

# IMPACT OF THE 2021 LOCAL ELECTIONS ON THE WORK OF THE ASSEMBLY OF KOSOVO

Brief analysis



DECEMBER, 2021



Kosova Democratic Institute is a branch of  
Transparency International Kosova

KDI's mission is to support development  
of participatory democracy and fight  
against corruption through the promotion of  
transparency, accountability and integrity  
at all levels and sectors of society

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>INTRODUCTION.....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT – CANDIDATES IN THE LOCAL ELECTIONS 2021 AND THEIR POSITIONS (FUNCTIONS) IN THE ASSEMBLY.....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>HOW MUCH THE MOVEMENTS OF THE MPs AFFECT THE QUALITY OF THE REPRESENTATION OF THE ASSEMBLY? .....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>THE IMPACT OF LOCAL ELECTIONS ON THE PERFORMANCE OF THE ASSEMBLY.....</b>	<b>12</b>
PRESIDENCY OF THE ASSEMBLY .....	12
PLENARY SESSIONS .....	12
LEGISLATIVE AGENDA .....	12
PARLIAMENTARY OVERSIGHT .....	13
PARTICIPATION OF MPS IN PLENARY SESSIONS .....	13
PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEES .....	13
<b>CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....</b>	<b>14</b>

Copyright © 2021. Kosova Democratic Institute (KDI).

Kosova Democratic Institute reserves all rights and no part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any mechanical or electronic form, including photocopying or any other system of storage and retrieval of materials without written permission of the publisher. The publication may be reproduced or transmitted only if it is used for non-commercial purposes. Whenever and whoever uses the quotes or various materials of this publication shall be obliged to clearly state the source from where he or she has obtained those quotes or materials used.

For any evaluation, remarks, criticisms or suggestions, please contact us through the options provided below:

Address: Str. Bajram Kelmendi, No. 237  
10 000, Prishtina, Kosovo.  
Tel: +383 (0) 38 248 038  
E-mail: [info@kdi-kosova.org](mailto:info@kdi-kosova.org)  
Web: [www.kdi-kosova.org](http://www.kdi-kosova.org)

**Author:** Agnesa Haxhiu

**Design:** Envinion





Member of Parliament	Parliamentary group	Function/role in the Assembly of Kosovo	Candidacy
 Mimoza Kusari - Lila	<b>LVV</b>	Chair of the LVV Parliamentary Group	Candidate for Mayor of Gjakova
 Adnan Rrustemi	<b>LVV</b>	Chair of the Committee on Legislation, Mandates, Immunities, Rules of Procedure of the Assembly and Oversight of the ACA	Candidate for Mayor of Lipjan
 Alban Hyseni	<b>LVV</b>	Member of the Committee on Legislation, Mandates, Immunities, Rules of Procedure of the Assembly and Oversight of the ACA	Candidate for Mayor of Gjilan
 Visar Korenica	<b>LVV</b>	Member of the Committee on Budget, Labour and Transfers	Candidate for Mayor of Rahovec
 Salih Zyba	<b>LVV</b>	Deputy Chair of the Committee on Oversight of KIA; and Member of the Committee on Agriculture, Forestry, Rural Development, Environment, Spatial Planning and Infrastructure	Candidate for Mayor of Suhareka
 Valon Ramadani	<b>LVV</b>	Member of the Committee on Public Administration, Local Governance, Regional Development and Media	Candidate for Mayor of Ferizaj /bearer of the electoral list
 Bedri Hamza	<b>PDK</b>	Member of the Presidency of the Assembly	Candidate for mayor of Mitrovica
 Urani Ismaili	<b>PDK</b>	Member of the Committee on Health and Social Welfare	Candidate for mayor of Prishtina
 Fadil Nura	<b>PDK</b>	Member of the Committee on Agriculture, Forestry, Rural Development, Environment, Spatial Planning and Infrastructure; and Member of Committee on Oversight of Public Finances	Candidate for Mayor of Skenderaj
 Floretë Zejnullahu	<b>PDK</b>	Member of the Committee on Public Administration, Local Governance, Regional Development and Media	Candidate for Mayor of Podujeva/bearer of the electoral list for Municipal Assembly
 Eliza Hoxha	<b>PDK</b>	Member of the Committee on Education, Science, Technology, Innovation, Culture, Youth and Sports	Candidate for the Municipal Assembly of Prishtina/bearer of the electoral list
 Besnik Tahiri	<b>AAK</b>	Chair of the Parliamentary Group of AAK	Candidate for Mayor of Podujeva



