



EU Funded Project and Managed by the
European Union Office in Kosovo



IMPLEMENTATION OF KOSOVO EDUCATION STRATEGIC PLAN IN 2017

EVALUATION REPORT



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December 2017

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Content

List of abbreviations	8	
Executive summary	11	
1. Introduction	16	
2. Context	18	
3. Government Policies On Education	20	
3.1 Relationship between government policies.....	20	
3.2. Education budget	22	
4. Achieving Objectives	24	
4.1. Objective 1: participation and inclusion.....	26	
4.1.1. Participation in Preschool and Pre-primary Education	27	
4.1.2. Participation in Primary and Secondary Education	29	
4.1.3. Children with Special Needs.....	31	
4.1.4. Inclusion of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian Children.....	32	
4.1.5. Inclusion of Repatriated Children.....	34	
4.1.6. Supporting Children with Exceptional Potential	34	
4.2. Objective 2: Management of Education System.....	36	
4.2.1 Management Capacity Building	37	
4.2.2 School Management Staff	37	
4.2.3 Funding Mechanisms.....	38	
4.2.4 Data Collecting and Processing.....	38	
4.2.5 Legislation	38	
4.2.6 School Environments - Safety and Infrastructure	39	
4.3. Objective 3: Quality Assurance	42	
4.3.1 Quality Assurance Mechanisms.....	43	
4.3.2 School Development Planning	45	
4.3.3 Capacity Building for Quality Assurance	46	
4.3.4 External Student Assessmen	47	
4.4. Objective 4: Teacher Development	50	
4.4.1 Teacher Professional Development	51	
4.4.2 Teachers Licensing.....	52	
4.4.3 Preparing New Teachers.....	53	
4.5. Objective 5: Teaching and Learning	56	
4.5.1. Implementation of the new curriculum.....	57	
4.5.2. Textbooks	58	
4.5.3. Education technology.....	59	
4.6. Objective 6: VET and AE	62	
4.6.1. Enrollment and syllabi trends	63	
4.6.2. Curricula and teaching and learning materials	66	
4.6.3. Praktical work	67	
4.6.4. Career Guidance and Counseling	68	
4.6.5. Adult education.....	69	
4.7. Objective 7: Higher Education	72	
4.7.1. Institutional structure of higher education.....	73	
4.7.2. Students in higher education	74	
4.7.3. Academic staff.....	79	
4.7.4. Quality assurance in higher education	81	
4.7.5. Link with the labor market	83	
5. CONCLUSIONS	87	

List of Abbreviations

VET	Vocational Education and Training
AVETAE	Agency for Vocational Education and Training and Adult Education
KAA	Kosovo Accreditation Agency
EPAK	Employment Promotion Agency Kosovo
ERA	European Reform Agenda
AE	Adult Education
ATTA	Academy for Training and Technical Assistance
EU	European Union
BEP	USAID Basic Education Programme
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
BSFK	Balkan Sunflowers Kosova
MED	Municipal Education Directorate
PRTDN	Prevention and Response Teams towards Dropout and Non-registration in Compulsory Education
ESIP	Education System Improvement Project
FE	Faculty of Education
GiZ CDBE	GiZ Programme for Capacity Development in Basic Education
KPI	Kosovo Pedagogical Institute
MTEF	Medium Term Expenditures Framework
KEC	Kosovo Education Centre
KEEN	“Kosovo Education and Employment Network” Project
KCF	Kosovo Curriculum Framework (NQF - National Qualifications Framework)
SCLT	State Council on Licencing of Teachers

MEST	Ministry of Education, Science and Technology
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
OIQE	Organization for Increasing the Quality of Education
PISA	Programme for International Student Assessment
ERP	Economic Reform Programme
KESP	Kosovo Education Strategic Plan
SDP	School Development Plan
CfPA	Centre for Professional Advancement+
UTUESC	United Trade Union of Education, Science and Culture
PLSS	Primary and Lower Secondary School
NDS	National Development Strategy
EMIS	Education Management Information System
HEMIS	Higher Education Management Information System
CIT	Communication Information Technology
ToR	Terms of Reference
AI	Administrative Instruction
UNESCO	United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations International Children’s Emergency Fund
UNMIK	United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
TPD	Teachers Professional Development

Executive Summary

This report provides a summary of monitoring results on the implementation of Kosovo Education Strategic Plan by civil society organizations. Kosovo Education Strategic Plan 2017-2021 (KESP) is the base document for development of education in the time period 2017-2021, approved by the Government of the Republic of Kosovo. Whereas, monitoring of KESP implementation is accomplished within the European Union funded project “Kosovo Education and Employment Network (KEEN)”, a strategic coalition of four civil society organizations engaged in the areas of education, employment and social policy: Kosovo Education Centre (KEC), Employment Promotion Agency of Kosovo (EPAK), Balkan Sunflowers Kosovo (BSFK) and Academy for Training and Technical Assistance (ATTA).

For the purpose of monitoring, a special working group was established composed of representatives of civil society organizations and subject matter experts who, based on the drafted monitoring framework, provided information on the progress of KESP. During the course of the monitoring process, besides analyses of the available information, additional information was collected from MEST, other public institutions and other sources. In addition, site interviews were performed with education employees and officials, who have assisted a great deal in understanding the perspectives of all the stakeholders. There have been difficulties in gaining of some data, which were either not obtained from the responsible institutions in Kosovo or were not provided by the institution they were requested from, although a request had been duly submitted.

THE MAIN MONITORING CONCLUSIONS ARE AS FOLLOWING:

The monitoring was conducted during 2017 and was focused on the strategic objectives of the seven areas of KESP: 1) Participation and Inclusion; 2) Education System Management; 3) Quality Assurance; 4) Teachers Development; 5) Teaching and Learning; 6) Vocational Education and Training (VET) and Adult Education (AE); 7) Higher Education. During the monitoring process, the level of accomplishment of objectives during the first year of implementation of KESP was analysed compared with the accomplishment of determined indicators, as well as compared with the measures provided under KESP.

The finding of such analysis reveals that government policies dedicate special commitment to education; however, there is stagnation in the implementation of established policies, including Kosovo Education Strategic Plan 2017-2021. Such stagnation is not only due to budget constrains but also due to issues of organizational nature, which require special commitment in order for the MEST to accomplish the strategic measures, as well as a high level of coordination with other central and local level institutions. It is rather illustrative the fact that Kosovo Government has approved KESP with a budget of €176.9 million for a period of five years, thus determining the existence of a gap of €89.6 million, but there were no concrete actions to secure such funds although the required amount for 2017 was only €9 million. Moreover, no coordinating mechanism was set in place for the implementation of KESP.

- ✓ Kosovo has achieved a desirable level of participation in compulsory education, as well as in the upper secondary education, whereas participation in preschool education remains a challenge for the entire society, mainly due to lack of institutions of an affordable cost. School dropout is at a rather low level, except amongst Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities, which requires particular attention. Children with special needs and children with special talents remain the most marginalized categories in pre-university education.
- ✓ There was no progress in regulating the status of the school management personnel, who continue to depend directly in municipality mayors. Also, there is no system of recruiting education employees which would guarantee the respect of criteria and fairness in making employment decisions. There was some stagnation in approving the required legislation for implementation of reform in education.
- ✓ First steps were made in building quality assurance mechanisms in pre-university education. Out of 1.100, 140 quality assurance coordinators were appointed in primary and secondary schools of Kosovo; however, there are indications that the process of coordinators appointment is characterized by formality. Legal prerequisites for school performance assessment have been created. In addition, a school self-assessment methodology was developed, which was piloted in 63 schools.

- ✓ No step was undertaken towards establishing the Agency for Curriculum, Assessment and Standards, despite the fact that such agency is foreseen under the Law of 2011.
- ✓ Administration of national tests continues to be a weakness in their effective implementation. Also in this year, the MEST has also undertaken radical steps in improving such administration.
- ✓ The process of teachers' performance assessment has not started yet. Moreover, there is no clear action plan to carry out this process in the future. The drafting of AI on harmonizing grades in the salary system was not accomplished due to lack of budget. The salary increase continues to be done in linear manner and not in the function of improving the quality of teaching.
- ✓ Implementation of the new curriculum commenced, notwithstanding lack of text books and concrete materials which are in line with the requirements of the new curriculum. Schools reported considerable difficulties in implementation of the new curriculum, which is a consequence of insufficient preparations and lack of continuous professional support. The process of drafting new school text books has not been determined; no advertisement was published for new school text books and the proposals of print houses were neither admitted nor considered. Moreover, there are still dilemmas on whether the school text books shall be drafted by local publishers, be translated from foreign languages or will be taken from Albania.
- ✓ Around 47% of students of secondary vocational education attend lessons in economic, law and medical courses, which provide significantly fewer employment possibilities; whereas, the number of students in courses with a better employment perspective continues to be below the desired level. Information from the field indicates serious problems in accomplishment of professional practice. Career counselling and advising, with a few exceptions, continues to be lacking in vocational schools in Kosovo.
- ✓ Notwithstanding the progress in providing learning programmes for adults, adult education remains the most undeveloped education sector given that, to the present day, no necessary prerequisites for its management have been created.
- ✓ The gross registration rate in higher education is 84.23%, which places Kosovo on the third place worldwide, whereas it surpasses all European countries apart from Greece, Spain, Belorussia and Finland.
- ✓ The number of qualified academic staff in higher education institutions is insufficient – while the “teacher-student” ratio at national level is 1:41, it is even less favourable in the public sector – 1:60. Although there is some progress in the implementation of criteria for selection of academic staff, no concrete actions were undertaken by any higher education institution in Kosovo to address the blatant violations of academic integrity.

THE FINDING OF THE ANALYSIS YIELDED THE FOLLOWING RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 1** The MEST must set up a mechanism for coordination of implementation of KESP 2017-2021, governed by the Minister or Deputy Minister, which shall be composed of senior officials of MEST, representatives of local government and other institutions which have obligations related to the implementation of KESP, representatives of development partners and civil society, as well as education experts. The task of such mechanism would be drafting annual plans on the implementation of KESP, reviewing progress and counselling on the steps to undertake in order to ensure full implementation of the strategic plan.
- 2** In the area of participation in education, special attention must be paid to the pre-school level, where it should be continued with investments in infrastructure and increase of inclusion in the pre-primary level. Learning centres for Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian children must be supported in order to facilitate their participation and success in schooling; in addition, scholarships should continue to be granted to secondary school students of these communities.
- 3** The MEST must adopt unique and clear criteria and procedures for recruitment of directors and teachers in preschool education, in order to minimize the possibility of unmeritorious and political employment in education system.
- 4** Kosovo Assembly must adopt the Law on Education Inspectorate which would in turn pave the way for functionalisation of external quality assurance. In addition, schools must be supported in their efforts to accomplish their function of internal quality assurance.
- 5** Administration of the Achievement Test and State Matura Exam must be carried out in such a way as to ensure the reliability of the results, even by undertaking radical measures against the violators of test rules, including the administrators.
- 6** Notwithstanding the unsatisfactory result from PISA test, the efforts of the MEST and of all other relevant factors must be oriented in the essential improvement of the situation in education system and not in the mechanical increase of test results. Moreover, the MEST must warrant a credible administration of the PISA test so that the results reflect the real situation of the education system.
- 7** Linear increase of teachers' wages must be terminated because it produces no single positive effect. To motivate teachers for a better performance, the system for teachers' licensing must be urgently functionalized and the wages must be associated with the license level.
- 8** MEST must undertake special arrangements for monitoring of implementation of the new curriculum and to provide the necessary assistance to schools for the implementation of such curriculum. Also, the issue of the school text books and other teaching material must be resolved to the benefit of implementation of the curriculum. The drafting of a plan is crucial for equipping schools with technology and its effective use.
- 9** A review of vocational education schools must be conducted in cooperation with the MEDs in order to avoid structural unemployment by registering large numbers of students in courses where the possibility for employment is small, while there is lack of students in some other courses which are demanded in the labour market. Also, it is necessary to improve the practical work and career counselling so that students become as prepared as possible for the labour market.
- 10** Because of the enormous number of students and the small number of qualified academic personnel, the situation in the higher education is unstable. For this reason, it is required that the KAA imposes clear criteria on the quality, infrastructure aspect, content of learning programmes, as well as on the aspect of number and quality of the academic staff, insisting that such criteria are met by all the higher education institutions, regardless whether they are public or private institutions. To do this, the KAA must possess capacities to provide constant monitoring of higher education institutions, as foreseen by the legislation, and the independence of the KAA from political influence must be ensured.

