

Roundtable on “Transparency and Accountability in the Healthcare Sector”



On 7 March 2024, it was held the roundtable on transparency and accountability in the healthcare sector at the Tirana International Hotel, during which the association “Together for Life” presented the report entitled “Compulsory Health Insurance Fund – Does the Scheme Meet Actual Healthcare Needs”, supported by the National Endowment for Democracy (NED).

In her remarks, Ms. Eglantina Bardhi, Executive Director, emphasized that the healthcare sector continues to face significant challenges, particularly in terms of insufficient funding, and stressed the importance of ensuring that the recommendations put forward are duly considered and addressed by the relevant institutions.

Ms Aurora Sulçe presented the key findings of the report, highlighting issues related to poor planning, revenue instability, and the lack of transparency within the Compulsory Health Insurance Fund. She pointed to existing gaps in achieving universal coverage of healthcare needs across all categories of the population and emphasized the need to improve the efficiency of fund utilization.

The report concludes with a series of recommendations aimed at revising the healthcare scheme model by adopting a more solidarity-based approach that would ensure full healthcare coverage for the entire population, rather than limiting coverage to contributing categories.

The recommendations also include a comprehensive reform of the financing model for public hospitals, based on performance-based budgeting and the quality of services provided; improving the transparency and quality of monitoring reports; and increasing transparency in the fund budgeting process by publishing funding sources, including each hospital’s own revenues, together with relevant quality indicators such as bed occupancy rates, the number of hospital admissions, and readmission rates.

Furthermore, the report recommends increasing public expenditure on healthcare, noting that the relatively low level of public healthcare spending—10% of total public expenditure—combined with the

high level of out-of-pocket payments of 56%, results in inadequate financial coverage under the scheme and creates conditions conducive to abuse and a high level of informality in the sector.

The Chair of the Committee on Labour, Social Affairs and Health of the Parliament of Albania, Ms. Zheni Gjergji, together with Member of Parliament Mr. Petrit Vasili, highlighted the persistent challenges associated with the low level of funding allocated to healthcare. They emphasized shortcomings in budget planning and uncertainties surrounding the new law on hospital autonomy, while also discussing potential legislative initiatives aimed at improving the system.

In his remarks, Mr. Fatjon Çajupi, representative of the Network of Anti-Corruption Coordinators, focused on the shared mission of ensuring transparent practices and promoting accountability through the submission of recommendations to the relevant institutions. He also highlighted preventive and awareness-raising measures concerning the consequences of corruption and irregularities.

The meeting was attended by members of the Committee on Labor, Social Affairs and Health, as well as representatives of the Albanian Supreme Audit Institution (ALSAI), the Compulsory Health Insurance Fund, the Health Care Quality Assurance Agency, the State Social Service, the Network of Anti-Corruption Coordinators, the Commissioner for Protection from Discrimination, other independent institutions, healthcare professionals and experts, civil society organizations, and the media.