Member of Parliament	Parliamentary group	Function/role in the Assembly of Kosovo	Candidacy
 Bekë Berisha	<b>AAK</b>	Chair of the Committee on Security and Defence Affairs	Candidate for Mayor of Istog/bearer of the electoral list for Municipal Assembly
 Anton Çuni	<b>LDK</b>	Member of the Committee on Security and Defence Affairs	Candidate for Mayor of Prizren
 Fridon Lala	<b>Multietnik / IRDK</b>	Member of the Committee on Rights and Interests of Communities and Returns, Committee on European Integration and Committee on Oversight of the KIA	Candidate for the Municipal Assembly of Gjakova/bearer of the electoral list
 Bahrim Šabani	<b>Multietnik / VAKAT</b>	Member of the Committee on Rights and Interests of Communities and Returns and Committee on Foreign Affairs and Diaspora	Candidate for the Municipal Assembly of Prizren/bearer of the electoral list
 Adem Hodža	<b>LS / JGP</b>	Member of the Committee on Rights and Interest of Communities and Returns and Committee on Oversight of Public Finances	Candidate for the Municipal Assembly of Dragash/bearer of the electoral list
 Ivan Todosijsjević	<b>LS</b>	Member of the Committee on Rights and Interest of Communities and Returns	Candidate for the Municipal Assembly of Zvečan/bearer of the electoral list

**Fig 1.** Data on MPs and already former MPs who have participated in local elections divided by parliamentary group, function in the *Assembly and candidacy in local elections 2021*.

Six of these MPs - candidates for mayor are MPs who have also had leading functions within the working bodies of the Assembly. Considering the important role that the chairpersons of the parliamentary groups have in the work of the Assembly and the progress of the plenary proceedings, their regular presence in the Assembly has directly affected the overall smooth running of the proceedings of the Assembly. Also, since the chairpersons of the parliamentary committees have the authority to convene committee meetings, chair and set the agenda of those meetings, their lack of commitment in performing these tasks has affected the work dynamics of the respective committees.

From the ranks of the PDK parliamentary group, the candidate for Mayor of South Mitrovica, Bedri Hamza, was also the Deputy Speaker of the Assembly of Kosovo. On the other hand, the chairpersons of the parliamentary

groups of LVV and AAK, Mimoza Kusari-Lila and Besnik Tahiri, were also candidates for Mayors of the respective municipalities. Whereas, one MP from each of these two parliamentary groups were candidates for Mayors, who hold the positions of chairpersons of parliamentary committees - the Committee on Legislation, Mandates, Immunities, Rules of Procedure of the Assembly and Oversight of the ACA (Adnan Rrustemi) and Committee on Security and Defence Issues (Bekë Berisha). Also, Salih Zyba, MP of the LVV PG and Deputy Chairperson of the Committee on Oversight of KIA, was also a candidate for Mayor. Whereas, other MPs who have also been part of the local election race have been members of one or more relevant parliamentary committees.





# HOW MUCH DO THE MOVEMENTS OF THE MPS AFFECT THE QUALITY OF THE REPRESENTATION OF THE ASSEMBLY?

In Kosovo, politicians have consistently seen the position of MP as an opportunity to be promoted to other public positions. Although, being an MP in a parliamentary republic, as in the case of Kosovo, represents the highest position of representation in the representative and legislative body. Despite the importance, responsibility, and privilege of being the representative of the people in the highest legislative body, in each legislature of the Assembly, there have been MPs who have left their mandate to take other executive positions at the central or local level. This occurred even though the citizens have voted for these people to represent them and their interests in the Assembly.

