil society organizations from Kosovo. The summit aimed to gather momentum towards normalizing relationships between Kosovo and Serbia. Similarly, KCSS organized a high-level conference to examine the potential consequences if the status quo in the normalization dialogue between Kosovo and Serbia persists. KCSS also organized discussions involving Kosovo Albanian, Kosovo Serb, and Serbian civil society representatives, which resulted with the publication of a report that offers an overview of the main arguments

surrounding the political, social, and economic implications of the state of affairs between Kosovo and Serbia.



KCSS in the Kosovo Peace and Democracy Summit.



KCSS in the in-country meeting in Prishtina, Kosovo within the framework of the project Regional Youth Partnership.



# WESTERN BALKANS SECURITY BAROMETER (WBSB)

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Western Balkans Security Barometer is a regional program led by KCSS that measures the public opinion in Albania, Kosovo and Serbia on a wide range of security and safety threats, integrity of the institutions, regional and international cooperation and other relevant issues. The WBSB annually surveys 4,500 citizens in three countries using a unique methodology.

In 2022, as part of this program, nine reports were published, and 10 conferences were organized to present and discuss the results of the reports. Another significant outcome of the program is the creation and launch of the project's online platform <https://securitybarometer.qkss.org/te-dhenat/>. This platform brings novelty to the research in the Western Balkans as it allows users to interact with the survey results from Kosovo, Serbia, and Albania, and provides the option to cross-tabulate the data based on various indicators.

The program contributed to developing the research capacities of young people as well by training and employing 90 students in the three countries for field research.



Western Balkans Security Barometer - Focus groups with Field Researchers



Closing Conference of Western Balkan Security Barometer



Planning of the next WBSB conference with the data on European Integration, Kosovo-Serbia Dialogue and Regional Cooperation

# GENDER AND SECURITY

The Gender and Security Program has been created to support Kosovo in reaching the goals outlined in the Women, Peace, and Security agenda. Consistent with United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325, the program's aim is to support security institutions in Kosovo to develop policies that are gender-sensitive both internally and externally. The program also seeks to promote gender equality in key security organizations, such as the Kosovo Security Force and the Kosovo Police.

In the framework of the program in 2022, stakeholder and community meetings were held in 17 different municipalities. These discussions served to inform citizens about how to report instances of domestic violence, allowed local institutions and communities to voice their needs, and facilitated communication between the community and decision-making bodies. Additionally, a research report was produced that offers a baseline assessment of Gender-based Violence (GBV) in Kosovo, primarily examining significant trends and difficulties based on the perspectives of the community and stakeholders.



KCSS' panel in "Women, Peace and Security" Forum – Building Alliances for Sustainability

Finally, KCSS hosted the panel "Women in Security Sector: Challenging Gender Stereotypes in the Security Sector", in the margins of the "Women, Peace and Security" Forum organized by the President of the Republic of Kosovo.



Meeting in the Municipality of Lipjan against domestic violence



Meeting in Klina Municipality Against Domestic Violence

# GENDER AND SECURITY

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In line with our commitment to gender equality, KCSS made remarkable progress in the year 2022. In this respect, during this year we have successfully increased gender representation within our organization, with women now making **45 percent** of our staff. Moreover, KCSS drafted and put into force the **“Gender Equality Policy”** and the **“Gender Equality Code of Conduct”**, which consist our institutional efforts to ensure that gender equality and gender mainstreaming are central to organization’s operations.

In 2022, we also launched the Gender and Security program. This strategic initiative is a significant component of our work to support Kosovo's efforts in reaching the objectives outlined in the Women, Peace, and Security agenda. This program provides a concrete example of our dedication to fostering a gender-sensitive approach to security issues and contributes to the broader transformation towards gender equality, particularly in the security institutions. In the framework of this program, we have published a Baseline Report on Gender-Based Violence in Kosovo, which explores

the key trends and challenges in this regard, based on the perceptions of stakeholders and community. Similarly, other reports of the KCSS have also included the gender-lens to provide more comprehensive views related to the topics covered by these reports.

In terms of cooperation and outreach, we have started a cooperation with the **President's Office** for the **“Women, Peace, and Security Conference”** organized by this institution. In this capacity, we organized and facilitated a side event within the framework of the conference. This cooperation provided us a vital platform to further advocate for gender equality in the realm of peace and security.

