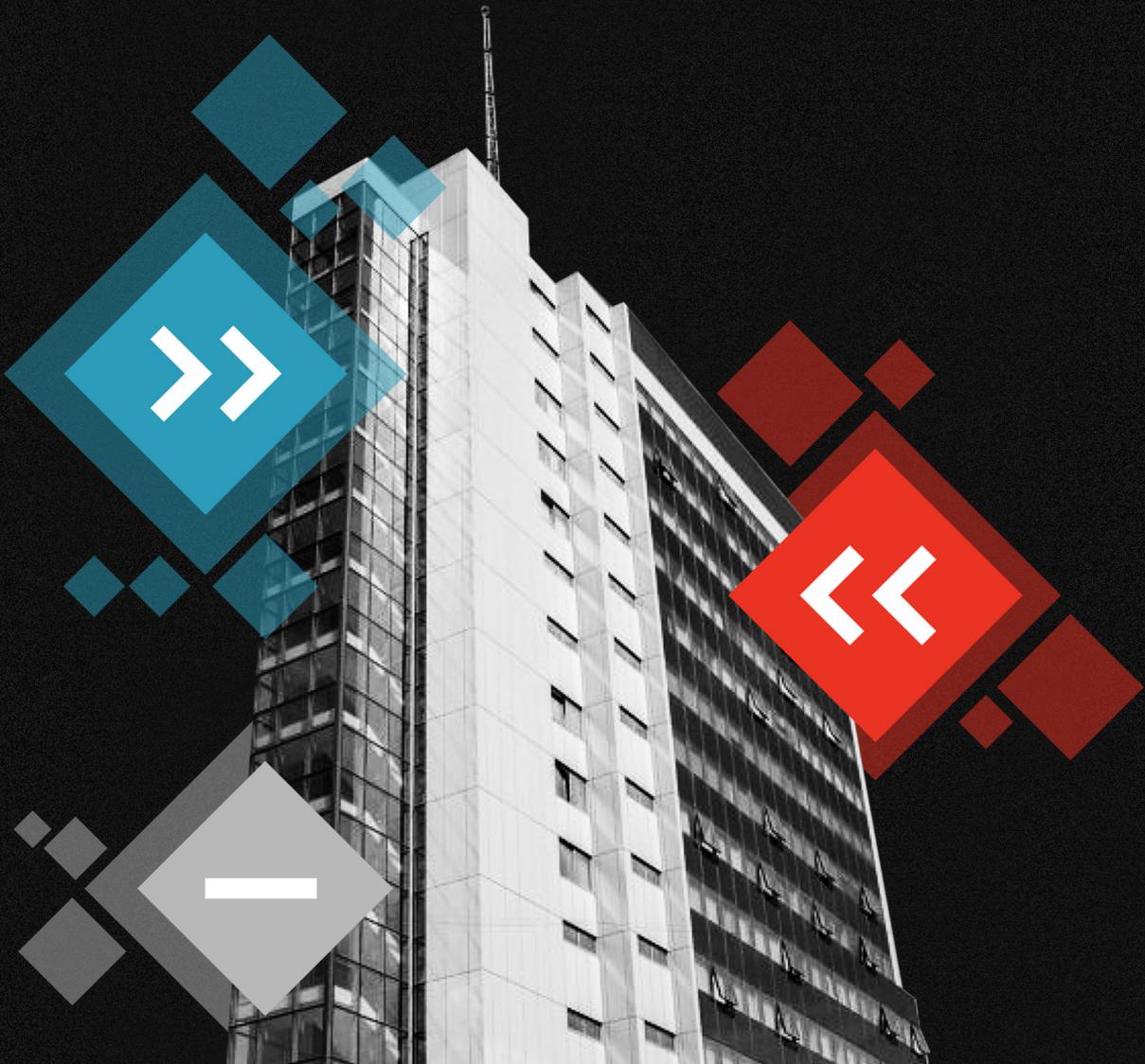




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# **TO WHAT EXTENT HAS THE ELECTORAL PROGRAM OF VETËVENDOSJE BEEN INTEGRATED INTO THE GOVERNMENT PROGRAM?**