1. Introduction

On 7th of December 2016, Kosovo Government adopted Kosovo Education Strategic Plan 2017-2021 (KESP)¹, a document which was developed for more than one year and which defines the path of education development in the forthcoming five-year period of time. The mission of the KESP is “Development of an Education System based on quality, all-inclusiveness and accountability, offering education and training of individuals in accordance to best international standards and practices”.

KESP has seven strategic objectives in the following areas:

- 1 Participation and Inclusion;
- 2 Management of Education System;
- 3 Quality Assurance;
- 4 Teacher Development;
- 5 Teaching and Learning;
- 6 Vocational Education and Training and Adult Education;
- 7 Higher Education.

Expected results and potential measures have been identified for each objective, as well as success indicators that serve for monitoring of KESP implementation. They are all accumulated in an action plan for implementation of KESP². In addition, the KESP budget was calculated amounting to a total of €176.94 million.

The initiative for monitoring of implementation of KESP is accomplished within the European Union funded project “Kosovo Education and Employment Network (KEEN)”, the strategic coalition of four civil society organizations engaged in the area of education, employment and social policies: Kosovo Education Centre (KEC), Agency for Promotion of Employment in Kosovo (APEK), Balkan Sunflowers Kosovo (BSFK), Academy for Training and Technical Assistance (ATTA) and SPARK.

One of KEEN project objectives is participation in the development of policies in the area of education and employment. In the frame of its activities, the project has supported the process of drafting of the KESP and was also assigned to conduct the monitoring of implementation of this document from the position of civil society. A monitoring framework was drafted for this purpose which determines the monitoring methodology. In order to monitor the implementation of KESP, respective activities were broken down and transformed into questions related to all aspects, segments and concrete phases of the concerned activities and other concrete sources were identified, as well, for facilitation of monitoring and for verification of implementation of such activities. These aspects and sources of monitoring were presented in a five-year time range for the period of time 2017-2021.

1 http://www.kryeministri-ks.net/repository/docs/PLANI_STRATEGJIK_I_ARSIMIT_NE_KOSOVE.pdf
2 <https://masht.rks-gov.net/uploads/2017/02/20161006-plani-i-veprimit.pdf>

Furthermore, a working group for monitoring of KESP was established, consisting of representatives of civil society organizations and subject matter experts who, based on the drafted framework on monitoring, have provided information on the progress of the KESP.

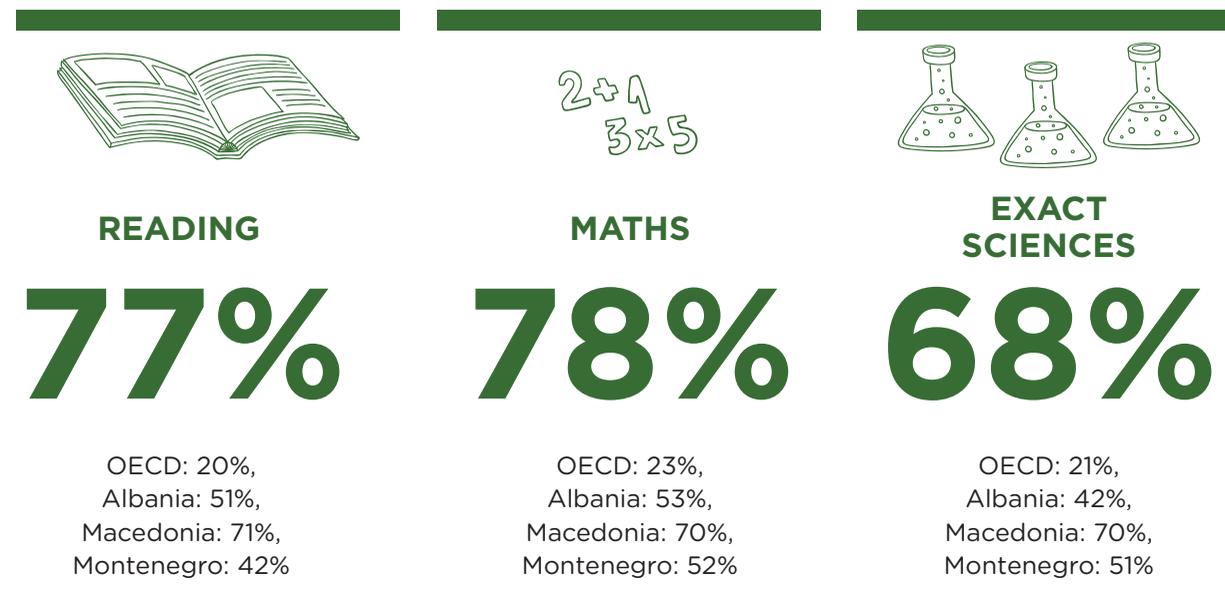
During the monitoring process, besides analysing the available data, additional data were collected from MEST, from other public institutions, as well as from other sources. Also, field interviews were conducted with educational employees and officials, which have contributed a great deal in understanding the perspectives of all stakeholders. There were some difficulties in acquiring some data, which were either not collected by the responsible institutions in Kosovo or were not provided by the institution they were requested from, although a request had been duly submitted.

2. Context

Kosovo has marked some economic progress in the last decade. It is assessed that the gross domestic product for 2016 has increased for 3.5% and a similar increase is expected to occur in 2017, as well³. Nonetheless, Kosovo continues to have one of the lowest GDPs per capita in Europe, while the country's economy continues to be unstable and reliant on the remittances which constitute around 11% of the GDP.

According to the last report on poverty, conducted in 2015, 21.1% of Kosovo population live in poor conditions, whereas 5.2% live in extreme poverty⁴. The report outlines the fact that an important factor that contributes in decrease of poverty is the level of education. More than one third of persons who have not completed compulsory education live in poor households, compared to 12% of persons with higher education qualifications. Nearly two thirds of poor persons have less than secondary school qualification.

The PISA test results, published at the end of 2016, confirmed once more that the situation of education in Kosovo is not satisfactory at all. Beside the poor ranking of Kosovo compared with other countries, a great concern was caused by the enormous percentage of students who failed to reach the minimum level of skills on using their knowledge in life – in Reading: 77% (OECD average: 20%, Albania: 51%, Macedonia: 71%, Montenegro: 42%); in Maths: 78% (OECD: 23%, Albania: 53%, Macedonia: 70%, Montenegro: 52%); in Exact Sciences: 68% (OECD: 23%, Albania: 53%), Macedonia: 70%, Montenegro: 51%). Until the publication of PISA test results there was no single argument that education system in Kosovo is in such a grave situation, apart from the general social perception with regards to low quality of education, which proved to be true.



³ Staff Report; and Statement by the Executive Director for the Republic of Kosovo, IMF, 17 March 2017.
⁴ Consumption Poverty in the Republic of Kosovo 2012-2015, KAS, April 2017.

Nevertheless, the effects of low quality of education have been and remain to be quite visible. Some of the causes that led to this situation are:

- ✓ The abnormal situation of the 90s which inflicted serious wounds to Kosovo education, in all of its levels.
- ✓ Effective dissolving of all quality assurance systems in the post-war time period, starting from removal of pedagogues from schools, closure of pedagogical institutes, diminishing the role of Education Inspectorate.
- ✓ Building of an administration system that does not encourage responsibility, where school directors are appointed by municipality mayors, teachers are oftentimes employed based on their political affiliation, while there is no genuine system of accountability in place.
- ✓ Shortcomings in the external assessment of students, in particular tolerating massive copying, which causes demobilization amongst students and schools, and even amongst parents.
- ✓ Extreme degradation of higher education in Kosovo through politicizing, tolerating different forms of violation of academic integrity and uncontrolled massing of this sector.
- ✓ Failure in implementing adopted education policies and legislation. As of 2004, strategic documents on the development of education in Kosovo have been drafted with the wide participation of all stakeholders and they, in general, reflect a wide consensus. However, their implementation in reality does not occur, either due to organizational or financial reasons.

In 2017, Kosovo underwent central and local elections which, to a great extent, have displaced the attention of the public from education problems, but have also resulted with stagnation in implementation of proclaimed education policies.

3. Government Policies on Education

Education has an important role in the socio-economic development of a country, enabling thus individuals to apply their potential and play a productive role in the development of the society. As such, besides in the KESP 2017-2021, education is placed in a prioritised position in various strategic documents of the Kosovo Government, including the National Development Strategy (NDS), European Reform Agenda (ERA), Programme for Economic Reforms (PER), Government Programme of the Republic of Kosovo.

3.1. Relationship between Government Policies

National Development Strategy 2016 – 2021 is a basic strategic document addressing development policies of special importance, thus determining concrete measures and activities for a medium term period of time. The education area, as one of the prioritized areas, has been treated under Chapter One of the Strategy – Development of the Human Capital. Within this pillar, measures were foreseen which deal with the increase of children's participation in preschool education, improvement of teaching quality in pre-university education, relating education with the demands of the labour market, strengthening accountability through inspection, performance assessment and external tests, as well as optimizing expenses in education through database systems.

European Reform Agenda is a strategic document determining the concrete short-term measures and activities on three priority areas: good governance and law enforcement; competitiveness and investment climate, as well as education and employment. Within the area of education for the time period 2016 – 2017, ERA foresees three measures, as following

- Adoption of the remaining legislation which provides the grounds for policy reforms in the education sector.
- Improvement of education quality through:
 - a. Constant increase of attendance in pre-school education;
 - b. Conducting the external assessment and expediting implementation of the new curriculum, including new school text books in pre-university education;
 - c. Creating mechanisms for assessment and improvement of initial training programmes and to the benefit of teachers;
 - d. Improvement of general quality of higher education;
 - e. Encouraging better relations between higher education and labour market through facilitation and encouraging establishment of industrial boards in universities which shall counsel the HEIs on the importance of teaching/ learning curriculum, identifying the shortcomings in the skills of graduated persons, participating in trainings and teaching (visits, workshops) and providing trainings and experiences of internships for students;
- Improvement of the quality of Vocational Education and Training (VET) and transfer from school to work.

Economic Reforms Programme (ERP) determines Government priorities in achieving Kosovo key obligations from the SAA in the field of economy. In this direction, the main objective of Kosovo in the area of education is interrelation of education and training with the labour market demands, which is in harmony with NDS, ERA and KESP. With regards to this objective, ERP foresees the following two measures for the time period 2016 – 2017:

- Reform measure #17: Harmonizing offer and demand by way of drafting occupational standards and reviewing curricula.
- Reform measure #18: Implementing and improving the career system for teachers.

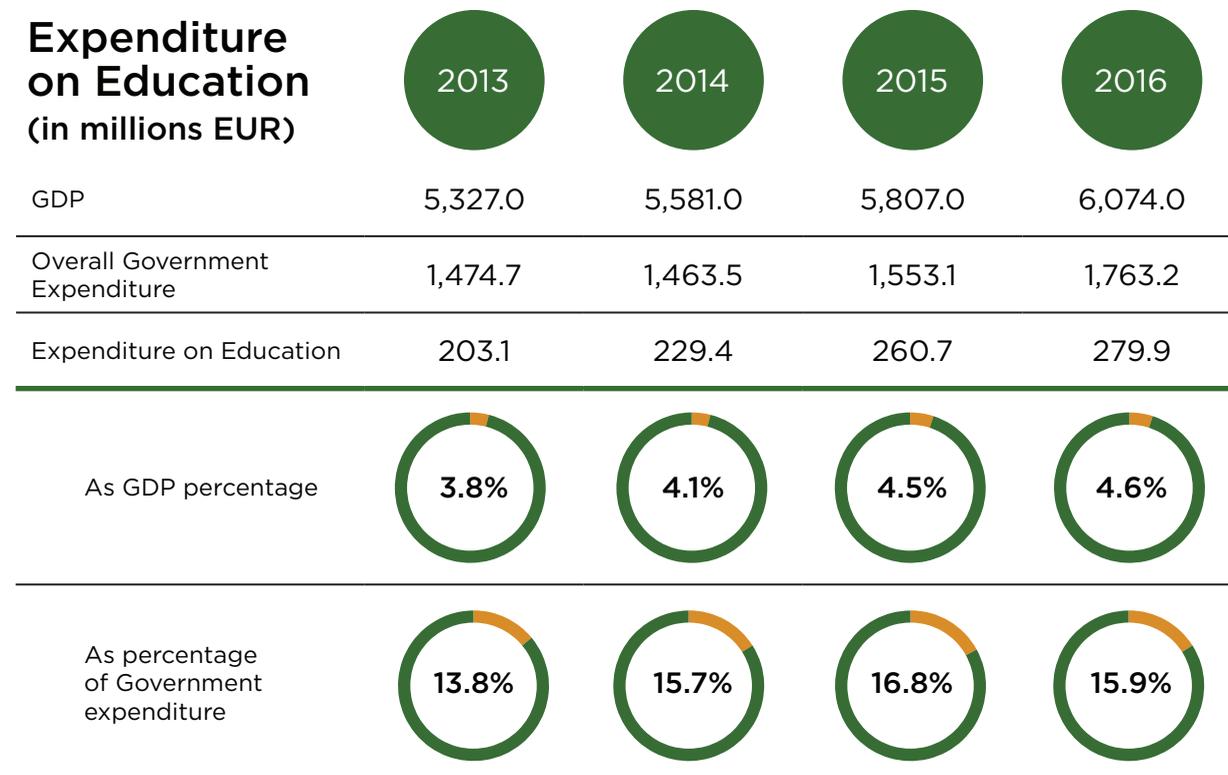
Government Programme of the Republic of Kosovo 2017-2021 “aims at building a new model of education which will focus on concrete reforms from preschool education to the academic advancements.” Within this programme, Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MEST) foresees five objectives for the four-year period of time 2017 – 2021, as following:

1. Reforms in education system;
2. Improvement of legal infrastructure;
3. Adapting education system to the labour market demands;
4. International cooperation in education;
5. Research, development and innovation.