To ensure the principle of gender balance extended beyond our internal structure, we ensured that all activities conducted by KCSS in 2022 invited an equal number of men and women. This practice applied to both participants and speakers, reaffirming our commitment to providing an equal platform. In actual practice, across all our activities implemented in 2022, we were able to achieve

# GENDER AND SECURITY

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around **40 percent** representation of women both among participants and speakers

Finally, on the grassroots level, our team organized a series of local events across 20 municipalities in Kosovo. These events, focusing on gender violence and the representation of women in security institutions, allowed us to engage with local communities and bring our gender equality efforts directly to the citizens. The insights gathered from the discussions in the local level served as a valuable resource for advocacy with institutions at various levels. Following these events, we held bilateral meetings with all Gender Equality Officials of the covered municipalities to share our findings and propose concrete actions to advance gender equality and reduce gender-based violence. Furthermore, we had the opportunity to engage in ten meetings with central institutions related to these issues, including the Ministry of Internal Affairs, Kosovo Police, Ministry of Defense, Kosovo Security Forces, the Information and Privacy Agency etc. This enabled the facilitation of a comprehensive dialogue on gender issues, bridging

the gap between grassroots discussions and policy making, and allowing us to promote informed, gender-sensitive actions across all these key institutions.

As we look ahead, KCSS remains committed to fostering an environment that is gender-responsive, and inclusive. We aim to further enhance our gender mainstreaming efforts and continue to work relentlessly to promote gender equality across all areas of our influence. KCSS key objectives in this respect are:

- **Central and local advocacy to identify prominent challenges related to women’s participation in the security sector;**
- **Baseline, midline and endline monitoring of recruitment within public security institutions in Kosovo;**
- **Gender-analysis in line with Kosovo’s WPS objectives;**

# COMMUNICATION AND OUTREACH

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KCSS has a comprehensive communication strategy that seeks to increase the visibility of its work to a broad audience, to impact relevant policies and policy makers, and to promote the changes that the organization advocates for. The strategy aims to increase KCSS's visibility in policy initiatives at local, regional, and international level and to enhance its communication tools and techniques by utilizing new technologies and methods. In accordance with this strategy, KCSS's communication with the public takes two main forms:

- Traditional communication, which encompasses communication through media appearances, publishing articles in local, regional, and international media, participating in various local, regional, and international events, and promoting its work through regional and international networks in which it is a member.
- Social media, which involves communication through KCSS's official social media pages, including Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn.

KCSS is the primary address for the media on issues related to security issues in Kosovo and the region. In the last year, the KCSS team had 150 appearances on different media outlets. Additionally, during this time, the KCSS team has taken part in 30 conferences, workshops, and round tables organized by other organizations and institutions, including 10 local, 7 regional, and 13 international events. KCSS is a member of the EPLO international network, through which its products and activities are promoted on its official pages and newsletters. It is also a member of the WBOCR regional network, which increases its visibility at the regional level. KCSS is also a part of four consortiums within the HORIZON2020 fund scheme, respectively PAVE, ExtremelyEUnited, Perceptions, and D.Rad, ensuring the visibility of its activities and products at the international level.

# CONCLUSION

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In figures, spread through all six programs, KCSS has published 18 reports, policy briefs and analysis, has implemented 19 projects, organized 50 local and 2 regional conferences, has held 50 advocacy activities and 40 trainings, while having 30 representations in international and regional activities throughout the year. In the Good Governance in the Security Sector, KCSS has proved commitment by providing ongoing monitoring and support to the security sector, e.g. being part of the selection committee for the selection of the new General Director of the Kosovo Police and more. KCSS efforts have been distributed towards P/CVE through local and national levels. Trainings with Municipal Councils for Community Safety in multi-ethnic municipalities, implementations of 7 projects in the field of religiously inspired and ethno-political radicalization with 4 published reports and capacity building for both Probation and Correctional Service of Kosovo are some of the achievements in this program. The focus of the Center in Emerging Threats in 2022 has primarily been in Critical Infrastructure and Disinformation. During COVID-19, KCSS carried out successful disinformation awareness campaigns that amassed large audiences online. KCSS has also cover a wide array of subjects in the field of Foreign Policy and Regional Security Cooperation, being the organizers of the first Kosovo Peace and Democracy Summit and partners in the project Regional Youth Program with participants from Kosovo, Serbia and Bosnia and Hercegovina. Yearly, KCSS measures the perception of the citizens of Kosovo in various security issues, which is implemented in Serbia and Albania in partnership with local organizations, with a combined 4,500 surveys in all three countries.

In addition, KCSS recently launched the [securitybarometer.qkss.org](https://securitybarometer.qkss.org) website, which allows users to surf around data from 2021 and 2022, allowing different filters and cross-tabulations. KCSS is strictly in line with the Women, Peace and Security agenda, thus the creation of the Gender and Security has been achieved as an effort to help Kosovo's institutions. This program aims to develop gender-sensitive policies, internally and externally. In line with the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325, it promotes gender equality in security organizations, such as the police and armed forces.