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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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Following the national elections held in Kosovo on February 14th 2021, Vetëvendosje emerged as the winning party, and subsequently formed the government in March. The magnitude of Vetëvendosje's electoral results, for the first time in the period post-1999 allowed a political party in Kosovo to form the government with the lone support of political parties which represent the non-majority communities. Despite the fact that due to the ongoing global pandemic the electoral offer of most political parties was dominated by objectives related to combating consequences of Covid-19, both regarding public health and economic recovery, in the recent years Vetëvendosje's platform as the lead opposition party had been built around the goals of combating corruption and enhancing rule of law in Kosovo institutions. As such, Vetëvendosje's political discourse had been centered around the necessity to implement deep changes within Kosovo institutions, through cross-cutting reforms. Indeed, such an ambitious platform naturally requires a detailed and well-developed Government Program, which would properly prescribe and anchor the work of the institutions over the next four-year mandate.

Government Programs are the lynchpin which drives the direction of governments and daily work of respective institutions, given that they serve as a base for short-term and long-term policy decision-making. Ideally, the Government Program should represent an extension of the electoral

program, which was voted by the citizens at the ballots. Yet, conversations surrounding the content of governing programs, and the nexus between the latter and electoral promises, have been underdeveloped in Kosovo thus far; to illustrate such a point, serves the fact that this report is one of the first attempts to conduct a more structured analysis. Based on this, the report seeks to address such shortcoming, by answering the following question: to what extent has the electoral program of Vetëvendosje, as the winning party from the recent elections, been integrated in the Program of the Government of the Republic of Kosovo 2021-2025?

To do so, a set of electoral promises from a wide range of sectorial fields have been analysed in relation to the government program, namely economy, public health, justice, addressing war crimes, public safety, foreign affairs etc. Overall, the main findings of this short report showcase that an important portion of electoral promises, which were part of Vetëvendosje's electoral offer have not been integrated in the Government Program. In addition, the report also highlights that a number of promises consisting of monetary figures which were part of the electoral program have been removed or modified in the Government Program in order to exclude the specific budget costs; this points to the fact that these promises in the electoral program were not financially sustainable to be included in the governing program, in turn to

be implemented into concrete policies and investments.

This report seeks to increase accountability of the citizens towards public institutions and political parties, and in this vein contribute to the public discussion revolving around electoral promises and government decision-making. As such, the report is primarily directed to Kosovo's citizens and political parties. The data has been selected and categorized by Lëvizja FOL, while the report has been prepared by Prishtina Institute for Political Studies (PIPS).

## **ELECTORAL PROGRAM OF VETËVENDOSJE**

For the purpose of analyzing the extent of compliance between the electoral program and government program, a set of planned policies were extracted from the electoral program of Vetëvendosje. The policy promises were selected based on the importance that they played not only for the program, but the electoral campaign in general. This also entails that these promises were more loudly presented in different public appearances, henceforth they represented the foundation of Vetëvendosje's electoral offer for the citizens in these elections. One should take into account the fact that there might be promises which are incorporated in the Work Plan, however, the report does not cover the content of this document.

Following an initial overview, based on the structure of the electoral program the promises were selected and categorized into two temporal categories (the current phase and the future), across ten different sectorial fields. In total, for the purpose of this report 71 different promises from the electoral program of Vetëvendosje were considered, thus providing the data for the analysis.

Following the selection process, in the next phase these policy promises were compared with the content of the Government Program and each of them was evaluated based on three categories. The three categories should be comprehended as follows: Integrated (**Blue Colour**) entails that the promise has been identified within the Government Program; Partly Integrated (**Gray Colour**) entails that the promise has been modified and changed, but nonetheless can be found in the Government Program; on the other hand, Not Integrated (**Red Colour**) points that the promise has not been found in the Government Program.

In the following, these promises are presented and categorized in one of the three aforementioned clusters. For each policy promise which has been categorized in the Integrated or Partly integrated clusters, the exact page number in the Government Program is also provided.