3.2. Education Budget

The following table provides data on education expenditure compared with the gross domestic product and overall Government expenditure. Data on expenditures have been extracted from annual reports of Ministry of Finance of Kosovo⁵ expenditures, whereas data on gross domestic product were taken from the medium term expenditures frameworks.

The table indicates that expenditures on education are constantly increasing and the expenditure as percentage of the GDP is also increasing, thus Kosovo can be compared also with the countries in the region. Based on the data of UNESCO, such expense in Albania constitutes 3.5% of GDP in 2013, in Bulgaria – 3.5% (2012), in Croatia – 4.2% (2011), in Serbia – 4.4% (2012), whereas in Slovenia – 5.7% (2012)⁶.



5 <https://mf.rks-gov.net/page.aspx?id=1,29>
6 http://data.un.org/Data.aspx?d=UNESCO&f=series%3aXGDP_FSGOV

With regards to education expenditures as a percentage of the overall Government expenditure, an increase of 3% is observed in the time period 2013-2015; however, in 2016 this expenditure drops to 15.9% of the overall Government expenditure, thus resulting in a decrease of around 1% compared to the previous year. In this aspect it is observed, however, that Kosovo spends proportionately more than other countries in the region – Albania – 12.1% (2013), Bulgaria – 10.7% (2012), Croatia – 8.6% (2011), Serbia – 9.6% (2012) and Slovenia – 12.6% (2012).

One thing to be observed with regards to education expenditure is the high participation of wages in these expenses. Hence, in 2013, 78.6% of education expenditures were spent on wages and per Diem⁷, whereas in 2014 – 81.1%⁸. The reason for this is constant increase of wages as of 2008 which was not followed by a proportional budget increase for other type of expenditures in the education system.

KESP 2017 – 2021 was adopted by the Government with a budget of €176.9 million for a 5-year time period, where it was estimated that there is a gap of €89.6 million, a funding which has to be provided by Kosovo Budget and donors. Kosovo Budget was supposed to provide €9 million of additional funds for 2017; however, this was never accomplished. Moreover, based on the Medium Term Expenditures Framework (MTEF) 2018-2020⁹, no additional funding is envisaged for the next 3-years' time period. The objectives of the education section in MTEF are the same ones as in the KESP 2017-2021, but no separate budget is foreseen for achieving of those objectives, apart from the fact that the financial means for 430 teaching posts were not deducted from the specific grant for pre-university education but they were reserved for payment of quality assurance coordinators in schools, which is envisaged under objective 3 of KESP.



7 Annual financial report for 2013, Ministry of Finance. <https://mf.rks-gov.net/desk/inc/media/0079C14F-1EFO-47EE-ADB5-57E79B805EFB.pdf>
8 Annual financial report for 2014, Ministry of Finance. <https://mf.rks-gov.net/desk/inc/media/12E08348-ABF1-4DC0-A125-63CCCA765126.pdf>
9 <https://mf.rks-gov.net/desk/inc/media/FO499CD8-DB8B-48A0-9B2B-F313CB114E67.pdf>

4. Achieving Objectives

KESP has seven strategic objectives

- ✓ Increase of inclusion and equal opportunities for development, training and education of every individual in pre-university education.
- ✓ Quality and efficient management of education system, based on transparency and accountability.
- ✓ Development of a functional system for quality assurance, in compliance with international standards.
- ✓ Enhancing teacher quality through the effective and sustainable system for preparation and professional development of teachers.
- ✓ Improving learning through quality teaching, implementing the competence-based curriculum and using high quality learning resources.
- ✓ Harmonizing vocational education and training with the labour market demands in the country and wider, and creating an open system for adult education.
- ✓ Upgrading of quality and competitiveness of higher education through encouragement and teaching excellence, scientific research, artistic creativity, innovation and internationalization.

Following is an analysis of the level of achieving of objectives during 2017, compared with the achievement of determined indicators, but also compared with the accomplishment of measures foreseen under KESP.

PARTICIPATION AND INCLUSION



4.1. Objective 1: Participation and Inclusion

Increasing participation and providing equal opportunities for development, training and education of every individual in pre-university education.

SUMMARY OF MONITORING::

In 2016/17 school year, inclusion of children in preschool reached 17.64% of 0-5 age group, which represents a progress compared with 15.70% in 2014/15 (Target in 2021: 20%).

Inclusion of 5 year-old children in pre-primary education increased from 79.6% (2014/15) to 85.5% (2016/17) (Target in 2021: 100%).

Inclusion of 4-5 year-old children in preschool education increased from 40.7% (2014/15) to 46.44% (2016/17) (Target in 2021: 55%).

Participation of boys and girls in all levels of pre-university education continues to be balanced, except in upper secondary education where there is room for improvement. The gender parity index for this level of education is 0.91, whereas according to the population structure it should be 0.94.

School dropout rate in compulsory education in the school year 2016/17 is 0.07%, while among the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities it is 26 times higher – 1.85%.

There are no facts on inclusion of children with special needs in education system, while their identification and classification continues to be a significant issue.

Integration of repatriated children in the education system is a process to which special importance is dedicated.

During school year 2016/17, the number of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian children at preschool level increased for 61% compared with the school year 2015/16, while it stabilized at other levels of education. Following the adoption of AI on functionalization of learning centres, prerequisites were created to fund them from public funds.

Notwithstanding the fact that school dropout is not at a critical level, mechanisms for prevention of school dropouts and non-enrolment are not effective.

Apart from some isolated cases, there is lack of support for children with exceptional intellectual potential and special talents in academic, creative and artistic areas.

4.1.1. Participation in Preschool and Pre-primary Education

Table 1 shows that in 2016/17 school year the number of children in preschool education **increased for 7%** compared with the school year 2015/16, with an increase of only 1% in the public sector and 123% in private sector. Nevertheless, this increase is more attributed to the regulation of data collection system from private sector than to the increase of admittance capacities in the said sector. The table also contains data from Serbian schools which do not greatly affect the total – 621 children in school year 2015/16 and 487 children in 2016/17 school year. On the other hand, there is lack of data from unlicensed preschool institutions, as well as from centres offering preschool education for children but which are based in communities.

Tabela 1. Children in preschool education by type of institution

Type of institution	2015/16		2016/17	
	T	F	T	F
Public	26,191	12,318	26,453	12,491
Private	1,354	618	3,020	1,402
Total	27,545	12,936	29,473	13,893

Source: MEST Statistics for school years 2015/16 and 2016/17

In 2016/17 school year, inclusion of children in preschool education reached 17.6%¹⁰ of 0-5 age group, which represents a progress compared to 15.7% in 2014/15¹¹. The main reason for such low participation is **the small absorbing capacity** of the preschool institutions network of an affordable cost.

¹⁰ Number of children 0- 5 year-old in preschool education in the school year 2016/17 (Table 1) as a percentage of population aged 0- 5 years old in 2016 (Kosovo Population Projection 2011-2061, KAS, December 2013, p. 41.).

¹¹ Number of children 0- 5 year-old in preschool education in the school year 2016/17 (Table 1) as a percentage of population aged 0- 5 years old in 2016 (Kosovo Population Projection 2011-2061, KAS, December 2013, p. 41.).

Table 2. Children of aged 4-5 years old in preschool education

Age	2015/16		2016/17	
	T	F	T	F
Age 4	1,794	878	1,954	938
Age 5	22,469	10,817	23,394	11,355
Total 4&5	24,263	11,695	25,348	12,293

Source: MEST Statistics for school years 2015/16 and 2016/17

Table 2 provides the grounds for comparing participation in preschool education in Kosovo with participation in the European Union countries. The focus is on preschool participation of children aged from 4 years old until their beginning of compulsory education, which in the EU countries reaches up to 93.9% (2012), whereas by year 2020, the target is to increase such participation up to 95%¹². Our calculations, however, indicate that participation of age groups of 4 and 5 year-old children in Kosovo, in the school year 2016/17 is 46.4%¹³ which represents an increase compared with the school year 2014/15 when it was 40.7%¹⁴ and one step closer to the KESP target of 55%¹⁵. Table 2 also shows a significant growth of registration in pre-primary education. Participation of children at this level has already reached the rate of 85.5% compared with 79.6%¹⁶ in 2014/15¹⁷ school year. KESP foresees that by 2021, all children aged 5 years old shall be included in pre-primary education. Out of 20 pre-primary classrooms predicted to open in 2017, only 12 were opened.

KESP is not focused only in increasing participation in preschool education but also on upgrading quality. Implementation of the New Curriculum started in September 2017 for pre-primary classrooms.¹⁸ Four educators of Social Educational Centre SOS Kindergarten¹⁹, started to work with the New Curriculum in September 2017 after attending the five-day training on its implementation. They²⁰ emphasize that advantages of working with the New Curriculum are inter-area

¹² <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/tgm/table.do?tab=table&init=1&language=en&pcode=tps00179&plugin=1>

¹³ Number of children aged 4 and 5 years old in preschool education in the school year 2016/17 (Table 2) as percentage of population aged 4 and 5 years old in 2016 (Kosovo Population Projection 2011-2016, KAS, December 2013, p. 41.).

¹⁴ Kosovo Education Strategic Plan 2017-2021.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Number of children aged 5 in preschool education in school year 2016/17 (Table 2) as a percentage of population aged 5 in year 2016 (Kosovo Population Projection 2011-2016, KAS, December 2013, p. 41.).

¹⁷ Kosovo Education Strategic Plan 2017-2021.

¹⁸ Core Curriculum for Pre-primary Grade: <http://masht.rks-gov.net/uploads/2017/02/kurrikula-berthame-1-finale-2.pdf>.

¹⁹ Interview with Remzije Krasniqi, Director of Educational Social Centre SOS Kindergarten, Prishtina, 31.10.2017. This community-based preschool institution is partially subsidized by Municipality of Prishtina. During 2017, out of total of 130 children aged 3-6 years old, municipality supported this institution financially to look after 31 marginalized children: abandoned by their parents, children without parental care, single mothers, social cases, war veterans and with special needs.

²⁰ Interview with Laureta Hasanaj, Aida Ismaili and Afërdita Kavaja, Educators at Educational Social Centre SOS Kindergarten, Prishtina, 03.11.2017.

integration of topics developed in classroom, bi-monthly planning which breaks down topics and facilitates weekly and daily planning, as well as closer cooperation between educators which enables sharing of ideas and experiences amongst them. However, the educators²¹ expressed their dissatisfaction with the level of knowledge they acquired in trainings for the new curriculum. **Trainers were not sufficiently prepared to convey their knowledge onto participants**, and they possessed neither sufficient materials nor adequate subject programmes. Moreover, the training was quite dense and it included participants of various levels, which limited educators' possibility to acquire sufficient knowledge for the preschool level.

4.1.2. Participation in Primary and Secondary Education

Kosovo maintains solid participation in primary, lower secondary and upper secondary education compared with other European countries, which was evident also during the drafting of KESP. For this reason, Strategic Plan focused on improving gender representation, increasing registration rate in upper secondary education and declining school dropout rate.

Table 3. Indicators of participation in education

Indicator	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
Gender Parity Index Level: Preschool (0-5 years old)	0.92	0.93	0.92	0.95
Gender Parity Index Level: Pre-primary (5 years old)	0.94	0.93	0.94	0.93
Gender Parity Index Level: Primary (6-10 years old)	0.93	0.91	0.93	0.94
Gender Parity Index Level: Lower secondary (11-14 years old)	0.94	0.92	0.94	0.93
Gender Parity Index Level: Upper secondary (15-17 years old)	0.89	0.91	0.91	0.94
Level of transition into upper secondary education	97.2%	-	99.4%	-

²¹ Interview with Laureta Hasanaj, Aida Ismaili and Afërdita Kavaja, Educators at Educational Social Centre SOS Kindergarten, Prishtina, 03.11.2017.

