

KOSOVO DOCTORS CHAMBER OVER THE YEARS



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The idea to establish the Kosovo Doctors Chamber (KDC) came as a response to the need to implement the 100-year-old concept of self-administration of the medical profession, which has been applied since the beginning of the last century.

This concept continued to develop in democratic states, while in the communist bloc it died out as it opposed the centralized concept and the idea of control of everything by the state and the party.

Within the reform process, the Ministry of Health is committed to bring this concept to life and, through the organization of intensive workshops and discussions, possible modalities for the establishment of Chambers of Health Professionals have been discussed and analyzed. Among the experts and representatives involved in these processes, a particular recognition goes to Dr. Ramin Parsa Parsi, Dr. Salih Berisha and Mr. Domen Podnar from the German Medical Association, who provided significant inputs and deep support for the process of creating this structure as part of the modern concept of self-governance of health professionals.

As a result of continuous efforts and ongoing dialogue, Law No. 04/L-150 on Chambers of Health Professionals was adopted by the Assembly of the Republic of Kosovo on May 30, 2013.

The Law on Chambers and the inauguration of the KDC

The adoption of the Law on CHPs was an important step towards building a specialized and professional institution that aims to represent, protect and develop the interests and responsibilities of Kosovo doctors. In a sensitive sector like the health sector, which has a major impact on the well-being of citizens, it is essential to have a united voice that represents and protects the profession and professionals in this field, as

best as possible.

In November 2013, the inauguration of the Kosovo Doctors Chamber took place, an important event that was accompanied by the election of the President of the KDC, Prof. Dr. Zylfije Hundozi. The inauguration ceremony was a solemn event, attended by representatives from the Medical Chambers from Germany, Austria, Hungary, Croatia, Montenegro, Bosnia and Herzegovina, North Macedonia, and Albania, as well as senior representatives of diplomatic missions in Kosovo.

The effort to operationalize the Doctors Chamber faced great challenges that were addressed by the first leadership. The law governing the Chambers of Health Professionals provided for the transfer of powers from the Ministry of Health (MoH) to the Chambers of Health Professionals during the first three years of their establishment. However, facing political-administrative obstacles was inevitable and, during the first mandate, the Doctors Chamber was unable to successfully undertake the main mission to create an independent institution that represented the medical profession in Kosovo with dignity.

In the face of challenges, during the first mandate, the Kosovo Doctors Chamber took essential steps to improve the organization of its activity. This process included the adoption of the Statute of the Chamber and the implementation of several key regulations. In addition, the KDC has managed to build a significant presence on the international stage, participating in numerous important events.

However, due to the failure to initiate the membership process for doctors and, also, due to the lack of key powers guaranteed by law for the Chambers of Health Professionals, during the first mandate the Kosovo Doctors Chamber was unable to ensure functional and financial independence and stability.



Competences transferred from the Ministry of Health to Kosovo Doctors Chamber

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Establishment of bodies and strengthening of the Chamber

After a successful election process in December 2017, in the first Assembly of the second term of the Kosovo Doctors Chamber, the elections for the new president of the KDC took place. The successful candidate was Dr. Pleurat Sejdiu, and with the arrival of new structures in the Kosovo Doctors Chamber, a new period for the development of the KDC began.

During the first mandate of the Kosovo Doctors Chamber, all performed activities were made possible with the financial support of LuxDev's KSV/017 Project. This project provided significant and continuous financial support to enable the conduct of the organization's activities. This support was continued during the second mandate and is still continuing, but this time to carry out some important strategic activities, which will be mentioned in more detail below.

In 2018, the Doctors Chamber was given its original form, an important period where the basic bodies of the Chamber were established and the process of membership of doctors was started. Also, during this period, the powers of Professional Ethical Oversight, Continuing Professional Education, as well as Doctor Licensing and Re-Licensing were transferred from the Ministry of Health to the Doctors Chamber. In this regard, the KDC has begun to examine the first cases of Ethical-Professional Oversight, has financially supported the organization of continuing professional education activities, has begun the process of licensing and re-licensing of KDC member doctors. In the same year, the KDC also started the process of equipping members with unique facsimiles for all licensed members, a process that was also taken as an example by sister organizations in several countries.

During this year, the Kosovo Doctors Chamber has managed to join the Standing Committee of European Doctors (CPME) as an observer. Likewise, the KDC chair, Dr. Pleurat Sejdiu has managed to secure a space within the HCUK complex for the Chamber's offices, which were renovated through financial support from LuxDev.

At the same time, the professional service of the KDC has been developed, establishing the necessary structure to support the implementation of all activities provided by law.