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## SUMMARY OF VETËVENDOSJE ELECTORAL PROGRAM FOR THE NATIONAL ELECTIONS

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The program of Vetëvendosje was separated into two main timeline categories: (1) the current phase (Present), (2) the future

### PRESENT

Regarding the current phase (e tashmja) Vetëvendosje proposed three immediate interventions:

-  Vaccination of at least 60% of the total population of Kosovo (page 6)
-  Training and capacity building for the health care staff (page 6)
-  Immediate talks with countries in the region, especially Albania in joint efforts to deal with COVID-19.

### FUTURE

The future (e ardhmja) section was separated into categories which will be listed in accordance to one of the colours distinguishing their status in the Government Program. The main section of the future entails some promises regarding the economy of Kosovo, as such the following promises have been selected:

-  Create the Sovereign Fund (Fondi Sovran) (page 6)
-  Create the Development Bank of the Republic of Kosovo (Banka Zhvillimore e Republikës së Kosovës) (page 9)
-  The Privatization Agency will be liquidated and the assets will be given to the Sovereign Fund (page 9)
-  Ensure contractual employment that does not surpass more than 40 regular hours per week

-  Increase the minimum wage to 250 Euro for 40 hours a month (page 8)
-  Maternity leave will be in total 12 months, the state will contribute to the payment and the opportunity will be available to both parents. For unemployed mothers, the state will provide a payment of 250 Euro for the first 6 months of maternity leave (page 11)
-  Guaranteed Employment Scheme (Skema e Punësimit të Garantuar) for aged 16-18 (page 26)
-  Provide 2000 grants to young entrepreneurs with a total amount of 20 million euro destined for rent and equipment
-  Create the 'Fourth Grant' (Granti i 4) for capital investment through which for the next four years, municipalities will be allocated more than 600 Million Euro (page 23)
-  Implement the program for additions for children  
20 euro additional pay for each child under 2  
10 euro additional pay for each child under 16 (page 11)
-  Social scheme for families with low income  
50 euro per child for families with annual income of lower than 7000  
100 euro per child for families with annual income of lower than 6000  
150 euro per child for families with annual income of lower than 5000
-  Build 160 kindergartens
-  Finance the agriculture sector with up to 100 million annually
-  Remove the border green card (kartoni i gjelbërt) for Kosovo's diaspora
-  Prioritize sport by supporting Multifunctional Sport Centers with an annual budget of 15 million euro
-  Build the largest Multifunctional Sport Center in a location near the capital city Prishtina
-  Fix the issue of sanitation by 2025
-  Functionalize the Airport of Gjakova

The rest of the electoral program of Vetëvendosje was separated into ten specific sections which are presented below. The following promises have been analysed and categorised:



## 1. SCHOOL – ECONOMY – UNIVERSITY

- ◆ Remove the payment for early education for children that come from low income families (partly integrated, page 42)
- ◆ Remove differential grading for classes 1-4 and replace it with formative grading (partly integrated, page 42)
- ◆ Create teachers libraries in each school (page 42)
- ◆ Provide affordable housing to teachers (page 42)
- ◆ All vocational schools will be equipped with practical workshops (page 43)
- ◆ Establish the ‘Research Fund’ available for Universities (page 44)
- ◆ Ensure re-membership in The European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA) and The European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR) (page 44)
- ◆ Remove the semestral payment for public universities (page 44)
- ◆ Ensure 1000 scholarships for women that seek to study technical sciences, both in the country and abroad (page 42)



## 2. PUBLIC HEALTH

- ◆ Functionalize the public health insurance (page 10)
- ◆ Budget the essential list of medications
- ◆ An additional 40 million euro added annually to the healthcare budget



### 3. JUSTICE

- »» The high hierarchy of the justice system will undergo the vetting process (page 12)
- »» Strengthen the mechanism for quality legal aid for citizens (page 15)
- «« Amend the Law on Free Legal Aid
- »» Create the Administrative Court and the Labor Court (page 13)
- «« Create a new electronic system for managing cases
- «« Draft the Law on the Protection of Civil Rights
- «« Add 'Investigating and Treating War Crimes' as part of the curricula in the Academy of Justice
- »» The draft law that regulates the status of the administration of the justice system to be processed in the Assembly of Kosovo