Table 3 provides an overview of relevant indicators on participation in pre-university education. The gender parity index represents the quotient of the number of females and males of certain age groups. In the drafting stage of the KESP, indexes were determined based on the data from 2014/15 school year, as well as based on the set targets for 2021 based on the population projection and the fact that Kosovo population consists of more males than females. Gender parity indexes, calculated for the school years 2015/16 and 2016/17, indicate progress towards the target, except in the case of preschool level (0-5 years old) and upper secondary level (15-17 years old) where additional work is required on upgrading gender parity. Furthermore, registration in upper secondary education of 99.4% of those who completed ninth grade may be considered as success.

Table 4 provides an overview of school dropouts in the last three years. The table shows that girls do not make more than 30% of students who abandon schooling. A more thorough analysis of data from EMIS shows that **a considerable number of students abandoning school at primary and lower secondary level are members of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities**. Hence, in school year 2014/15, members from these communities comprise 48.1% of students abandoning school in 1-9 grades, in school year 2015/16 – 43.3%, whereas in school year 2016/17 – 57.5%. The very same data show that in 2014/15 school year the school dropout rate of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities in primary and lower secondary education was 3.88% (compared with 0.19% at national level); in school year 2015/16 – 3.98% (0.19% at national level); whereas in school year 2016/17 – 1.85% (0.07% at national level).

Tabela 4. School dropout

Level of education	2014/15		2015/16		2016/17	
	T	F	T	F	T	F
PLS (Grades 1-9)	528	254	488	214	174	69
Upper Secondary (Grades 10-12)	1,445	325	1,805	469	1,382	350
Total	1,973	579	2,293	683	1,556	419

Source: Data from EMIS for school years 2014/15, 2015/16 and 2016/17

Establishment of Prevention and Response Teams towards Dropout and Non-registration – PRTDN is an important step in affording all children the right to education, and in supporting them in the learning process. During the course of collection of data for this report, it was realized that PRTDNs were established in most of the municipalities at both, municipal and school level. However, **the vast majority of PRTDNs are not functional and there is no monitoring of them**. In municipality of Fushë Kosova²², which has a large number of members of Ashkali community, but also members

22 Interview with Islam Shabani, Director of Education in Fushë Kosova, 16.10.2017.

of Roma and Egyptian communities, establishment of PRTDNs was necessary because children of the said communities make a higher prevalence in school dropouts and in irregular attendance of lessons. Although this team at municipal level functions rather well with the teams established at school level, the school dropout rate in this municipality continues to be quite concerning.

Concerning the training of PRTDN teams at municipal level and at school level in relation to implementation of the existing documents, which is provided under action plan of KESP, MEST²³ advised that this training was carried out in 31 Kosovo municipalities, but not in all the schools. The MEST has also reviewed indicators, drafted early-warning instruments on school dropout and determined standard operating procedures. In spite of all the efforts, the effect of the team for returning students who dropped out school is not considered to be at the desired level.

In “Selman Riza” school in Fushë Kosova²⁴, the PRTDN was established and is composed of five members: school director, two teachers, one student, and one mediator from Communities Centre. The team is quite active in returning students who dropped out school by undertaking various steps such as: home visits, regular visits in school by the mediator to monitor attendance of the returned children, as well as team’s frequent meetings.

A five-member PRTDN team exists also at “Zenel Hajdini”²⁵ school, which is composed of the school psychologist, two teachers, one parent and one student. Through close cooperation of team members with the students’ council and the disciplinary council of the school, as well as through regular monitoring of attendance of lessons and immediate addressing of cases of students with many absences, this school has managed to achieve a very satisfactory level of preventing its students from dropping out school. During 2017, the PRTDN of this school managed to prevent the dropout of around 18 students.

4.1.3. Children with Special Needs

Data on inclusion of children with special needs in the education system remain to be wanting. The official publication of statistics on education reads “the accuracy of these data is complex due to the fact that all children with special needs attending regular classes have not yet been assessed by the professional assessment teams in municipalities”²⁶. Actually, the statistics refer to 5,294 students with special needs included in regular classrooms and 271 of them included in special schools in 2016/17 school year. When these data are compared with those of the school year 2015/16 (5,815 in regular classrooms and 357 in special schools)²⁷, one can notice a small decrease of 9.8% of participation of students with special needs, which shows that the system for data collection and processing for this category **leaves a lot to be desired**. Drafting instruments for assessment of pedagogical needs of children with special needs – foreseen for 2017 – **is accomplished**. The MEST²⁸ highlights that the piloting of these instruments will take place from November 2017 until June 2018 in 7 schools of 7 municipalities: Prishtina, Mitrovica, Ferizaj, Gjakova, Prizren, Peja and Gjiilan. Implementation of these instruments in all schools is expected to begin in 2018/19.

23 Interview with Avni Rexha, Head of Division for General Education, MEST, 02.10.2017.

24 Interview with Nexhmije Hykolli, Secretary of school “Selman Riza” in Fushë Kosova, 18.10.2017.

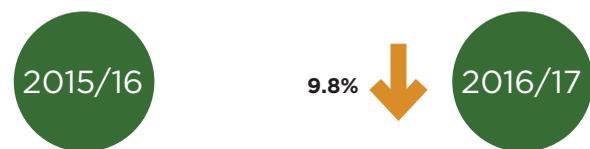
25 Interview with Shkurte Krasniqi, Deputy Director at PLSS “Zenel Hajdini”, 19.10.2017

26 Statistics of Education in Kosovo 2016/17, MEST-KAS, 2017.

27 Statistics of Education in Kosovo 2015/16, MEST-KAS, 2016.

28 Interview with Lulavere Behluli, Head of the Division for Education with Special Needs, MEST, 02.10.2017.

Children with Special Needs



Regular classrooms	5,815	5,294
Special schools	357	271

4.1.4 Inclusion of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian Children

Participation of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian children shows a clear increase trend at preschool level and is relatively stabilized at the level of compulsory education and in upper secondary education (Table 5). However, based on these data it is impossible to assess the progress of participation of these communities in the education system, given that referential data on population are lacking. Such an assessment can be conducted only by way of special survey accomplished in 2014²⁹.

Table 5. Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian Children in Pre-university Education

Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian Children in Pre-university Education



Preschool level	373	601
Grades 1-9	5,524	5,444
Grades 10-12	431	413

Source: MEST Statistics for school years 2015/16 and 2016/17

²⁹ Multiple Indicators Cluster Survey 2013-2014 – Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian Communities (MICS), Final Report, KAS, Prishtina 2014.

There is, however, an explanation on the increase of participation in preschool education. Numerous civil society organizations have worked in providing assistance for registration of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian children at this level of education, so that their preparation for compulsory education is as qualitative as possible.

MEST envisages two main ways for addressing the learning needs of children coming from the mentioned communities:

1. by advancing the performance of learning centres
2. facilitating registration requirements.

Learning Centres are informal educational institutions managed by NGOs and funded by various international donors. They provide supplementary educational services for needy children, aiming to improve their performance at school and their integration in the wider society. These services are especially provided to marginalized groups or groups of children having difficulties in learning which results due to lack of language knowledge, non-majority ethnical background, etc.

In August 2017, MEST adopted Administrative Instruction which governs functionalization of these centres.³⁰ This Instruction determines formal frameworks under which the learning centres operate and provide supplementary lessons and educational activities for students of pre-primary and primary ages in Kosovo, in particular for children of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian³¹ communities. In the total of 15 municipalities³², there are 40 learning centres which perform based on programmes which are not harmonized amongst them.

The Learning Centre of the organization “The Ideas Partnership” in Fushë Kosova, provides supplementary learning for students of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities by following the curriculum being used at PLSS “Selman Riza” in Fushë Kosova where most of beneficiaries of this centre attend lessons. Supplementary learning is provided by volunteers and the curriculum is prepared by the learning centre pedagogue who also monitors implementation of the curriculum. This curriculum aims to reflect the expected learning outcome. Besides the basic subjects, such as: Albanian Language, Maths and English Language, this curriculum includes also topics from areas such as health, life and work, as well as recreational activities. Therefore, besides increasing students’ capacities in the academic aspect, this learning centre aims to also develop other skills of the beneficiaries, such as: communication culture, work habits, socializing, and increasing awareness on the importance of schooling³³. According to the pedagogue “more than harmonizing curriculums between the learning centres in the country, **curricula alignment and a closer cooperation between schools, where children attend their lessons, and learning centres, where they attend supplementary classes, is necessary**”³⁴. Such coordination between the school and the learning centre would enable the learning centre to provide even further academic support to children during their supplementary learning.

KESP Action Plan foresees the drafting of a regulation on facilitation of registration requirements and attendance of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian children in preschool and upper secondary schools, which was actually not accomplished until September 2017³⁵. MEST plans to draft an Administrative Instruction on facilitation of registration requirements³⁶, but, according to MEST, lack of such Instruction should not hinder facilitation of registration requirement for children

³⁰ <http://masht.rks-gov.net/uploads/2017/08/ua-masht-nr-12-2017-per-themelimin-dhe-funksionimin-e-qmpdf.pdf>

³¹ <http://kosint2020.net/sq/lajme-dhe-ngjarje/miratimi-i-udhezimit-administrativ-nr-12-2017-per-themelimin-dhe-funksionimin-e-qendrave-mesimore-nga-ministria-e-arsimit/>

³² http://uboconsulting.com/PDF/al/Study_on_Impact_and_Sustainability_of_the_Learning_Centers-ALB.PDF

³³ http://uboconsulting.com/PDF/al/Study_on_Impact_and_Sustainability_of_the_Learning_Centers-ALB.PDF

³⁴ Interview with Hysni Hasanin, Coordinator of the Centre Ideas Partnership, 18.10.2017.

³⁵ <http://masht-smia.net/30.pdf>

³⁶ Interview with Nazan Safiqi, Head of the Division on Education of Communities, MEST, 02.10.2017.

of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities. Municipalities of Fushë Kosova³⁷ and Shtime are good examples where, despite lack of a Regulation, different activities are organized in order to facilitate registration at school³⁸ of children from Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities, such as: parents meetings at community centres, engaging community activists, or home visits by members of PRTDNs at, both, municipal and school levels.

4.1.5. Inclusion of Repatriated Children

During the second semester of 2016/2017 school year, around 300-320 repatriated students were equipped with school text books and didactic means dedicated to them. Additionally, in terms of supporting education of repatriated children, training was carried out with municipal officials on the programme for repatriated persons. In total, 11 municipality officials participated in these trainings. The teachers selected for implementation of the curriculum attended a one-day workshop in 11 involved municipalities. Furthermore, MEST³⁹ confirms that supplementary classes were monitored by municipalities, as foreseen by the action plan for 2017. MEST, in cooperation with GIZ, created working groups with municipality officials to monitor catch-up classes in schools. According to the monitoring report, supplementary learning was accomplished.

4.1.6. Supporting Children with Exceptional Potential

ATOM Institute is the only organization in Kosovo dealing with identification and support of children and young people with exceptional intellectual potential. As of 2011, project ATOM has in total identified 221 persons with exceptional intellectual potential Kosovo wide (aged 13-23 years old, of both sexes and almost from all municipalities and communities living in Kosovo). ATOM provides to the selected children some free-of-charge services and activities (depending on the available resources) such as: services of psychological counselling and career counselling services, summer school camps with some advanced courses, study visits and social and recreational activities.⁴⁰

During year 2017, “ATOM” was supported by MEST with a total amount of 15,000 euro. It was also supported by private sources⁴¹. Nevertheless, MEST has not undertaken any activity in identifying children with special talents within the education system, nor in providing any service to such category of children. The sole activity supported by MEST is organising competitions for secondary school students by the Association of Mathematicians of Kosovo

37 Interview with Islam Shabani, Director of Education in Fushë Kosova, 16.10.2017.
38 Interview with Nexhmije Hykolli, Secretary at “Selman Riza” school in Fushë Kosova, 18.10.2017.
39 Interview with Avni Rexha, Head of Division for General Education, MEST, 02.10.2017.
40 Interview with Jusuf Thaçi, Executive Director at “ATOM”, 01.12.2017.
41 Ibid.

MANAGEMENT OF EDUCATION SYSTEM



4.2. Objective 2: Management of Education System

Qualitative and efficient management of education system based on transparency and accountability.

