

The "Functional Zone" model in local government reform in Albania, how the criteria were implemented Case study Gjirokaster Region

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Abstract

In July 2014, the Parliament of the Republic of Albania approved the local government reform, reducing an ineffective amount in the provision of services to the communities of local units (municipalities and communes) from 365 to 61 municipalities.

Today, almost 6 years after its implementation, according to the Albanian institutions (KLSH) and international institutions that have analysed the effects of the reform, have noticed a series of weaknesses in the implementation of the reform.

Most importantly, the reform was approved without political consensus (Majority-opposition) and as a result the opposition has promised to reconsider it if it comes to power. In practice such major issues with strong political, economic, and social impact to be effective and long-lived should have been done with the widest possible consensus

Despite the interest of the opposition in the context of its advantage and disadvantage in relation to the political interest of the new administrative-territorial configuration in the electoral process, this article aims to analyse the reform in the context of implementing the criteria of the "Functional Zone" model by the government bringing weaknesses in the practical functioning of the new local units.

Keywords: The "Functional Zone", local government, Albania, Gjirokaster Region.

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