### 4. ADDRESSING WAR CRIMES

- »» Prepare the lawsuit against Serbia in the International Court of Justice (page 14)
- «« Ensure membership of Kosovo in Geneva Convention and the Convention Against Genocide
- »» Establish, by law, the Institute for Investigating War Crimes (page 14)
- «« Establish a permanent Commission in the Assembly focusing on War Crimes (crimes against humanity and genocide)
- «« Establish a special unit within the Agency for Forensics, in order to scientifically verify facts and evidence related to Kosovo War
- «« Approve specific legislation to protect the identity and data of war crime victims in Kosovo

- ◀◀ Establishing a special branch / department within the University of Prishtina, as part of the Faculty of Law, focusing on the education and specialization of professionals on these issues



## 5. PUBLIC SAFETY

- ◊ Start the reform within the Kosovo Police immediately after the approval of the Law on Early Retirement of Police Officers (partly, page 16)
- ◀◀ Recruit over 2000 Police Officers
- ◀◀ Provide health and life insurance for Police Officers
- ◀◀ High hierarchy of the Kosovo Police will undergo vetting
- ◀◀ Train police officers in dealing with minorities and the prevention of gender based and domestic violence



## 6. DEFENSE AND KOSOVO SECURITY FORCE

- ▶▶ Commence the preparation for Kosovo's membership in the Adriatic Charter (page 53)
- ◀◀ Cooperate with NATO armies in ensuring the completion of Kosovo Security Forces
- ◀◀ Prepare the combined Military Service Plan, consisting of a timeframe of 3+3 months



## 7. FOREIGN AFFAIRS

- ◆>> Deep reforms in Diplomatic Service, grade verification, as well as strengthening the Academy of Diplomacy within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Diaspora (MFAD) (page 54)
- ◆<< Return of the Ministry of European Integration as a Ministry within the Kosovo Government
- ◆<< Joint parliamentary and government commissions on national security, foreign affairs and natural resources



## 8. ART INSTITUTIONS AND ARTISTS

- ◆>> Art institutions will have independent and sustainable funds (page 45)
- ◆<< National Theatre and local theatres will have guaranteed regular financing and additional fund for artistic projects
- ◆>> Establish the Opera and Ballet Theatre (page 45)
- ◆>> Build the New National Theatre (page 45)
- ◆<< Create new city cinemas
- ◆— Treat the Museum of History of Nature, Museum of Prishtina's Prison and Archeological Museum with priority (partly integrated, page 48)



## 9. CULTURAL HERITAGE

- Establish the fund for emergency interventions to save over 100 Kosovo assets listed as 'heritage in risk' (partly integrated, page 47)
- Document all sources of cultural heritage (page 47)
- Include cultural heritage in spatial planning (Kosovo Spatial Plan, Kosovo Zonal Map, Cadastral Registry) (page 47)



## 10. SPORT

- Joint programs of the sport sector with education and healthcare sectors (page 49)
- ◀◀ Build the National Stadium
- ◀◀ Build the Olympic Pool

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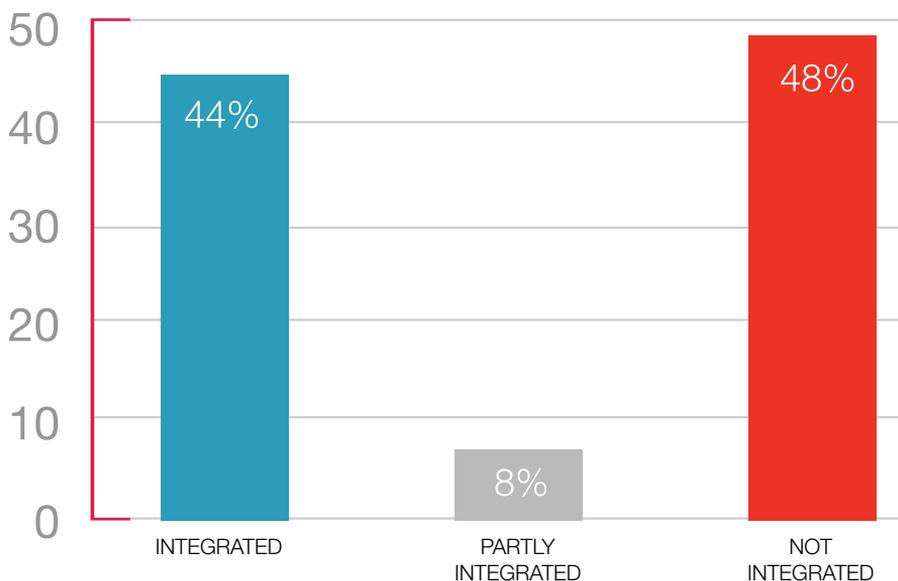
## ELECTORAL PROGRAM VS. GOVERNMENT PROGRAM