SUMMARY OF MONITORING:

Activities aiming at building capacities at central and municipality level were not carried out according to the planning and, therefore, yielded limited effects.

There was no progress in regulating the status of school managing staff, which continues to depend on the will of municipality mayor.

71 participants on education management trainings were certified, while the process of organizing another four groups for training in this area is ongoing.

MTEF 2018-2020 included some expenditures related to implementation of new MEST policies at local level, such as budget for 560 quality assurance coordinators in the schools of Kosovo. Reviewing of the formula on financing of pre-university education is ongoing.

Preparations were made for entire integration of statistical data which enable their effective use in policy-making.

There is stagnation in adoption of necessary legislation for implementation of reforms in education, such as Law on Education Inspectorate, finalized in 2016.

Activities for prevention of violence in school were developed, but no planning on increase of safety at school was accomplished.

Construction of new school and preschool buildings was achieved according to the plan, as well as supplying of schools with inventory; however, there is no reliable data with regards to rehabilitation of existing school premises.

4.2.1. Management Capacity Building

Although action plan for 2017 foresees assessment of MEDs needs for professional development, nothing was done in this aspect. However, GiZ CDBE is planning, as of October 2017, to support the Collegium on Education of Association of Kosovo Municipalities in drafting of an action plan which will include as one of its activities the assessment of needs for professional development of MEDs. The KESP action plan for 2017 has envisaged the drafting of three manuals (Manual on Monitoring of Education Process in Municipalities, Manual on Registration and Licensing of Education Institutions, Manual on Training of Teaching and Administrative Staff in Schools); nevertheless, until this reporting period, GiZ CDBE has only reviewed the Handbook on Education Management in Municipalities published by Association of Kosovo Municipalities in 2015⁴².

During the course of data collecting, it was realized that no analysis was carried out on the needs for professional development of MEST staff during 2017, which would focus on policy-making and monitoring trainings, as foreseen by KESP. Whereas, regular monthly meetings between MEST and MEDs are of a routine character where, primarily, the current tasks of these institutions are discussed. They do not present the form of meetings where more complex education topics are tackled, as required by KESP, and the situation was the same in 2017, as well.

Based on the field data, Parents' Councils exist in every school but in a considerable number of schools these councils are not functional. Law provides that in the event the Parents' Council is non-functional within a 6-month period of time, the competencies of such council are transferred to the school director (appointed by the Mayor). This leads to de-functionalisation of an important body which represents the interests of the school and interests of the school community. KESP 2017 foresaw the monitoring of performance of Parents Councils; however, such thing was not done.

From the data collected to the present day, one can infer that GiZ CDBE plans to continue trainings with School Steering Councils in partner municipalities: Gjilan, Kaçanik, Klina, Fushë Kosova, Prishtina and Prizren. Given that a number of schools had been included earlier in such trainings offered by GiZ CDBE and BEP, from 2017 only schools from partner municipalities have now been included which had not been included earlier. The school network called "Learning Together Communities", established earlier in partner municipalities of GiZ CDBE, were functional. The school network "Learning Together Communities" has expanded as of 2017, thus encompassing also non-partner municipalities, such as Shtimje and Gjakova, and it is also planned to continue with extending such networks in Mitrovica, as well. During the visit at PLSS "Ismail Qemali"⁴³ in Prishtina, it was found out that the said school is included in the activity "Learning Together Communities" as of beginning of this school year, in cooperation with "Xhemajl Mustafa" school as the host of this activity with five other schools. Thus far, the impressions of this activity are positive

4.2.2 School Management Staff

In compliance with the legislation in force, directors continue to be appointed by municipality mayors, on 4-year mandates, based on the criteria and procedures provided by MEST⁴⁴. Directors are licensed only as teachers, and in order to apply for such a post they must be trained in some programme accredited for education management. The

42 <http://www.cdbe.info/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/03-Doracak-p%C3%ABr-Qeverisjen-e-Arsimit-n%C3%AB-Komuna.pdf>.

43 Interview with Hatmane Demiri, School Director at "Ismail Qemali" school, Prishtina, 06.10.2017.

44 Administrative Instruction 08/2014 Procedures and selection criteria of director and deputy director of instructive/educational and training institution, MEST.

determination that the director must be a professional whose position does not depend on the will of the municipality mayor is lacking. For this reason there is no genuine system in place for licensing of school managers.

Notwithstanding the fact that the development of a regulation on monitoring the performance of school directors was foreseen to take place in 2017, nothing was done in this aspect. The director is a civil servant and his/her performance can be assessed based on the rules on civil service, but this has not occurred in practice,⁴⁵ either.

As it regards to trainings on education management, it was identified that they have started in 2017 and 4 groups are in the process as an undertaking of GiZ CDBE. Whereas, from the groups that started in 2016, 71 participants were certified in 2017, out of which 34 are males and 37 females. It is worth pointing out that 24 of them are of Serbian ethnicity from Gjilan municipality. GiZ CDBE provides the training material, ensures quality and performs assessment of the participants at the end of the training, whereas the NGOs, who have an agreement with GiZ CDBE, implement such trainings.

4.2.3. Funding Mechanisms

Although MEST has highlighted as a priority of KESP the reviewing of the formula for funding of pre-university education, and this was planned within the ESIP project, such a thing was not accomplished until November of 2017. This has also had an impact on non-accomplishment of training of MEDs officials on finance management. Also, the expected analysis on the effectiveness of budgetary planning, at central and local level, was not carried out. Nevertheless, the Medium Term Expenditures Framework 2018-2020, included some of the expenses related to implementation of new policies of MEST at local level, as is the budget for 560 quality assurance coordinators in Kosovo schools.

During the national elections campaign of 2017, the entities, which later on formed the new governing coalition, made promises to increase wages in the public service in the amount of 30%⁴⁶, but an increase of only 4%⁴⁷ was accomplished, namely starting from 1st of January 2018. This fact has stressed the relationship between the Government and the Trade Union of Education, Science and Culture (TUESC) which has threatened with education employees going on strike⁴⁸.

4.2.4. Data Collecting and Processing

Drafting and publication of regular reports based on analyses and interpretation of data from IMES, is necessary in order to use them in the policy-making process. For this reason, the ESIP project is working on draft-concept on re-structuring of statistics division, and as a result, it is expected that the EMIS capacities be enhanced after the re-structuring of the division. Also, within the ESIP project the process of advancing the system has also started. At the current stage, only ToRs have been prepared, which foresee to integrate various systems (system of licencing, students assessment, data on the school infrastructure, the process of licensing schools, students and teachers databases) into a single system.

4.2.5. Legislation

The harmonizing and completion of the Legislation for the entire pre-university education sector, is an important result foreseen with the Action Plan of KEPS for 2017; however, to the present day no comprehensive analysis was carried out on the legislation and existing policies for pre-university education, nor has been drafted any plan for the development of new legislation. Although the Law on Education Inspectorate was drafted at the beginning of 2016, the same has not

45 E-mail from Vesel Hoda, GiZ CDBE, 3 November 2017.

46 <http://www.gazetaexpress.com/zgjedhjet-2017/veseli-e-haradinaj-garantoje-per-rritje-30-te-pagave-per-mesimdhene-sit-383407/>

47 <http://indeksonline.net/punetoret-qe-marrin-page-nga-buxheti-i-shtetit-u-rriten-pagat/>

48 <http://www.epokaere.com/sbask-u-nese-pagat-rriten-vetem-4-per-qind-nga-janari-ne-greve/>

passed through the screening procedures at Kosovo Assembly. Currently, this law must undergo the screening procedures again by the Government, in order to continue with its screening at Kosovo Assembly.

During 2017 it was also worked on the draft-law on the status of employees of Albanian education of the Republic of Kosovo from school year 1990/91 until the school year 1998/99, initiated in 2011 by Kosovo Assembly. The current version of the draft law foresees that education employees who worked from 1 to 5 years during the time period 1990/91-1998/99, shall be entitled to old-age pension in the amount of 65% of the basic wage in primary education, whereas those who have worked for more than 5 years, in the amount of 75% of the basic wage in primary education. In addition, other type of benefits, related to health services and social welfare, are also envisaged.

4.2.6. School Environments – Safety and Infrastructure

Aiming to create safe, friendly and healthy environments for all in schools, the MEST and MEDs undertook several steps, though they may be considered as being insufficient. At this stage it was realized that MEST has established the working group that will engage in the drafting of Administrative Instruction on healthy food in schools.

It was also found out that various activities were carried out aiming the increase of school and MEDs capacities in preventing violence. During the school year 2016/2017, 43 cases of violence in schools were registered in EMIS. With the purpose to increase the awareness of the school staff on the importance of reporting violence, in 2017, two trainings took place on Implementation of the Protocol for Prevention and Referral of violence in pre-university education institutions, where 20 schools from 9 municipalities were included. Peer Mediation Groups shall be established in these 20 schools, which will assist schools in solving conflicts amongst the peers. The process will continue with training of MED officials on using the Module for reporting of violence which is part of EMIS during months of October and November of 2017.

The process of fostering safe, friendly and healthy environments for all children in schools suffers significant stagnation. For example, no school has yet organized or held any training on health and safety, and 300 schools were equipped with first aid kits, as it was expected for this year.⁴⁹

According to the data from MEST - Department of Infrastructure and Technical Services, three school premises were constructed until the reporting date: in Batllavë/Podujevë, in Duhël/Suharekë and in Fushë Kosovë. By the end of the calendar year, it is expected to have another two school premises completed: the role-model school in Mitrovica and the school in Qirez/Skenderaj, thus accomplishing the plan foreseen in KESP 2017 for building of five new school premises in the entire territory of the Republic of Kosovo⁵⁰.

49 E-mail from Fadile Dyla – Head of the Division for Infrastructure, MEST, 20 October 2017.

50 Ibid.

MEST and European Commission have cooperated closely in the construction of kindergartens planned for 2017. Hence, the construction of three kindergartens was contracted by the joint budget of MEST and IPA 2016, whereas construction of another kindergarten was transferred to MAP. It is about building kindergartens in Shtime, Kaçanik, Rahovec and Prizren. These projects are envisaged to be completed in 2018⁵¹. Because of the contracted obligations for building schools, MEST has had limited projects in renovation of schools. Among the three only projects for renovation of schools, such renovation was completed in only one of them, renovation is ongoing in another one and the third school is in the process of repeating the publication procedures. MEST does not possess information from municipalities regarding the number of school premises renovated by municipalities themselves⁵².

During 2017, a total of 13 schools were equipped with school inventory. Whereas, seven sports halls were equipped with sports packages, and due to the budget constraints, three other sports halls remained without any sports equipment.

51 Ibid
52 Ibid.

QUALITY ASSURANCE



4.3. Objective 3: Quality Assurance

Developing a functional quality assurance system, in compliance with international standards

SUMMARY OF MONITORING

First steps were made in developing mechanisms on quality assurance in pre-university education. 140 quality assurance coordinators were appointed in primary and secondary schools, whereas, beginning from January 2018, the budget was allocated for 560 coordinators out of 1,100 that Kosovo schools are supposed to have. Nevertheless, the process of appointing coordinators has formality elements, given that some of the appointed coordinators are not able to perform their job due to other workload.

Legal prerequisites were created for evaluation of school performance. In addition, the methodology for school self-assessment was developed and is piloted in 63 schools, as was the methodology for external assessment, for which purpose 16 education inspectors were trained.

Administrative Instruction was issued on the performance of school activities and its implementation started in schools where the new curriculum was being piloted. Due to lack of monitoring, nothing can be said with regards to the effectiveness of functioning of such activities according to the new concept.

Municipal education development plans were drafted in 10 out of 36 municipalities, whereas in 140 schools school development plans were drafted. All these were accomplished with the support of donor-funded projects.

No step was undertaken towards establishment of the Agency on Curriculum, Assessment and Standards, despite the fact that such agency is foreseen under the law of 2011.

With the support of ESIP project, the process of debriefing municipalities and schools has started. Drafting of the new roadmap on administration and monitoring tests and developing the bank of questions including full characteristics of the questions.

Administration of national tests remains a weakness in their effective implementation. MEST has, also this year, not undertaken any radical steps on improvement such administration.

4.3.1 Quality Assurance Mechanisms

As expected for 2017, Kosovo Pedagogical Institute (KPI) with the support of UNICEF developed a methodology for self-assessment of schools⁵³, which was implemented in 63 schools where the new curriculum is being piloted. In August 2017, Administrative Instruction was approved on Assessment of Performance of Education Institutions in Pre-university Education⁵⁴, which determines the assessment methodology, as well as procedures for internal and external assessment. According to this instruction, the process of school performance internal assessment is carried out by the school-based team according to the areas of quality and the School Development Plan⁵⁵. The school director and another staff member of each school were trained and the schools submitted the self-assessment reports to the KPI, who then provided the follow-up on such reports. KPI capacity building is ongoing in order to systemize these reports in such a way as to draw conclusions concerning necessary interventions in the education system. This process is being supported by KulturKontakt-Austria⁵⁶.