In 2018, taking into account the above-mentioned activities, the Kosovo Doctors Chamber managed to build independence and financial stability, thus allowing it to successfully present a draft budget for 2019 at the next session of the Assembly, including all activities foreseen for the following year.

In 2019, after the stabilizing and organizational year, the KDC marked the beginning of concrete steps in the field of professional activities, such as the organization of annual Congresses attended by approximately 2,000 doctors from various fields. With this comprehensive philosophy and multi-disciplinary approach, the annual Congresses continued with core themes planned on an annual basis. In these congresses, doctors had the opportunity to attend scientific presentations by local and foreign lecturers. In addition to the lectures, during the congress, workshops were also held by experts in the relevant fields on various topics.

In the framework of continuous professional education, the KDC financed and co-organized over 60 congresses, conferences, workshops, roundtables and various professional gatherings.

Also, during 2019, at the initiative of the KDC chair, Dr. Pleurat Sejdiu, the first talks on the construction of a common facility for all Chambers of Health Professionals (CHPs), which would be financed by LuxDev's "Support for the Health Sector" Project (KSV/017), were initiated. After many challenges, this project's implementation only began in early 2023, thanks to the

commitment of the Mayor of Prishtina, Mr. Përparim Rama, and support from the Municipal Assembly of Prishtina, which during the session held in December 2022 voted on the use of the plot for the construction of a common facility for all Chambers of Health Professionals. This project will be realized with financial support from the Government of the Duchy of Luxembourg through the LuxDev Development Agency.

"Revista Mjeku" (Doctor Magazine)

2020 brought special challenges due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Government of Kosovo declared a state of emergency for public health and took measures to prevent the spread of the virus. As a consequence of this, the KDC was forced to suspend some initiatives/projects and continued work in its offices respecting the anti-COVID-19 measures.

On March 30, 2021, on International Doctors' Day, the KDC published the "Revista Mjeku" (Doctor Magazine). This magazine is published for the first time in Kosovo, and deals with various current events from Kosovar medicine and beyond. "Revista Mjeku" (Doctor Magazine) comes as a result of the vision and commitment of the Kosovo Doctors Chamber for an informative magazine dedicated to Kosovar doctors and other potential readers interested in Kosovo health news. The Editorial Board is made up of members who are united by their great professional and academic background, but also by the sense of obligation to always take a "step forward" in Kosovar healthcare.

After a successful partnership, in December 2021, the Kosovo Doctors Chamber and the LuxDev Project signed an agreement on the delegation of funds and the implementation of activities related to building the capacities of the medical staff of the

General Hospitals in Gjilan and Prizren. This program is designed in accordance with the human resources management plan of the two hospitals for the 2022-2026 period. Through the training provided, the doctors of these two hospitals will have the opportunity to advance their professional skills and knowledge. This initiative will help increase the quality of healthcare and progress



Sining the agreement for the plot of Professional Medical Chambers

of the medical sector as a whole.

2021 was marked by the organization of the Elections for the third mandate of the Kosovo Doctors Chamber (KDC). As the results of these elections, Dr. Pleurat Sejdiu was re-elected for a second term at the head of the KDC, continuing the teamwork as in the previous 4 years.

The Obelisk and Professionals Memorial Day

On February 16, at the entrance of the HCUK, the Obelisk memorial monument dedicated to all health professionals was inaugurated. This project was realized at the initiative of the KDC chair, Dr. Pleurat Sejdiu, and in cooperation with all Chambers of Health Professionals of Kosovo. Also, by the Chambers of Health Professionals designated February 16 as "Memorial Day of Health Professionals of the Republic of Kosovo".

The launch of the implementation of the Information System and the interactive da-

tabase, which will integrate all the processes of the Kosovo Doctors Chamber (KDC), is an important step that has received the support of the LuxDev Project. This system is expected to enter in operation in September 2023 and aims to bring about a transformation in the way the KDC manages and monitors data, making it more accessible and up-to-date. This innovative intervention will enable a better coordination of activities, increase transparency, and improve work efficiency. This is one of the key initiatives that will help the KDC become more productive and provide a better service to its members and the medical community at large.

The Chamber Today

Currently, the Doctors Chamber has 5,784 active members, who regularly interact with the Doctors Chamber regarding various services.

While the construction of the new facility and the implementation of the new digital

system are pending, the KDC continues to make progress and respond to new challenges. In this special period, the KDC is proud of its achievements and on September 18 will celebrate its 10th anniversary together with international friends and local stakeholders.



The obelisk in honor of Health Professionals who lost their lives during the exercise of their duties at different stages