KCSS has hosted the panel “Women in the Security Sector: Challenging Gender Stereotypes in the Security Sector” within the “Women, Peace and Security” forum, hosted by the President of the Republic.

KCSS aims to increase the reach of audience through its communication strategy which takes form through:

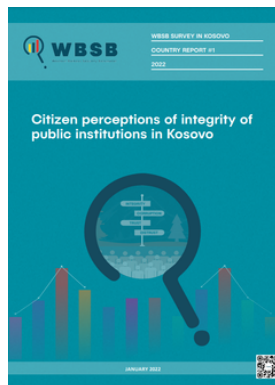
- Media appearances and the publications of articles in national and international media levels, as well as promotion of work through networks in national and international levels.
- Communication through official channels of social media such as [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [LinkedIn](#) and [Instagram](#).

As the main address for security concerns in Kosovo and beyond, KCSS has had 150 appearances in media outlets, as well as being a member of the EPLO international network, consortiums such as PAVE, ExtremelyEUnited, Perceptions and D.Rad and WBOCR regional network which increase visibility in the regional and international sphere

# LIST OF PUBLICATIONS



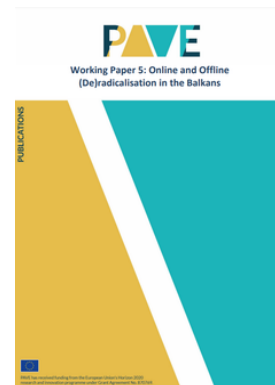
Safeguarding Critical Infrastructure in Kosovo



Citizens perceptions of integrity of public institutions in Kosovo



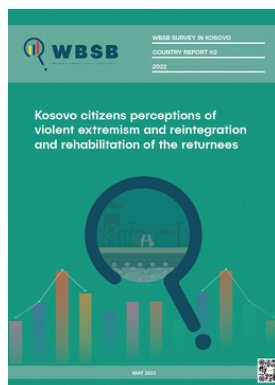
Disengagement, rehabilitation and reintegration of foreign terrorist fighters



Online and Offline (De)radicalisation in the Balkans



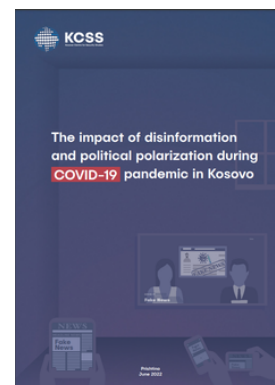
Kosovo-Serbia dialogue: Consequences of the status-quo



Citizens perceptions of violent extremism and reintegration and rehabilitation of the returnees



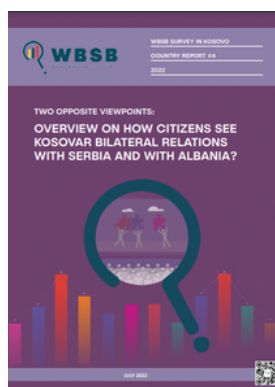
Online and Offline (De)radicalisation in the Balkans and MENA Region Synthesis Report



The impact of disinformation and political polarization during COVID-19 pandemic in Kosovo



Citizens' Perceptions on Kosovo's EU Integration Perspective and Regional and International Cooperation



Two Opposite Viewpoints: Overview on How Citizens See Kosovar Bilateral Relations with Serbia and with Albania



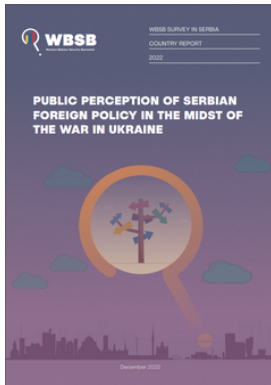
Preventing and Addressing Violent Extremism through Community Resilience



Little black book of organized crime groups in Western Balkans



# LIST OF PUBLICATIONS



Public Perception of Serbian Foreign Policy in the Midst of the War in Ukraine



Public perception on Trust, Corruption and Integrity of Public Institutions in Kosovo



Meeting the Security Challenges of Open Borders: Law enforcement cooperation needed between Albania and Kosovo to combat organized crime



Baseline Report on Gender-Based Violence in Kosovo: Community and Stakeholder Perceptions



Time for Smart Integration at Community Level: Challenges and opportunities for improved interethnic relations in Kosovo from local and international perspectives



What are the Kosovo Citizens' Perceptions on Inter-ethnic Relations: Fostering Inter-ethnic Relations and Reconciliation Survey Results

