

# GENDER RESPONSIVE BUDGETING IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF LUSHNJA

## WATCHDOG REPORT

### CITIZEN'S VOICE



## Watchdog report – Zëri Qytetar (Citizens' Voice)

### ➤ Introduction:

Zëri Qytetar (Citizens' Voice) is a growing, developing, and committed NGO operating in Lushnje since 2013. Its main activities are:

- supporting, protecting and promoting the rights and interests of citizens with a special focus on women, youth, and marginalized groups;
- improving citizens' lives;
- serving as a bridge between the civil society, the community, and the local actors.

Some of the main activities of Zëri Qytetar are:

- Enhancing active participation and volunteering;
- Promoting human rights, tolerance, equal opportunities, democracy, active citizenship and solidarity;
- Promoting the principles of the European Union and strengthen the European identity;
- Promoting, encouraging and supporting youth initiatives and ideas;
- Encouraging the participation of youth in the decision-making processes;
- Developing the creative potential of youth;
- Promoting cultural diversity, and intercultural dialog;
- Fighting against discrimination of women, marginalized groups, etc.

Zëri Qytetar has started to work with Gender Responsive Budgeting since its establishment. Women, their equality, rights and empowerment have been its main focus. Therefore, it has dealt with such issues in several projects.

In 2018, Zëri Qytetar has implemented a project entitled "RIK është zëri ynë" (RIK is Our Voice) funded by Lëviz Albania which aimed to: Prioritize the needs of citizens using the Citizen Reporting Card. It consisted in the completion of questionnaires, filled by citizens of different ages, in two Administrative Units, in the rural areas and the center of the city. After collecting the data and being presented with the priorities of the communities of different areas, the findings were made public, and Zëri Qytetar presented them to the local authorities. After the participation in the public hearings organized for the 2019 budget, about 70% of these priorities became part of the municipal budget and have been/ or will be implemented.

Such priorities include:

#### **DUSHK:**

- Drinking water supply,
- Road reconstruction in Konjat.

#### **BALLAGAT:**

- Hysgjokaj-Ballagat road construction,

- Adding street lighting in the center of the Administrative Unit and in the villages.

#### **ALLKAJ:**

- Improving the city cleaning service and adding containers,
- Road reconstruction in the villages of Toshkez and Zhelizhan.

#### **LUSHNJE:**

- Cleaning of the city canal,
- Reconstruction of "Skënder Libohova" and "Jani Nushi" education institutions,
- Improving city cleaning and adding containers,
- Placing pumps, etc.

#### ➤ **Municipality of Lushnja**

The Municipality of Lushnja is located in the southern part of the western lowland of Albania. Its main activities are:

- serving the communities' highest interests;
- ensuring the citizens' safety and social welfare;
- ensuring the citizens' social equality, equal rights, and environmental protection, etc.

This Municipality is divided into 11 Administrative Units: Lushnjë, Allkaj, Bubullimë, Hysgjokaj, Golem, Dushk, Karbunarë, Ballagat, Fier-Shegan, Kolonjë and Krutje. All the Administrative Units are currently part of Lushnja district and Fier County. After the territorial reform, the new Municipality has now the city of Lushnja and 85 villages under its administration. The area of the new municipality is 372.72 km<sup>2</sup>, the density is 341.91 inhabitants per km<sup>2</sup>. The main economic activities in the Municipality of Lushnja are agriculture and livestock products processing. The size of the arable land in the Municipality of Lushnja is 25384 ha.

In the Municipality of Lushnja, there are about 2417 small businesses (mainly self-employed individuals), as well as 934 large businesses. The economy of the Municipality of Lushnja is mainly focused on agriculture and the industry of agricultural products processing and, as a result, these are the main sectors of employment. However, regarding the large percentage of the population employed in the agricultural sector, we refer to the area of the former communes, because the city of Lushnja itself is focused on the provision of services and trade.

