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Blerina Istrefi

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By: Blerina ISTREFI, Project Manager, Group for Legal and Political Studies

Assisted voting is a mechanism designed to guarantee the exercise of the right to vote for persons who, due to disabilities, are unable to exercise this right independently. In Kosovo, this form of voting is recognized and regulated within the electoral legislation, as part of efforts to ensure inclusiveness and equality in democratic processes.

Paragraph 5 of Article 89 of the [Law on General Elections in Kosovo](#) regulates and guarantees assisted voting in cases of persons with disabilities. Specifically, this article concludes as follows: “For this type of voting, the CEC shall set the criteria by electoral regulation.” Apparently, this led the Central Election Commission (CEC) to take a [decision](#) regarding assisted voting in the most recent local elections in November 2025, specifically during the second round. According to this decision, in the second round of voting, the CEC issued an Administrative Instruction for the assisted voting procedure, in which, among other things, it was required that persons voting with assistance must possess a medical document proving the health condition of the person from this category. This decision has sparked a debate about the balance between electoral process integrity and respect for the fundamental rights of voters.

CEC justified this decision during a [conference](#) in November with the need to prevent abuses of assisted voting. It is understandable that electoral institutions in Kosovo have a responsibility to prevent abuses, but not by creating new barriers for voters who are already in a disadvantaged position. This requires broader dialogue with organizations of persons with disabilities, a review of existing practices, and an approach that places the voter and their dignity at the center, not just the procedure. Comparative practices in other countries show that approaches to assisted voting differ in writing, but a common element is the effort not to condition the exercise of the right to vote on burdensome or stigmatizing procedures. In many electoral systems, a declaration of the need for assistance by the voter is considered sufficient, while the focus is placed on monitoring the process and training election personnel, rather than filtering voters through medical documentation.

When comparing to other countries’ practices and regulations, in Albania, Article 108 of the [Electoral Code in Albania](#) guarantees the right to assisted voting without requiring a medical document. Article 143 of the [Belgium Electoral Code](#) clearly regulates assisted voting for persons with disabilities, without requiring any medical certificate. In Germany, according to Article 57 of the [Federal Electoral Regulations](#), assisted voting is regulated without requiring any medical evidence. All these codes and laws in the mentioned electoral systems clearly regulate the entire assisted voting procedure and do not contain legal gaps like the Law on Elections in Kosovo, where according to Article 89, the CEC is granted the right to set criteria through electoral regulation.

In the general elections held on 28 December 2025 in Kosovo, the legal gap allowed the CEC to issue yet [another decision](#) applicable to these elections and enabled it to make changes to the assisted voting procedures. Article 99 of the Law on General Elections in Kosovo divides voters with special needs into different categories, which also includes elderly persons. For the 28 December 2025 elections, CEC decided that citizens over 80 years of age, who applied to vote from home as voters with special needs would not need to present a disability certificate or medical diagnosis. Based on this latest decision for the elderly category, it is implied that people

over 80 who did not register to vote from home by 21 December 2025 ([the deadline set by the CEC](#)) were required to have a medical document proving the need for assistance during voting in the 28 December elections. Even for this decision, the CEC did not provide a detailed explanation that would clearly show how this decision was reached. Most importantly, the decision was taken at the meeting on 16 December 2025, while the deadline to register for voting from home was set for 21 December 2025. The question of whether five days is enough time for citizens to first be informed about decision, then learn about the registration deadline, and finally complete the registration remains a serious concern. The possession of a medical document is the same requirement that was introduced during the second round of the most recent local elections for persons with disabilities, a requirement which, according to the [new regulations](#), did not apply in the 28 December elections. Article 5 in this regulation does not require a medical proof as in the second round of the last local elections held in November 2025. However, this article requires that for assisted voting, the voter's disability must be demonstrated through "relevant documents". This requirement remains debatable: what is meant by relevant documents? Is a relevant document the medical proof? Or a certificate from an institution? Therefore, the space for discussion and interpretation remains present because there is a legal gap in the norm.

This clearly shows that the requirement for medical proof in the second round of the last local elections, came from a decision that was not well considered, because the procedural change did not result from an actual problem, but from the aim of preventing possible abuse that in reality did not occur. The prevention of abuses even with this decision remains debatable. The competence of the commissioner to examine the medical certificate and verify it in order to allow someone to vote with assistance is subject to discussion and raises multiple questions. All these issues raised led to changes in the regulation for the elections of 28 December 2025, even though for the reasons mentioned above, the regulation itself remains debatable.

In this context, such decisions risk shifting the focus from guaranteeing access to voting to controlling the voter, treating assisted voting more as a problem to be limited than as a right to be protected. Frequent changes to voting procedures that are not sufficiently consulted on, and for which proper information is lacking, negatively impact the guarantee of a democratic voting process. Although concerns about the integrity of the process are legitimate, solutions must be balanced and must not compromise the essence of the right to political participation.



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