In the scope of advancing quality in education, for 2017 the action plan also envisages inspectors performing school external assessments, as well as reliance on school external assessments. Until September 2017, when data for the purpose of this part of the report were collected, these activities were in the process of accomplishment, though with a delay. In 2016, the KPI trained 16 education inspectors for external assessment of schools and, upon completion of the training; the methodology was piloted in 7 schools. After the piloting, the roadmap for external assessment was finalized⁵⁷.

As the 2017 action plan foresees, the manual on quality management was drafted by EU funded Twinning Project and was published in January of 2017. This manual serves as grounds for training of quality assurance coordinators in schools which is carried out by the KPI, as well as for the work of quality assurance coordinators in schools. Tasks of quality assurance coordinators are described in the AI 2016/12⁵⁸. Based on the AI 24/2016, in schools with fewer than 150 students, the tasks of the quality assurance coordinator are performed by the school director, whereas in other schools, the director appoints one of the employees for this task. Also, AI determines the workload of the quality assurance coordinator depending on the number of students, criteria the coordinator must meet and provides a full description of the tasks of coordinator's work.

The 2017 action plan foresees appointment of quality assurance coordinators in 1,100 primary and secondary schools. Until August of 2017, a total of 140 quality assurance coordinators were appointed in institutions of pre-university education in Kosovo, whereas MTEF 2018-2020⁵⁹ secured the budget for 560 quality assurance coordinators starting from 2018. Reports from the field show that appointment of quality assurance coordinators is often characterised with formality, without fully understanding the role that such person must exercise. There are cases when in these positions are appointed teachers who do not have a full norm of teaching classes.

For instance, at "Ismail Qemali" school⁶⁰, the chemistry teacher was appointed as quality assurance coordinator, but although he has attended training for such task, according to the director, he fails to meet the objectives at a desirable level

53 <http://ipkmasht.rks-gov.net/udhezuesi-per-vleresimin-e-brendshem-te-shkolles/>
54 <http://masht.rks-gov.net/uploads/2017/08/4-2017-ua-vleresimin-e-performances-se-institucioneve-arsimore-ne-ar-simin-parauniversitar-rotated.pdf>
55 Ibid.
56 http://www.kulturkontakt.or.at/html/D/wp.asp?pass=x&p_lcd=de&p_title=5452&rn=179122
57 Roadmap on school external performance assessment, KPI, 2017.
58 <http://masht.rks-gov.net/uploads/2016/12/rotatedpdf180.pdf>
59 <https://mf.rks-gov.net/desk/inc/media/FO499CD8-DB8B-48A0-9B2B-F313CB114E67.pdf>
60 Interview with Hatmane Demiri, School Director at "Ismail Qemali" Prishtina, 06.10.2017.

in school. This happens, primarily, because the teacher was not relieved of teaching classes, and this hampers his focusing on coordinator's tasks, as mentioned above. There are similar examples of not relieving quality coordinators from teaching tasks at "Xhemajl Mustafa" school in Prishtina⁶¹ and in "Selman Riza" school in Fushë Kosovë.⁶²

A good example of implementation of the aforementioned AI is "Mihal Grameno" school in Fushë Kosovë. Based on the large number of students, over 2,400, in September 2017, a class teacher was appointed as quality assurance coordinator in this school and was entirely released of the teacher's position and is now exercising only the tasks of quality assurance coordinator at the school level. Her selection as quality assurance coordinator was also conducted in compliance with the criteria set under the AI, given that she had attended adequate trainings, although, according to her, they were rather hasty and not sufficiently effective. Upon starting work, the quality assurance coordinator focused on consolidating professional committees within the school. Professional departments, such as: language department, social sciences department, natural sciences, mathematics and CIT, skills, as well as class teachers departments, have functioned quite well in this school even in the absence of the quality assurance coordinator. Nonetheless, according to quality coordinator, there is still room for their improvement and consolidation, particularly in strengthening the role of each head of the department, as well as establishing closer cooperation between members of the same department through frequent meetings. However, at such initial stage of exercising her new duties, she faces numerous difficulties, starting from lack of working space – office, working means – laptop, as well as lack of dispensable material that was supposed to be provided by the MED⁶³. Another good example is at PLSS "Zenel Hajdini" in Prishtina, where the quality assurance coordinator, elected in September 2017, was released of 8 regular teaching classes, thus respecting the criteria set under the AI. Quality assurance coordinator of this school is at the same time the Head of the Internal School Performance Assessment⁶⁴.

Based on the data collected until September 2017, it is ascertained that appointment of department leaders in schools, which was foreseen by the action plan for this year, was partially accomplished. The MEST AI No. 22/2016 on School Professional Actives (Departments) was adopted in November 2016⁶⁵. The AI obliges schools to establish departments based on subject areas of the New Curriculum. In addition, it determines the criteria and the manner of selecting the department leaders. Such groups were established in schools where the new curriculum is being implemented, while in other schools the functioning of professional departments continues based on the current system. Nevertheless, from September 2017, all schools shall gradually transfer into the new system; hence, departments shall be organized in compliance with the new regulation. It must be hereby emphasized that the AI only sanctions and specifies a several-years-old practice of functioning of professional departments in schools; however, it does not necessarily change their operating practice. The AI does not foresee any compensation for department leaders, while their appointment is made by the school director. This may pose a risk for the work of departments to be characterised by formality.

AI 22/2016⁶⁶ provides for establishment of joint departments of several schools ("Learning Together Communities") and at municipality level. Such groups at municipality level were established by the MED – Prishtina and MED – Gjakova, but there are reports on serious obstacles on their functioning due to non-payment and improper coordination. Appointment of quality assurance coordinators in municipalities, as it was foreseen in the action plan, based on the data collected by September 2017, was partially accomplished. To the present date, we have no information whether all the municipalities

61 Interview with Shpresa Shala, School Director at "Xhemajl Mustafa" Prishtina, 06.10.2017.

62 Interview with Ruzhdi Krasniqi, Quality Assurance Coordinator and Teacher of English Language at "Selman Riza" school in Fushë Kosovë, 18.10.2017.

63 Interview with Mimoza Kryeziu, Quality Coordinator at PLSS "Mihal Grameno" in Fushë Kosovë, 18.10.2017.

64 Interview with Shkurta Krasniqi, Deputy Director at PLSS "Zenel Hajdini" Prishtina, 19.10.2017.

65 <http://masht.rks-gov.net/uploads/2016/12/22-ua-nr-22-2016-per-aktivitetet-profesionale-te-shkollave.pdf>

66 <http://masht.rks-gov.net/uploads/2016/12/22-ua-nr-22-2016-per-aktivitetet-profesionale-te-shkollave.pdf>

have appointed quality coordinators, but we are aware that a considerable number of them have already done this. Nevertheless, it must be highlighted that quality coordinators are, usually, appointed municipality education officials who have other engagements in the MED, which influences this task not to be dealt with priority. During an interview with the MED of Fushë Kosova⁶⁷ it was found out that two quality assurance coordinators were appointed in this municipality. They carry out regular visits in schools and cooperate with quality assurance coordinators at school level.

The action plan for 2017 foresees assigning education inspectors for external school performance assessment, assigning education inspectors for teacher licensing and assigning inspectors for administrative inspection. However, until December 2017, the Draft Law on Education Inspectorate, though prepared as of beginning of 2016, was not adopted by the Assembly⁶⁸. Accordingly, the formal distinction of inspectors' duties was not done, in compliance with the law. Inspectors continue to be divided based on geographical regions and performing general duties, but some of them have been involved in the piloting of external school assessment, as well as in piloting of assessment of teachers' performance, which does not necessarily mean that they will continue performing these duties.

Another activity, foreseen in the action plan for 2017, is also making monitoring data available to the MEDs and schools for their use; however, based on information, until the new Law is adopted, education inspectors perform routine visits in schools and inspection reports are shared only with the MEDs. Given that this activity deals with external assessment reports, which is at a very early stage of implementation, one cannot claim that there was some progress. From the data collected at "Ismail Qemali" school⁶⁹, one could realize that there have been routine visiting of this school by the education inspectors who monitor teaching classes (a total of 8 classrooms were monitored during the school year 2016/2017), review the documentation of the school director and of the psycho/pedagogical and administrative staff, but they focus very briefly on the quality of teaching. They also provide very little follow-up information for school management and this thwarts them in making the needed improvements. On the other hand, Shpresa Shala⁶¹ asserted that there was no visit or monitoring by education inspectors at "Xhemajl Mustafa" school during her mandate as the school director, namely since August 2015.

4.3.2. School Development Planning

As foreseen in the action plan for 2017, the roadmap "School Development Plan and Project Management" (Module 4) was reviewed by a working group established by GiZ CDBE. Schools have already started to use the reviewed roadmap in drafting of development plans which is in compliance with the new AI 23/2016⁷⁰ on School Development Plan and Municipality Plan that determines the new procedure on drafting and approving of such plans. The AI determines the format of the development plan, whereas instruments are provided in the annex of the AI⁷¹. The AI identifies 31st of March as the deadline for drafting/reviewing of school development plans.

The KEEN European Union funded project has assisted in drafting of 5-year development plans in seven Kosovo municipalities: Prishtina, Prizren, Gjilan, Ferizaj, Gjakova, Mitrovica and Peja. In addition, GiZ CDBE has supported the drafting of municipal development plans in Kaçanik, Klina and Fushë Kosova. These plans reflect the development needs of municipalities in the area of education and are in harmony with KESP.

67 Interview with Islam Shabani, Director of Education in Fushë Kosova, 16.10.2017.

68 <http://www.kuendikosoves.org/common/docs/ligjet/05-L-114.pdf>

69 Interview with Hatmane Demiri, School Director at "Ismail Qemali" Prishtina, 06.10.2017.

70 <http://masht.rks-gov.net/uploads/2016/12/rotatedpdf90.pdf>

71 <http://masht.rks-gov.net/uploads/2016/12/23-shtojce-e-ua-23-2016-pzhsh-dhe-pzhak-final-30102016pdf-pjesa-2.pdf>

Until September 2017, the ESIP project, implemented by MEST and funded by World Bank loan, within its sub-component 1.3 – School Development Grants, supported 140 selected grant beneficiary schools for drafting their school development plans. However, out of total 24 schools that will benefit from these grants, information from the field show that a small number of municipalities have strengthened the integrated approach of planning, in spite of being notified of such an approach. In general it was noticed that the cooperation MEST – MED – School is deficient in the vast majority of municipalities.

Although it was foreseen that, in 2017, the framework on monitoring and implementation of school development plans would be developed, it was never accomplished. Nevertheless, even in the absence of such framework, a type of external assessment of development plans will be conducted in 2017 by the “School Development Grants” project.

4.3.3. Capacity Building for Quality Assurance

Amongst the efforts on capacity building for education inspectors, trainings were organized for school performance assessments, which were accomplished between October 2016 – May 2017, and which continued until December 2017. In these activities, 16 education inspectors were involved. Drafting the manual for school departments and organizing informative sessions in schools/municipalities was foreseen in the action plan for 2017, but the data collected until September 2017 show that they were not accomplished. Apart from the MEST AI No. 22/2016 on Professional Committees, which was adopted in November 2016, no specific manual is available for the work of professional departments. Nevertheless, some general instructions on their role and implementation of the new curriculum are provided by “Roadmap on Management of Curriculum in School”⁷², a KPI publication in 2016, but this does not represent a replacement of specific instructions directly relating to daily operation of such departments.

Based on the data collected for the purpose of this report, until September 2017, several activities foreseen for 2017 were accomplished on schools’ capacity building on management of quality. The European Union funded Twinning Project has trained around 200 quality coordinators from schools of all over Kosovo. These trainings also included 35 school directors and 24 quality coordinators at municipality level. Training was delivered by KPI trainers based on the manual for quality management drafted by the Twinning Project.

In the aspect of capacity building of municipality professional groups, according to the data collected in September 2017, there was no progress in this direction. The role of these groups is to support schools in the implementation of new curriculum, and the fact that those groups do not operate properly represents a challenge for the implementation of the new curriculum. This assertion is supported by data collected at “Ismail Qemali” school⁷³ where it was identified that besides insufficient training on the new curriculum, teachers feel unprepared and unsupported in its implementation in teaching classes.