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As part of the data analysis process the electoral promises were compared in regard to the content of the Government Program and the results show that a larger number of these policy promises have not been integrated in the latter. As the table below shows, there are 34 policy promises which have not been integrated in the Government Program, compared to 31 that have been integrated in the document, while 6 policy promises were partly integrated.



On the other hand, there are also similar figures if these promises are calculated in the basis of percentage. As the chart below shows, around 48% of policy promises were not integrated in the Government Program, compared to around 44% which have been integrated in the document. At the same time, around 8% of these policy promises were modified or changed, as such they were only partly integrated in the program.



The level of integration of selected electoral the government program, calculated in percentage

What is interesting is the fact that a number of policy promises in the electoral program were followed with investment figures, yet this was not the case with the Government Program. For instance, a number of promises with important investment figures can not be found in the Government Program, such as: providing 2000 grants to young entrepreneurs with an amount of 20 million euro for rent and equipment; financing the agriculture sector with up to 100 million annually; or additional 40 million euro added annually to the health care budget.

In a similar vein, some other promises such as creating the Fourth Grant for municipalities, has been stripped of the fee to be allocated (600 million euro), thus incorporating only the promise in the Government Program. In general, these changes in terms of budget investments point to the fact that some aspects of the electoral program were designed and offered to the citizens in absence of proper financial planning.

While there is a lack of data to compare these figures with the compliance of electoral programs of previous governments with their governing programs, in relation to the research question that was presented in the first section, the findings show that there is a gap between the policy promises that were part of Vetëvendosje electoral program and Government Program. The data that has been used for this report shows that there are important discrepancies between the two documents, as such an important portion of electoral promises are not likely to be transformed into concrete policy-decisions during the governing mandate. In order to ensure that the electoral offer -and also citizen's vote- becomes transformed into concrete policies, the quality of electoral programs from the political parties in Kosovo must be improved. This entails focusing on offering more realistic policy and financial promises, which have a higher chance to construct and be transformed into the Government Program.

## CONCLUSION

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This short report has discussed the content of the Government Program of the Republic of Kosovo 2021-2025, in relation to the electoral program of Vetëvendosje, which has formed the government shortly after winning the elections in February 2021. For this purpose, a set of 71 electoral promises were extracted from the electoral program and then compared with the government program, based on three categories (integrated, partly integrated and not integrated). The results showcase that the highest group of these promises is not integrated in the governing program, constituting a figure of around 48%.

In order to better deconstruct the Government Program, in the next phase it would be interesting to analyse the percentage of compliance of the current government program with past government programs. This would better allow to trace the content of the government program, thus allowing the space to analyse if the Government Program has more compliance with the electoral program of the political subject or with the past government programs.

At the same time, another research avenue would be exploring the implementation level and method of the Government Program; namely even though Vetëvendosje had promised to remove the green card payment for diaspora members entering Kosovo, in the recent weeks this promise was implemented, by covering the costs from the state budget. In this vein, the payment was not removed per se, but it was redirected to be covered by the taxpayer's money, rather than being removed which was the initial promise. As such, shedding light on the level of implementation and how the electoral promises were implemented, could also represent an interesting puzzle for future policy research.

NOTE: DATA WAS COLLECTED UNTIL JUNE 2021 AND THE PUBLICATION WAS DRAFTED DURING JULY 2021 . CONSEQUENTLY, THE PUBLICATION DOES NOT INCLUDE SUBSEQUENT GOVERNMENT DECISIONS.

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