According to the Civil Registration 2021 the population is **130989** individuals, **63787** women and **67202** men. The data is also divided according to each Administrative Unit part of the Municipality, in the table below:

**Table No. 1: Municipality of Lushnja Population by Gender**

Administrative Unit	Population	Men	Women
Lushnje	54989	27609	27380
Allkaj	6424	3363	3061
Ballagat	3937	2038	1899
Bubullimë	7167	3777	3390
Dushk	12471	6439	6032
Fiershegan	9953	5188	4765
Golem	7908	4152	3756
Hysgjokaj	3711	1969	1742
Karbunarë	5710	2991	2719
Kolonjë	8378	4300	4078
Krutje	10341	5376	4965
<b>Total:</b>	<b>130989</b>	<b>67202</b>	<b>63787</b>

Source: Civil Registration, August 2021

### ➤ 2020 Budget

The budget itself is a balancing ratio between revenues and expenditures that have been used to serve the interests of the citizens of Lushnja related to:

- construction,
- rehabilitation and maintenance of roads,
- expansion and maintenance of the network of lighting in public spaces,
- increasing the number of green areas and their maintenance,
- cleaning and processing urban waste,
- administration and maintenance of public cemeteries,
- preservation and development of cultural and artistic values,
- development of sports and social services,
- maintenance of kindergartens and schools,
- rehabilitation of canals and public markets,
- supporting and promoting the businesses, etc.

More details related to the 2020 budget of the Municipality of Lushnja can be found in **Annex A** of this document. However, there is no specific budget item calculated regarding GRB.

### ➤ Gender Equality Policies

The Municipality of Lushnja has a Social Program drafted on 2019-2021 and is working to update the Social Plan for 2021-2023. There is no plan related to gender equality.

### ➤ Mapping Groups of Interest

Group of interest	Needs	How GRB can assist them	Benefits
- 100 women living in rural areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Participation in the budget hearings organized by the Municipality of Lushnja,</li> <li>- Learn how to make their requests during the budgeting process.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Learn about their rights related to GRB,</li> <li>- be assisted by our experts to support and increase their participation in public hearings of the 2022 budget,</li> <li>- present their demands,</li> <li>- their demands will definitely become a priority.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- increased participation of women in gender responsive budgeting;</li> <li>- active participation of women in the process;</li> <li>- learn make their requests and mediate the debate between the Municipality and the group of women on budget priorities and how it responds to their requests.</li> </ul>
- 15 employees of the Municipality of Lushnja	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Lack of training on how to ensure the participation of women in this process</li> </ul>	The municipal employees, such as Social Administrators, will present the requests received throughout the year 2021 of women to the Municipal Council. Any request, coming from the demand of the majority of women will be proposed during the public hearings or sent in writing form to the Municipality.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Increasing their capacities in ensuring the participation of women in the process</li> </ul>

### ➤ 2021 Budget

The budget is a financial instrument which is built on the basis of revenues and expenditures of Municipality of Lushnja, divided according to the type and purpose of use during the budget year after detailed revenue planning. The medium term budget program 2021-2023 considers the inclusion of the fullest possible coverage of the territory of the Municipality of Lushnja in offering public services quality, in order to improve the living conditions of citizens.

The 2021 budget has been drafted considering the best allocation of revenue sources with an increasing trend towards service maintenance, firstly fulfilling the short-term needs of the community with medium-term strategies and the long-term vision for the development of Municipality of Lushnje.

It ensures that the sources of income are distributed equality to all the areas of the territory of the Municipality of Lushnje by making an even distribution regardless of the contribution of income that communities in different areas of it have.

For 2021, in total operating and maintenance costs are calculated to be 476,047,000 ALL. **Annex B** of this report shows the 2021 budget divided by programs.

➤ **Main Findings from the Focus Groups:**

The project was implemented in the 10 rural Administrative Units. The target group was 100 women living in these rural areas as well as 15 Municipal Employees. The target group of women, living in the rural areas in the Municipality of Lushnje, were trained on the responsive budgeting process, while the employees were trained on how to ensure the participation of women in this process.

The participation of women in public hearings in urban areas is low, while in rural areas it is almost non-existent. Women living in these areas did not know GRB was, how they should be involved in the process, their role in the process, the benefits they should have from the local budget, etc. In these circumstances, their voice has never been heard and they have never exercised the right given by the law related to GRB.

After the training and activities carried out within the project implementation, they became more aware and understood their role and importance in being included in the public budget hearings organized each year by the municipality, and also how to present their proposals to the Municipality.

➤ **Recommendations for 2022 Budget:**

The Municipality of Lushnja should:

- focus more on Gender Responsive Budgeting,
- have a separate budget item related to GRB,
- offer more trainings to its staff related to GRB,
- support women and their initiatives,
- offer more facilities for women empowerment and entrepreneurship, etc.