In the framework of capacity building of schools and municipalities on development planning, as it was foreseen in the action plan for 2017, trainings on school development planning have continued, either within the GiZ CDBE programme on education management, or as specific activities. One of the specific activities was organized within the “School Development Grants” project where 280 representatives from 140 schools were trained on SDP, who were also assisted in drafting the 3-year development plans. Representatives of MEDs participated in such training, as well.

⁷² <http://ipkmasht.rks-gov.net/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/Udhezuesi-per-zbatim-te-kurrikules1.pdf>
⁷³ Interview with Bajram Vrapçani, Deputy Director at “Ismail Qemali” school, Prishtina, 06.10.2017

With regards to establishment of Agency on Curriculum, Assessment and Standards, data collected until September 2017 show that no progress was made in this direction. It is surprising how fulfilment of a legal obligation is procrastinated from one year to another considering that the same agency covers the most sensitive areas of education system on which the quality of the learning outcome directly depends on

4.3.4 External Student Assessment

The national assessment system enjoys the support of ESIP project funded by the World Bank, and it performs several activities foreseen in the action plan 2017. In order to support the improvement of this system, 3 million USD were allocated, and this figure covers implementation of the system for providing follow-up information to municipalities and schools, drafting of the new roadmap on administration and monitoring of tests and developing the bank of questions entailing entire questions’ characteristics. The Unit for Assessment and Standards is in the stage of selecting the international company which will provide professional support when addressing these issues. It seems that dependence on international expertise is of such a great extent that no significant progress was made in any of these activities. In this direction, publication of best practice examples was also not accomplished, though they were foreseen in the action plan for 2017. The quality assurance web portal does is not in place, nor was there any organized form of sharing quality assurance best practices.

The action plan for 2017 foresaw preparing the promoting material for informing parents, as well as conducting the informative awareness campaign through electronic media; however, based on the data collected until September 2017, these activities were not accomplished. Moreover, there was no campaign targeting parents.

Organizing the annual conference on quality assurance is a very important activity foreseen by the KESP, however, until the end of 2017 such activity did not take place. Actually, the last such conference was held at the end of 2015.

The result of national tests which are implemented within the education system in Kosovo may serve as a reflection of quality level in pre-university education, provided that the result is reliable and is based on students’ knowledge. Therefore, as it is foreseen by the KESP Action Plan, the new roadmap was drafted on administration and monitoring of tests. However, with respect to drafting of the programme for training of administrators and monitors of tests, only informative sessions for administrators were realized which lasted around 2 hours and have no training character.

Administration remains the weakest point in the management of national tests⁷⁴. MEST maintains that MEDs appointed test administrators who were subsequently informed by MEST regarding their duties. Also, each administrator was equipped with an AI on administration of tests so that it is clear what their role as administrator includes. Moreover, in 2017, media and civil society organizations were also invited to monitor the state Matura exam. Their reports were very critical, but this fact did not help the test to be more reliable.

⁷⁴ Interview with Mustafë Kadriu, Head of the Division for Standards, Monitoring and Assessment, MEST, 28.09.2017.

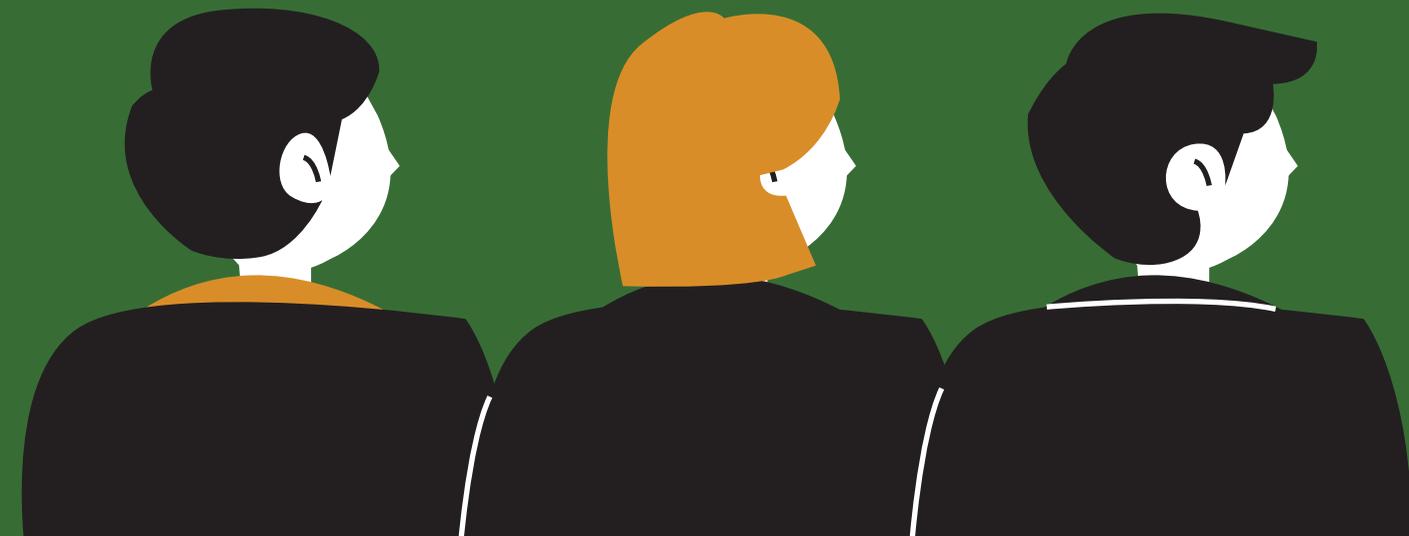
The average success in the achievement test, which is held at the end of the ninth grade, was 58 points in June 2017, which represents a decrease compared with the average of June 2016 – 64.7 points⁷⁵, whereas, the pass rate of the state Matura exam is much higher in 2017 – 83.5%⁷⁶ compared with the one from 2016 – 53.9%⁷⁷. Such results infer the necessity to work on improvement of administration and further standardization of tests.

Following the publication of PISA test results for 2015 (see Chapter 2 of this report), MEST established a working group intending to analyse the causes of the poor outcome and to make the required changes in the education system⁷⁸. This step bore no results because the budget was not provided to carry out the research proposed by the Working Group. By the end of 2017 the new Working Group for PISA was established, whose primary task is to make the necessary preparations for PISA test of 2018, including the increase of students awareness to “give the maximum of the acquired knowledge and come up with as best results as possible”⁷⁹.

Nevertheless, with the support of ESIP project, a national report was drafted on PISA test which is still in the form of a draft report. The report introduces recommendations on improvement of education system situation by emphasizing the need to enhance reading skills.

75 Information from MEST DSMA.
76 <http://masht.rks-gov.net/article/rezultatet-e-provimit-te-matures-shteterore-2017-afati-i-qershorit>
77 <http://masht.rks-gov.net/article/kqshm-shpalli-rezultatet-e-testit-te-matures-kalueshmeria-539-perqind>
78 <http://www.ekonomiaonline.com/nacionale/shoqeri/masht-planifikon-disa-hulumtime-ne-teren-para-testit-pi-sa-2018/>
79 <http://masht.rks-gov.net/article/masht-intensifikon-pergaditjet-per-testin-nderkombetar-pisa2018>

TEACHER DEVELOPMENT



4.4. Objective 4: Teacher Development

Enhancement of teaching quality through an effective and sustainable system on preparing and professional development of teachers.

SUMMARY OF MONITORING:

Notwithstanding the adoption of legal acts and policies that govern teacher professional development, this process still lacks genuine coordination of and support by analyses of needs. Selection of training depends, to a great extent, on the perception of MEST and MEDs officials, as well as on donors' priorities.

During 2017, the main focus was on training teachers to implement the new curriculum, where over 9,300 teachers were involved. On the other hand, no specific training was held on implementation of sectorial curricula and profile frameworks of VET.

The process of teacher performance assessment has not started yet. Moreover, no clear action plan exists for future development of this process, despite the fact that it has already been worked on preparation of necessary documents for training of inspectors.

Teacher licensing is done only for the career license level, where performance assessment is not required. Although it was foreseen in the action plan of KESP 2017, the drafting of AI on harmonizing of grades with the wages system was not achieved due to lack of budget. Increase of wages continues to take place in linear manner.

Data from Faculty of Education show that the number of excellent students who enrol in this faculty has increased. In the academic year 2017/18, 70% of enrolled candidates are excellent students.

4.4.1. Teacher Professional Development

Building a sustainable system of teacher professional development in the function of accomplishing education reforms is a prerequisite for advancing teaching quality. During 2017, MEST drafted the legal framework which enables the progress of teacher professional development process. Three administrative instructions were issued within a year, which are directly connected with the teacher development: AI 3/2017 on the State Council for Teachers Licensing (SCTL)⁸⁰, AI 5/2017 - on Licensing System and Development of Teachers in Career⁸¹, AI 6/2017 – on Criteria and Procedures of Programs Approval for Teachers Professional Development and Educational Workers⁸².

Teacher Professional Development Framework (TPDF)⁸³ was adopted in April 2017, which sets forth the standards of teachers' profession, including preparing pre-service teachers, initial stage of practicing and career development. Also, the TPD Framework determines competencies at different stages of the career and serves as a guide in organizing the teacher professional development in those stages. Teachers' profile of competencies consists of 7 standards which determine what a teacher must know and what he/she must do. The standards cluster in four groups: professional values, professional knowledge and understanding, professional practice and teaching, and professional commitment.

In Kosovo there is still no system in place for identification of needs for professional development at school level, processing of such data at municipal level and organizing training according to the teachers' demands. The complexity of coordination within governmental institutions has affected the drafting of the framework be postponed at a later time. Allocation of budget for teachers' professional development was, to a certain extent, challenging in 2017. MEST provided the required material for trainings that were organized on training of teachers to implement the KCF, while organizations that carried out other TPD trainings, secured themselves the necessary materials. Although the KESP 2017 working plan foresees that municipalities should equip the Centres of Competence (CeC) with necessary material, as well as to establish 2 new CeCs, such a thing was not accomplished due to budgetary constraints.

The MEST Division for Trainings has accomplished almost all activities dealing with TPD in 2017. During this year, 13 programs on professional development were accredited, whereas over 9,300 teachers of pre-university level attended training on implementation of KCF.

It has to be emphasized that no program for vocational schools was submitted for accreditation in the MEST office for trainings. Likewise, no specific trainings were held on implementation of sectorial curricula and profile frameworks of VET.

80 <http://masht.rks-gov.net/uploads/2017/08/3-2017-ua-per-keshillin-shteteror-per-licencim-te-mesimdheneseve.pdf>

81 <http://masht.rks-gov.net/uploads/2017/08/sistemimi-i-licencimit-dhe-zhvillimit-te-mesimdheneseve-ne-karriere.pdf>

82 <http://masht.rks-gov.net/uploads/2017/08/6-2017-ua-per-kriteret-dhe-procedurat-e-aprovimit-te-programeve-per-zhvillim-profesional-te-mesimdheneseve-dhe-punonjeseve-arsimor-rotated.pdf>

83 <http://masht.rks-gov.net/uploads/2017/04/kornize-strategjike.pdf>

4.4.2. Teachers Licensing

Teachers licensing is an important process in education. It refers to the formal process a school uses to review and assess the performance and effectiveness of teachers in the classroom. Ideally, findings from these assessments are used to attain trainings for teachers and to manage their professional development. Although teachers' performance assessment process is foreseen in the KESP 2017 action plan, data reveal that it has not yet started. According to the Department for Inspection, efforts are being made for finalization of documents related to performance assessment process. No specific review was conducted on the AI on teachers' performance assessment, but rather a reviewing of some parts of the earlier AI, which reflected within the AI 5/2017⁸⁴ on the Licensing System and Development of Teachers in Career. On the other hand, the process is ongoing on finalizing the manual with instruments for performance assessment⁸⁵.

Also, as it was foreseen in the action plan of KESP, during 2017 training of inspectors took place in relation to teacher performance assessment, but not for any other assessor. Non-finalizing of documents that enable teacher performance assessment has reflected so that the trainings on school management and information of teachers and other officials are postponed for a later point in time. MEST Inspectorate Department has still no action plan in place for teacher performance assessment.

In 2017, MEST along with the Kosovo Pedagogical Institute began delivering "Internal School Assessment" training, which also includes teachers' performance assessment. Internal school assessment directly influences the enhancement of the school quality, thus including assessments from different angles, such as assessment of teachers, director, students, parents, wider community. The roadmap on school internal assessment is in full alignment with⁸⁶ Administrative Instruction No. 4/2017 on Performance Assessment of Educational Institutions in Pre-university Education⁸⁷.

