



**OPEN  
GOV  
HUB AL**

Working Together to Empower Citizens

**Edison FRANGU**

Founder and Executive Director  
of Open Gov Hub Albania

# Who we are?

Open Gov Hub – Albania is an affiliate hub of the Open Gov Hub – Washington DC.

The mission of OPEN GOV HUB ALBANIA is to promote the creation of an open society through creating opportunities and enhancing the interaction between different sectors and organizations, and to serve as a bridge to establish cooperation that is needed to address global challenges of our time, in particular those related to good and open governance.

OPEN GOV HUB ALBANIA aims to contribute to the development of the civil society that will play an ineradicable role in the political and economic development of the Republic of Albania (and within the Western Balkans, Mediterranean, European and global contexts). The objective of OPEN GOV HUB ALBANIA is to bring together the skills and resources of researchers, data analysts, communicators, technicians, lawyers including journalists in order to encourage and promote the outstanding potential of this thematic model of cooperation across borders for an open society, and promote the use of best practices that are in place in various countries.



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The Center operates according to the following main pillars:

- a) To provide services to enable essential resources such as office space and for the organization of meetings for non-profit organizations operating in the field of open government;
- b) To enable the cultivation of a culture of community support for governance;
- c) To help advocate for open governance organizations to collaborate, to provide innovative ideas and to learn together to have a greater collective impact;
- d) To provide space for non-profit organizations as a collaboration opportunity and space for people who want to make a change.

In line with its objectives, the Center will organize conferences and seminars, trainings, refinement and updating courses, will promote studies and research laboratories, will participate in projects with such goals, will publish papers and studies, and it will conduct surveys, collect and facilitate the dissemination of information related to the field of open government.



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# Our new premises

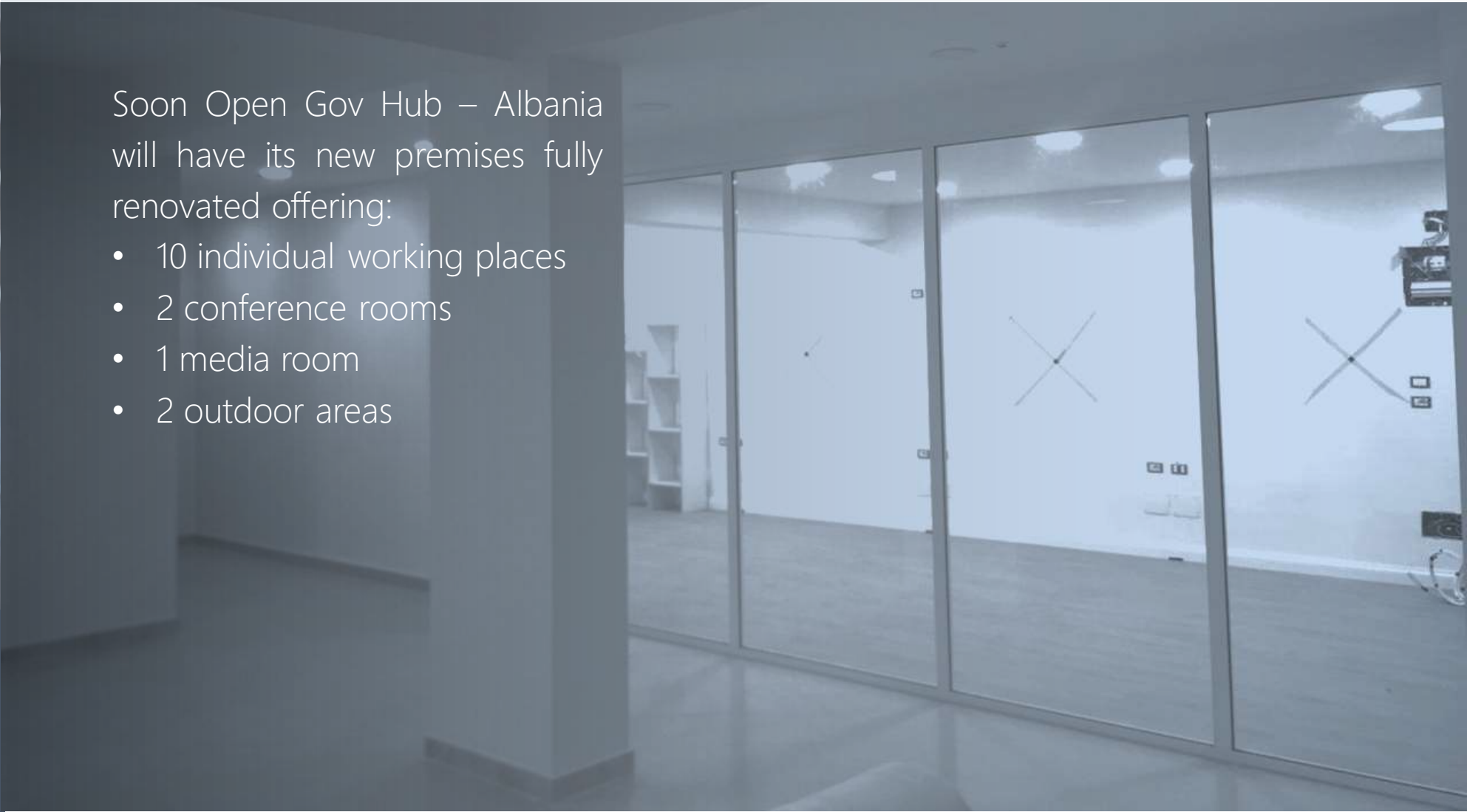
Soon Open Gov Hub – Albania will have its new premises fully renovated offering:

- 10 individual working places
- 2 conference rooms
- 1 media room
- 2 outdoor areas



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# The role of NGO's during and after the new pandemic

While our societies continue to suffer from different systematic problems like: social inequalities, corruption, infringement of human rights, political transitions, security, etc., now everything seems even more complicated and far worse because of the global spread of the new pandemic of COVID-19.



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# The role of NGO's during and after the new pandemic



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The opportunities associated with the increase in the use of the new technologies

During these pandemic times the new technologies of information have offered a tremendous help in the management of the pandemic and in the continuity of the normal daily life of the citizens. People and business started or continued to work and offer their services totally online. Shops that previously never had an online account started to sell online. People started to communicate more through social media and use for the first time online services like internet banking. Now even the Universities are used in offering all their classes online.

So if we can mention a positive effect of the new global pandemic in our country, the increased use by the society of the new technologies of information would be one.

This is a huge opportunity for the NGO's to reach more audiences and support in the online environment, transmitting in real time and continuously their messages and thus pushing forward their causes.

# The role of NGO's during and after the new pandemic



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Nevertheless, NGO's should re-think their current level of quality in presenting themselves and their activities in the online platforms. NGO's should be able to present to the online audience's, qualitative audio and visual materials that are able to attract the people reaction and attention.

That's why during these pandemic times Open Gov Hub – Albania re-thought its renovation plan of its new premises and decided to create a special media room fully equipped with the necessary hardware and software to record and transmit online qualitative media materials in different platforms like Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, etc.

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The new challenges to human rights associated with the measures taken in response to the new pandemic

But even though the new technologies offer unprecedented global opportunities, they also pose difficult to address social, ethical, legal questions. During these times governments are more prone to: lack of transparency in their activities, mismanagement of public funds, and forgetting their obligation to other important issues other than the management of the pandemic.

The new pandemic and the actual standard protection rules associated with it like: keeping and respecting a certain distance from other individuals, time and day lock-downs, illegality of public gatherings, censorship of free speech, etc.; pose many challenges for the NGO's and their now challenged reaction towards new infringements of the human rights.



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The new challenges to human rights associated with the measures taken in response to the new pandemic

Given the threat to global health, many countries have introduced measures aimed at containing the spread of the virus. Some of these unprecedented measures have been taken in a rush, without the usual democratic processes. Public gatherings are being banned; people are ordered to stay at home; freedom of movement between and within national borders is being restricted; surveillance measures are being used to monitor people's movements; access to health care is restricted to emergencies. Non-compliance is sanctioned and authorities are exercising exceptional powers.

While their necessity is understandable, those restrictions are affecting the enjoyment of human rights as well as the working conditions of NGOs and civil society. While such measures are expected to be time-bound, there is a risk that some might stay or be reactivated at a later stage, endangering thus the most fragile democracies.



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The new challenges to human rights associated with the measures taken in response to the new pandemic

Vulnerable groups will need growing support during the downturn that will follow the present restrictions, and the consequent loss of jobs and livelihood. NGOs should ensure that the needs of vulnerable social groups and of the people in general are taken into account in post-pandemic policies, especially in relation to health and social issues. NGOs should also have a role in monitoring the implementation of emergency measures in relation to tracking both surveillance and the use of collected data.

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# The role of NGO's during and after the new pandemic



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New challenges related to the fund raising, management, organization, activities, and priorities of NGO's

The situation created by the new pandemic limits NGO's in: organizing events, social and group gatherings, having a live contact with their target groups, influencing policies and reaching the decision-making level, staff recruiting and project implementation.

The new pandemic (for as far as it can remain present) and the new level of use of new technologies by the society have imposed change in the way NGO's should now transform their fund raising, management, organization, activities, and priorities.

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Raising funds in the new pandemic era will pose a serious threat for the existence of many NGO's or their long term activities. The economic crisis after COVID-19 is expected to limit donors' capacity and availability, consequently making it more difficult for NGOs to rely on their contributions. NGOs will have to re-think their business model, to diversify their income and build new alliances with other NGOs, as opposite to focusing on competing for public funding.

In re-thinking their business model NGO's can consider the application of multilateralism (the principle of participation by three or more parties in a cause or project) embodied in the philosophy of the hubs, as they have proven their relevance in battling health emergencies in developing countries, and in being at the forefront of solidarity efforts in solid economies.

# The role of NGO's during and after the new pandemic

New challenges related to the fund raising, management, organization, activities, and priorities of NGO's

Joining their efforts and resources can help NGO's in transforming the challenges presented by the pandemic in opportunities. NGO's can share projects, staff, information, premises, management and activities, thus being more effective and efficient. And that's what the philosophy of the Open Gov Hub – Albania is all about and we are eager to spread this new opportunity for the NGO's in Albania.



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