

NEWSLETTER

STATELESS PROGRAM JANUARY-DECEMBER 2023

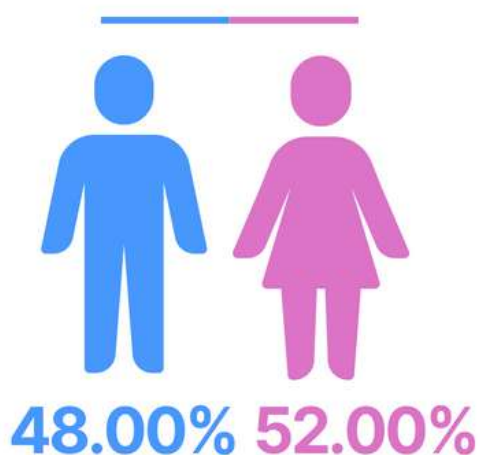
Provision of the Free legal aid to vulnerable persons lacking legal identity remains the ultimate goal for Civil Rights Program Kosovo (CRPK). By enabling informed access to administrative and judicial procedures positive changes are brought to the lives of legally invisible people.

OUTREACH ACTIVITIES

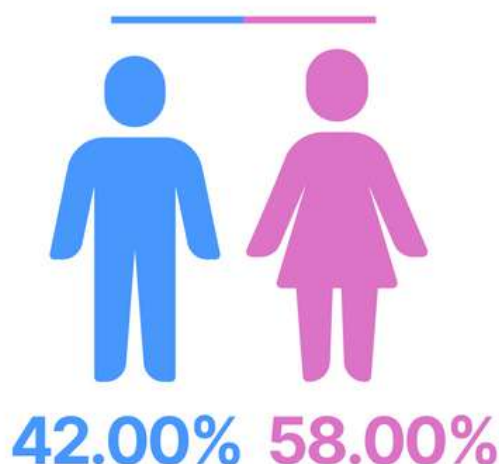
The outreach activities organized have been crucial in reaching out to **1150** unregistered individuals, particularly those Facing challenges related to birth registration and citizenship acquisition. Through a proactive approach, CRPK has been able to identify individuals who lack proper documentation, hindering their access to essential rights and services.

Among the individuals outreached, a total number of **135** were identified in need of legal aid for late birth registration and citizenship acquisition.

OUTREACH INDIVIDUALS

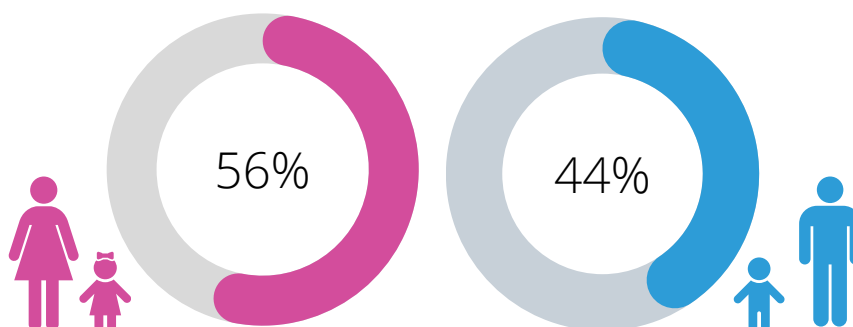


IN NEED OF LEGAL AID



PROVIDED LEGAL AID

140 undocumented individuals beneficiaries of free legal aid were equipped with civil status documents, thus enabling them utilization of other rights and services.





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Mustafa posing with birth certificate

Mustafa's story

Meet Mustafa, a resilient individual who, despite growing up without parents, always knew he was different from those around him due to the lack of a birth certificate and legal identity.

"I was orphaned early, and no one cared to register my birth. Consequently, I am unemployed and without any source of livelihood, since without personal documents, I cannot move freely," expressed Mustafa, wiping away tears, as he sought legal assistance from the legal staff of the CRPK.

Determined to change his situation, Mustafa began to explore the possibility of registering his birth. Aware that the path would be challenging, he was willing to do whatever it took to rightfully claim his place in society. With the unwavering support and guidance of CRPK's legal staff, the process of collecting the necessary documents commenced.