## Annex A

### Municipality of Lushnja 2020 Budget

Nr.	Emertimi i programit	Plani vjetor 2020	Realizimi vjetor 2020		%
			Plani	Fakti	
1	Planifikimi, menaxhimi & Administrimi	294,212	294,212	228,007	77.5
2	Sherbimet e policise vendore	10,223	10,223	9,278	90.8
3	Mbrojtja nga zjarri & mbr.civile	15,526	15,526	15,525	100.0
4	Menaxhimi ujitjes dhe kullimit	47,406	47,406	45,528	96.0
5	Menaxhimi pyjeve dhe kullotat	1,898	1,898	1,719	90.6
6	Rrjeti rrugor	321,492	321,492	194,473	60.5
7	Transporti publik	1,600	1,600	1,077	67.3
8	Menaxhimi i mbetjeve	62,541	62,541	61,302	98.0
9	Programet e mbrojtjes se mjedisit	21,422	21,422	15,285	71.3
10	Sherbimet publike vendore(np)	125,604	125,604	95,321	75.9
11	Sherbime lokale te Ujsjellesit	5,000	5,000	-	-
12	Ndricim rruges	27,634	27,634	20,663	74.8
13	Sport dhe argetim	8,723	8,723	8,394	96.2
13,1	Sport dhe argetim -Futolli	40,000	40,000	39,999	100.0
14	Art dhe kulture	41,127	41,127	34,487	83.9
15	Arsimi baze dhe parashkollor+cerdhe	269,096	269,096	249,682	92.8
16	Arsimi i mesem i pergjithshem	24,471	24,471	24,471	100.0
17	Arsimi profesional	9,249	9,249	6,866	74.2
18	Kujdesi social per PAK	14,183	14,183	12,249	86.4
19	Sigurimi shoqeror (Te moshuarit)	1,920	1,920	900	46.9
20	Strehimi social	7,000	7,000	3,314	47.3
21	Fondi.Rezerve	7,000	7,000	3,493	49.9
22	Fondi i kontigjences	3,000	3,000	-	-
	<b>Shuma.....</b>	<b>1,360,326</b>	<b>1,360,326</b>	<b>1,072,032</b>	<b>78.8</b>

## Annex B

### Municipality of Lushnja 2021 Budget

Nr	PROGRAMET	SHPENZIMET		
		Shuma	Shp.Korrente	Investime
1	Planifikimi,menaxhimi & Administrimi	256,321,200	256,321,200	-
2	Sherbimet e policise vendore	10,326,000	10,326,000	-
3	Mbrojtja nga zjarri & shpetimi	15,706,000	15,706,000	-
3,1	Mbrojtja & emergjenca civile	27,865,000	27,865,000	-
4	Menaxhimi ujitjes dhe kullimit	48,221,000	48,221,000	-
5	Menaxhimi pyjeve dhe kullotat	1,747,000	1,747,000	-
6	Rrjeti rrugor	101,905,840	101,277,000	628,840
7	Transporti publik	1,600,000	1,600,000	-
8	Menaxhimi i mbetjeve	61,818,000	61,818,000	-
9	Programet e mbrojtjes se mjedisit	21,636,000	21,636,000	-
10	Sherbimet publike vendore(np)	108,992,001	108,992,001	-
11	Sherbime lokale te Ujsjellesit	5,000,000	5,000,000	-
12	Ndricim rruges	27,911,000	27,911,000	-
13	Sherbime te Kujdesit Paresor	-	-	-
14	Sport dhe argetim	9,379,810	9,379,810	-
14,1	Sport dhe argetim -Futolli	4,733,630,000	40,000,000	4,693,630,000
15	Art dhe kulture	40,325,000	40,325,000	-
16	Arsimi baze dhe parashkollor+cerdhe	263,047,989	263,047,989	-
17	Arsimi i mesem i pergjithshem	11,382,000	11,382,000	-
18	Arsimi profesional	8,249,000	8,249,000	-
19	Kujdesi social per PAK	15,349,773	14,366,000	983,773
20	Sigurimi shoqeror (Te moshuarit)	1,920,000	1,920,000	-
21	Strehimi social	4,000,000	4,000,000	-
22	Fondi.Rezerve	7,000,000	7,000,000	-
23	Fondi i kontigjences	3,000,000	3,000,000	-
	<b>Shuma</b>	<b>5,786,332,613</b>	<b>1,091,090,000</b>	<b>4,695,242,613</b>





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Gender Budget Watchdog Network  
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