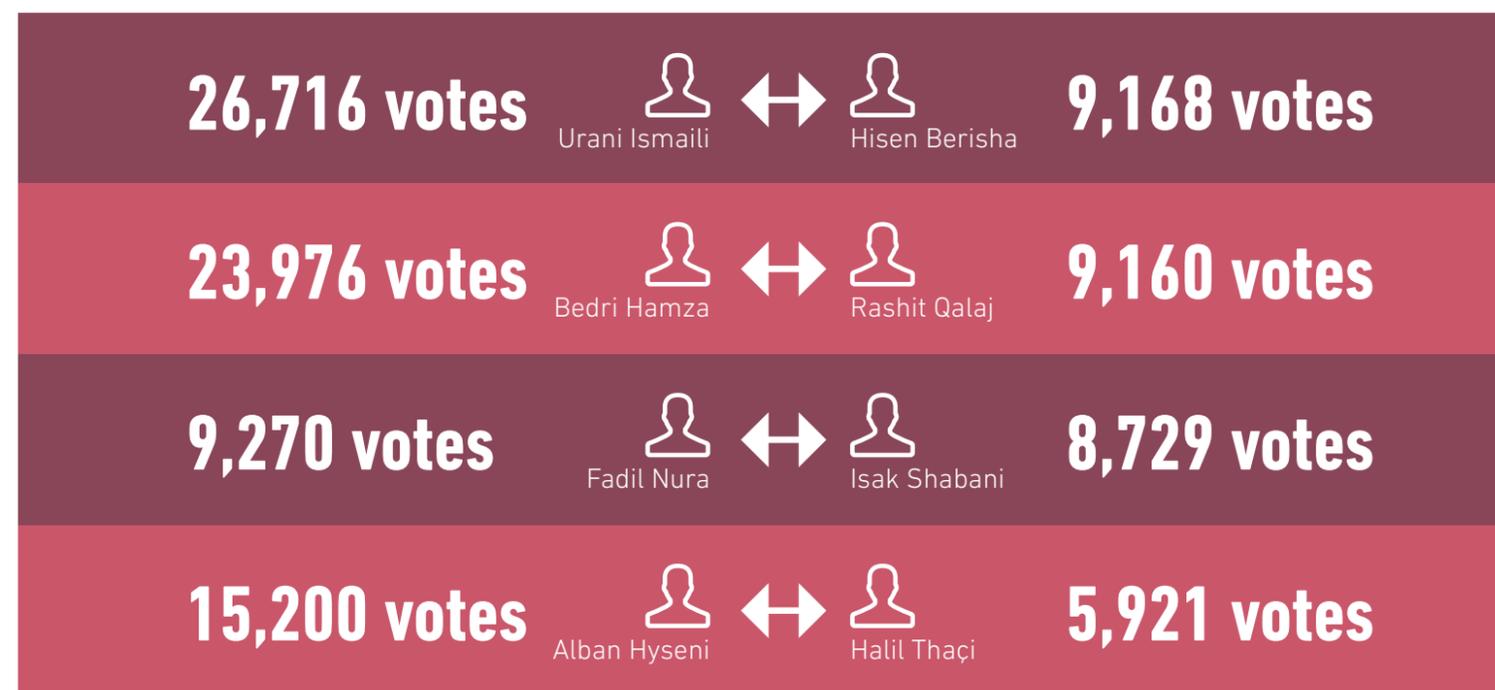
Parliamentary groups that have a parliamentary majority and consequently lead the government are always most affected by the departure of many important figures who are valuable to that particular parliamentary group. With the formation of the government, the key figures of the party, who have already won seats in the Assembly, usually take leading positions in the executive to give way to candidates for MPs who are next on the list in terms of the number of votes. But in the case of local elections, almost all parliamentary groups are influenced by the movements of many of the important figures in their groups, given the importance that political parties attach to local elections.

In almost every pair of local elections, the same situation is repeated, where a certain number of MPs enter the race for Mayor from all parliamentary groups. In the local elections

of 2017, where there were 13 MPs of the Assembly of Kosovo in the race for Mayor, only two had won the elections in the respective municipalities and both belonged to the Vetëvendosje Movement. Whereas, in these pairs of elections, out of 13 MPs who had become part of the race for Mayor, three have managed to win this election race, of which two are from the PDK parliamentary group and one is from the LVV parliamentary group. The PDK parliamentary group came out the most "affected", as it 'lost' three MPs from this race – which were important figures of the party. From the PDK, in addition to the two former MPs, Bedri Hamza and Fadil Nura, who have won the mayoral race, the former MP Uran Ismaili, as a candidate for Mayor of Prishtina, had resigned since the beginning of the election campaign, although the same has not won the race. Uran Ismaili was the only MP to resign from the position of MP to focus on his election race at the local level. While from LVV, the only winner from the group of MPs who had entered the race for Mayor was the former MP Alban Hyseni.

In addition to the differences in functions and importance that these former MPs may have in their respective parties, as opposed to those MPs who have replaced them, there is also a big difference in the popular support they received in the last parliamentary elections of 14 February.

Former MP Uran Ismaili, who had resigned from the position of MP, previously, as part of PDK, has been Chief of Staff to the former Speaker of Parliament, Kadri Veseli, then Minister



**Fig2.** Votes of former MPs who have resigned from the mandate of MP and votes of MPs who replaced them.

of Health in the «Haradinaj» Government, and has been an MP in the last two legislatures. In the last early parliamentary elections, he had managed to get 26,716 votes, being the second most voted candidate on the PDK list. After his resignation, he was replaced by Hisen Berisha, former KLA commander in the Brigade 138 «Agim Ramadani», who had joined the PDK more than two years ago, while in the last parliamentary elections had won 9,168 votes or about 18,000 fewer votes than former MP Uran Ismaili.