It was a five-year-long journey filled with determination, but finally, the day arrived when Mustafa received his long-awaited birth certificate. At the age of 32, he finally possessed an official identity, a proof of his existence that would open doors to a whole new world of opportunities. Reflecting upon his life, Mustafa acknowledged that the path to his legal identity had been difficult, yet he definitely believed it was a journey worth undertaking. Through this process, he had proven to society that he was more than just a face without a legal identity, but an individual with dreams and aspirations, just like anyone else.

Mustafa's journey serves as a reminder of the meaning of our collective efforts in promoting legal recognition and protecting the rights of those at risk of statelessness. Together, we can continue to make a difference in the lives of individuals, helping them overcome obstacles and fulfill their potential.



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B.B during the application for the temporary residence permit

CLOSE COOPERATION WITH PEOPLE IN NEED

CRPK is open to free legal aid requests of vulnerable communities in need for a legal identity, which they could not solve on their own due to lack of an adequate information on the procedures, complexity of procedures, need for a legal support and unavailability of the evidential documentation.

CRP/K provided support to 5 individuals in need for establishment of the legal status. All of them, with the decision issued by Ministry of Internal Affairs are equipped with the temporary residence ID cards which enables them an access to rights and services.

CRPK, as a part of the civil society organizations and a legal partner of UNHCR, continues to play an important role in cooperation with the authorities in enhancing the legislative framework through provision of the expert opinion on the observed gaps in the current normative framework and potential legal solutions that would enable identification and reduction of persons at risk of statelessness.

Three legal acts are in process of revision. Comments & suggestions are provided with an aim of prevention and reduction of statelessness in accordance with the goals of #Ibelong campaign.



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Awareness session held in Gjilane/Gnjilane

Enhancing the institutions capacities and respond

SWe are delighted to share an exciting update on our collaboration with the Department for the Reintegration of Repatriated Persons and the Integration of Foreigners/MIA. Our joint efforts continue to strengthen as we work towards addressing the integration challenges faced by foreigners on their legal path to establishing their identity. Throughout the year, CRP/K facilitated three awareness sessions in the Gjakove/Djakovica, Gjilane/Gnjilane, and Prishtine/Pristina municipalities.

Aligned with the Agenda 2030 and SDG 16.9, our discussions engaged representatives from various institutions to better understand the core issues related to legal identity, associated rights, and services. By creating a favorable environment for the protection and integration of persons with granted legal status, we strive to achieve the shared vision of a future where every individual's value is recognized, a future where everyone has an identity.



Through three significant events, we joined forces with Civil Registration Agency (CRA) and Municipal Civil Status Offices (MCSOs) across Kosovo to tackle the challenges related to late birth registration. These capacity building events provided a platform for participants to engage in meaningful discussions about the administrative hurdles that contribute to the issue of unregistered births. By exploring legal pathways and sharing best practices, we are working collectively to decrease the number of unregistered births and prevent statelessness. These efforts are crucial in ensuring that every individual's right to identity is recognized and protected.

COLLABORATION WITH THE ACADEMY OF JUSTICE

In October, a comprehensive two-day session for judges and affiliate forces was conducted through a close collaboration with the Academy of Justice

The core focus of the session addressed the issues related to the right to identity and the complexities judges are facing in adjudicating closely allied with the prevention of statelessness. Participants reviewed legislative acts closely interconnected with the international conventions along with their practical application within the current judicial verdicts and decisions.



Two - day session held with judges and affiliate forces



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Moments from pilot initiative held in Fushe Kosove, Mitrovica and Gjakove

HIGHLIGHTING OUR PILOT INITIATIVE FOR THE IDENTIFICATION OF UNREGISTERED INDIVIDUALS

In our continuous effort to address the challenges of civil status registration, we have undertaken a pilot initiative for identification of unregistered individuals in the municipalities of Fushe Kosove/Kosovo Polje, Obiliq/c, Mitrovica/Mitrovica, Gjakove/Djakovica and Gracanice/Gracanica.

This initiative, organized in close cooperation with MCSOs, Centers for Social Welfare (CSW), Municipal Offices for Community and Return (MOCR), and the Committee for Communities, aimed to bridge the gap between relevant stakeholders and unregistered individuals from vulnerable communities.

The success of this initiative was marked by the identification of 14 unregistered individuals. These cases have prompted critical discussions among participants, ensuring a collaborative and committed approach towards resolving issues of civil status registration. The synergy between government institutions, NGOs, and local community leaders or representatives proved to be very important in facilitating the birth registration process.