Former MP Bedri Hamza, who was an MP for two terms, was also part of the local election race from the ranks of PDK, while in the last parliamentary elections, he was ranked as the third most voted MP in the PDK list with a total of 23,976 votes. He had served as Governor of the CBK, and as part of the PDK, he was Minister of Finance. After resigning from the mandate of the MP, he was replaced by the MP Rashit Qalaj, who had joined the PDK a year ago, on the eve of the early parliamentary elections, in which he had received 9,160 votes, or about 15 thousand votes less than the former MP Hamza. Rashit Qalaj has previously exercised the function of Director of Kosovo Police.

Former MP Fadil Nura, although a first-time MP in this legislature, had previously held senior leadership positions as part of the PDK. Fadil Nura has been the Deputy Mayor of Skenderaj for one term, then he served as Acting Mayor of Skenderaj for one term, as well as Deputy Minister of Justice in the «Haradinaj» Government. In the last elections, he had managed to collect 9,270 votes, being among the top three most voted PDK MPs in Skenderaj. Former MP Nura, after the victory in Skenderaj and after resigning from the mandate of MP, has been replaced by Isak Shabani, who won 8,729 votes in the last elections, which is a similar number of votes to those of former MP Fadil Nura.

From the local elections, the VV parliamentary group has «lost» one MP as a result of the victory of the now former MP Alban Hyseni in the Municipality of Gjilan. He was a MP for two terms, while in the last parliamentary elections, he was the most voted MP from the list of LVV in Gjilan, with 15,200 votes. In his place, Halil Thaçi has already won the mandate of MP, who was also the candidate of LVV for Mayor of Obiliq, in the local elections of October 17. Currently, he is the Head of the LVV centre in Obiliq. In the last parliamentary elections, he had managed to secure 5,921 votes, or about 9 thousand votes less than the former MP Alban Hyseni.







# CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

As expected, the campaign for the local elections of October 17 and the run-off of November 14 has significantly reduced the efficiency of the work of the legislature, due to the focus that parliamentary political parties have had in this election process, where participated about 15% of the composition of this legislature. While in countries with consolidated democracies, the phenomenon of the impact of the local election process on the work of central level institutions is not implemented, in Kosovo it has become a practice the direct participation of MPs as candidates in the local election, but also the commitment and presence of MPs in election rallies of the respective parties.

In addition to influencing the performance of central institutions, in this case the legislature, the candidacy of MPs in local elections, and then resignation from the mandate of MP for an executive position at the local level also weakens representation in the Assembly. In many cases, MPs who resign from the mandate of MP to take office at the local level are also very important figures of the respective parties but also MPs with great popular support. The same, in most cases, are replaced by MPs with whom they have a big difference in the popular support expressed through the vote in the parliamentary elections, which raises the discussion whether in these cases the distortion of the civic will is occurring. As many political scientists say, the way of functioning and internal organization of political parties is a precondition for democratic governance and development of the state in general. In the framework of the process of internal democratization of political parties in Kosovo, it is more than necessary to review the way candidates are selected for elections at both levels. Nomination of candidates in the electoral lists of political parties, both for the central and local level should be addressed through legal rules. By defining in advance the form of the list of candidates in an election contest, on the one hand, the candidacy process is clarified for those who intend to be part of an electoral list, and on the other hand, it enables political parties to create

professional and political staff for representation in advance at both levels without damaging the representation in one or the other.

The practice of participation of MPs in local elections in Kosovo has been adapted due to the space provided by the Law on Elections, which allows MPs to be part of the local elections and until they are certified for the mandate for which they ran, they hold at the same time the other post as an MP. Such a legal opportunity, however, should not be used to the detriment of the institution and the mandate they have received to represent the interests of citizens in the legislature. Given the impact that commitment to another public office has on his / her role as elected by the people, it is imperative to set some ethical norms for MPs who have ambitions for other public office, including the option of resigning of the deputy since the beginning of the election campaign

Parliamentary political parties, ie MPs, must take into account the fact that they have been elected to fulfill their obligations to the citizens of Kosovo, through the drafting and adoption of policies and laws that improve their lives. The Assembly must adhere to the work calendar even at the time of local elections, respecting in the first place the Rules of Procedure and the criteria for the number of meetings and sessions to be held. And, at the same time, to function with increased dynamics in accordance with the issues that are raised for treatment, in order not to procrastinate those issues that require treatment by the deputies and not to hinder the proper functioning of the Assembly.