In the scope of entire functionalization of teachers' licensing system, MEST drafted the action plan on organizing the licensing process. Until this reporting period of time, no meetings were held with teachers with regards to licensing; however, they are planned to be held quite soon. During 2017, over 1,200 teachers have acquired the career license.

Drafting of the AI on alignment of grades with the wages system was not accomplished, although it was foreseen in the action plan of KESP 2017. In general, it seems there is no readiness to create a link between teacher's performance and wages. To this account goes also the continuity of increasing wages for all categories paid by Kosovo Budget on a fixed and same percentage for everyone.

84 <http://masht.rks-gov.net/uploads/2017/08/sistemimi-i-licencimit-dhe-zhvillimit-te-mesimdhenesve-ne-karriere.pdf>

85 <https://ipkmasht.rks-gov.net/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/UDHEZUESI-PER-VETEVLERESIM1.pdf>

86 <http://masht.rks-gov.net/uploads/2017/08/4-2017-ua-vleresimin-e-performances-se-institucioneve-arsimore-ne-ar-simin-parauniversitar-rotated.pdf>

87 Interview with Liridon Maliqi - Director at "Qamil Batalli" school, Prishtina, 18 October 2017.

4.4.3. Preparing New Teachers

The data collected at this stage show that standards have not been drafted on the admittance of students in faculties of education because the criteria of the vacancy announcement for student enrolment in education faculties are considered to be sufficient⁸⁸. However, the Faculty of Education in Prishtina, in the vacancy announcement for new students for the academic year 2017/18 has increased the admission standards, thus achieving to have 70% of students with excellent grades. This measure was undertaken on self-initiative of the Faculty in Prishtina and not as a requirement of MEST.

Faculty of Education (FE) denies that MEST requested the faculty to harmonize its learning programmes with KCF⁸⁹. They assert that MEST requests nothing from them and that they have no institutional support of whatsoever except for wages which is an obligation of MEST. The collected data show that no training was organized for the FE personnel with regard to drafting and implementation of programmes in line with the KCF⁹⁰. Owing to the initiative and the grant acquired from TEMPUS project, the FE in Prishtina shall admit this year the second generation on Pedagogy Master Studies programme for vocational schools, a programme which is accredited by Kosovo Accreditation Agency.

88 Interview with Majlinda Gjellaj, Deputy Dean on Academic Matters at FE, Prishtina, 18 October 2017.

89 Ibid.

90 Ibid.

TEACHING AND LEARNING



4.5. Objective 5: Teaching and Learning

Maximizing learning through quality teaching, by implementing competency-based curricula and by using high quality teaching resources.

SUMMARY OF THE MONITORING:

The decision to implement the new curriculum in grades 0, 1, 6 and 10 has been taken only one month before the beginning of the new school year. Its implementation started despite the lack of textbooks and teaching aids which are required by the new curriculum. Significant difficulties are reported in schools in the implementation of the new curriculum as a consequence of insufficient preparations and lack of continuous professional support.

Monitoring the implementation of the new curriculum continues to remain an unresolved issue. Until September 2017, no monitoring plan has been developed which would bring up relevant information regarding the challenges in curriculum implementation and provide a possibility to address such challenges.

The process of designing new textbooks has not been defined, the call for new textbooks has not been published, and the proposals from the publishing houses have not been received and reviewed. In addition, there are still some dilemmas whether the textbooks should be designed by local publishers, translated from foreign languages, or taken from Albania.

Limited progress has been made in promoting the use of ICT equipment in schools. Apart from supplying schools with new computers, there were no coordinated activities to install computer networks and providing internet access for teaching purposes, including the installation of SMART TVs or projectors in the classrooms. Likewise, activities to promote the use of electronic materials for learning purposes have lacked.

4.5.1. Implementation of the new curriculum

The implementation of the new competency-based Curriculum of Kosovo has been launched in all grades 0, 1, 6 and 10 in the academic year 2017/18. Although the preparations for this process had started earlier, the formal decision to expand the curriculum to grades 0, 1, 6 and 10 in all Kosovo schools was taken only one month before the start of the new school year, without disclosing the results of several years of piloting and without making any changes to the textbooks.

In fact, subject programs, which had been developed beforehand, were delivered to schools in August 2016, then discussions and their use in schools took place. During the school year 2016/17, around 9,300 teachers of grades 0, 1, 6 and 10 were trained. During the first training cycle, which was held in October - November 2016, a questionnaire was shared with the participants in trainings in order to obtain information regarding the programs and start using them. Three reports were also prepared for MEST – Curricula Division, which were used to finalize the programs for grades 0, 1, 6 and 10. As a result, these programs were adopted in August 2017, and they have been implemented in all schools since September 2017⁹¹. Guidelines for the implementation of the curricula for seven curricular areas which were published in October 2016, were reviewed during 2017, as envisaged in the action plan.

The school “Xhemajl Mustafa”⁹² was one of the schools where the new curricula has been piloted for the last 4 years. During the initial phase, particularly during the first two years, teachers had been faced with many difficulties, including the non-alignment of curricula with textbooks, absence of pedagogical documentation, lack of syllabus and other learning materials to adapt to the results, as well as, coping with the resistance to changes and lack of guidelines and support by MEST in the implementation of new curricula in the school.

Now, four years later, during the school year 2017/2018, the new curriculum is being implemented at all levels of this school, apart from grade five, and the school director, Ms. Shpresa Shala is of an opinion that teachers stand relatively well with curriculum implementation, though not completely at the desirable level. This is due to the fact that some teachers have not yet overcome their difficulties in understanding the new curriculum. Ms. Shala has also emphasized the lack of the means of concretization, study visits, and basic textbooks. The issue of ensuring teaching materials has been left in the hands of teachers, and there are no concrete methods to assess whether teachers have sufficient skills and competencies to properly evaluate what meets the expected outcomes of the new curriculum.

Interviews in schools reveal many difficulties faced by the directors in relation to training and implementation of the new curriculum. For example, in “Ismail Qemali” school, all first, sixth and pre-school teachers have attended a one-week training on the new curriculum at the end of August 2017⁹³. Teachers expressed their dissatisfaction with the insufficiency of the training and unclear instructions on how to implement the new curriculum, which were provided, very often, by trainers, who, according to them, did not possess sufficient skills to transfer the knowledge at the required level during the trainings. As a result, teachers in general feel unprepared and concerned regarding the implementation of the new curriculum.

In addition, non-alignment and non-adaptation of textbooks with the new curriculum makes teachers’ work even more difficult, as they are forced to make the selection of teaching materials from other sources to tailor them to the syllabi of the new curriculum.

91 <http://masht.rks-gov.net/arsimi-parauniversitar>

92 Interview with Shpresa Shala, director of the school “Xhemajl Mustafa” Pristina, 06.10.2017.

93 Interview with Bajram Vrapçani, deputy director of the school “Ismail Qemali, Pristina, 06.10.2017.

The same difficulties and concerns in the implementation of the new curriculum have been noticed in other schools as well, such as “Mihal Grameno”⁹⁴ and “Selman Riza”⁹⁵ schools in Fushë Kosovë, and “Zenel Hajdini”⁹⁶ school in Pristina. In “Mihal Grameno”⁹⁷ school, a specific concern was raised regarding the lack of materials needed for printing teaching plans and materials, due to the lack of consumables. Having a large number of students and teachers, this school has been continuously challenged with this problem, as it receives very little support in consumables from the MED. Although there is a lack of materials in LSS “Selman Riza”⁹⁸ in Fushë Kosovë, the school has appointed a curricula coordinator who has facilitated the process of curricula implementation, providing support to his/her colleagues in the design and preparation of weekly and bi-monthly plans.

For 2017, the action plan foresees the design and review of all trainings for school directors, teachers and school administrators, an activity that has been carried out this year. In this respect, KPI has drafted a Guide on managing the implementation of the curriculum in schools, which has been distributed to schools through MEDs. The training program for school directors has been reviewed by GIZ, however, at this stage, it is not known as to what extent the part of the revised curriculum has been included. The school directors of “Ismail Qemali” and “Xhemajl Mustafa”⁹⁹ ¹⁰⁰ schools pointed out that they have not participated in any trainings on the new curriculum. Both directors consider that the training of directors on the new curriculum a necessity, since s director can be a very important factor in the implementation of the new curriculum.

Information of parents about the new curriculum is seen as important in the KESP action plan. From the collected data, it appears that there were 7 regional meetings with school directors, MEDs and other education representatives related to the information on the new curriculum, but it is not clear whether parents participated in these meetings.

The action plan has foreseen, for 2017, the monitoring of the new curriculum implementation, however, this activity has not been carried out until September 2017 when the data for this report were collected.

4.5.2. Textbooks

The action plan for 2017 foresees the development of textbooks and other learning materials for all grades and all subjects, but this has not been implemented. The process of designing the textbooks has not been defined, the call for new textbooks has not been published, and the proposals from the publishing houses have not been received and reviewed. In addition, there are still some dilemmas whether the textbooks should be designed by local publishers, translated from foreign languages, or taken from Albania.

The managers of the schools that were visited, “Ismail Qemali” and “Xhemajl Mustafa” have expressed their indignation about the quality of the current textbooks at all levels. According to the director of the school “Ismail Qemali”¹⁰¹, the textbooks and workbooks in many subjects have been produced by different publishers and they are not harmonized with each other. This leads to an additional difficulty for the teacher and creates confusion for students. In the same way, the

94 Interview with Ismet Gashi, director of SHFMU “Mihal Grameno, Fushë Kosovë, 18.0.2017.

95 Interview with Myrrete Krasniqi, teacher in SHFMU “Selman Riza” Fushë Kosovë, 18.0.2017.

96 Interview with Shkurta Krasniqi, deputy director of PLSS “Zenel Hajdini” Pristina, 19.10.2017.

97 Interview with Mimoza Kryeziu, quality coordinator in PLSS “Mihal Grameno” Fushë Kosovë, 18.10.2017.

98 Interview with Esad Simnica, curriculum coordinator and ICT teacher in PLSS “Selman Riza” në Fushë Kosovë, 18.10.2017.

99 Interview with Hatmane Demiri, director of the school “Ismail Qemali, Pristina, 06.10.2017.

100 Interview with Shpresa Shala, director of the school “Xhemajl Mustafa” Pristina, 06.10.2017.

101 Interview with Hatmane Demiri, director of the school “Ismail Qemali, Pristina, 06.10.2017.

director of the school “Xhemajl Mustafa”¹⁰² pointed out that majority of the textbooks do not meet the requirements of the new curriculum, and the situation is much worse with English language textbooks as there are no textbooks for grades I, II, while the textbooks for grades III, IV are not suitable any longer. According to Ms. Shala, in general, the textbooks are badly written, thus, there have always been complaints regarding the textbooks.

An analysis of current textbooks¹⁰³ has shown that they have serious flaws in terms of scientific accuracy of facts, overload the encouragement of critical thinking, in terms of didactic-methodological and gender aspects, as well as, content wise. Although efforts have been made since 2013 to avoid these flaws, no tangible results have come out of these efforts, since there were reports of serious flaws detected in the textbooks in 2017 as well.¹⁰⁴¹⁰⁵¹⁰⁶

The action plan for 2017 foresees also the provision of textbooks to free of charge, and this has been partially implemented. Free textbooks have been distributed only for the primary level of education, while this has not happened for other levels, due to the lack of the budget. The foreseen training of 2000 teachers on the use of electronic materials has not taken place either.

4.5.3. Education technology

Providing schools with ICT equipment and other teaching aids is a necessity in order to ensure successful implementation of the new curriculum. According to the action plan, in 2017, it is foreseen to start the installation of telecommunication infrastructure in all educational institutions, however, at this stage of data collection, no information has been received regarding this issue. During the visit to the MED¹⁰⁷ of Fushë Kosovë municipality, it was reported that the installation of telecommunication infrastructure in the education institutions of this municipality is in the process. All the schools have ICT cabinets. At this stage, the general gymnasium “Hivzi Sylejmani” and the secondary economic school have 60 desktop computers and 20 laptops, and during this year the MED aims to supply both schools with 50 extra laptops to be used by students. Although the action plan foresees to start the provision of internet access, in 2017, for all educational institutions, in September 2017 it was reported that most of the schools, but not all of them, have access to the Internet. This applies mainly to the school administration, and in some schools for the ICT cabinets, but not for wider use in the teaching process. It is also foreseen to supply 1,000 classrooms with smart TVs, however, based on the information available until September 2017, this has not been implemented. In fact, only the model school in Pristina has been provided one smart TV. However, during the interview in the MED¹⁰⁸ of Fushë Kosovë municipality, it was reported that PLSS “Mihal Grameno” was supplied with 10 smart TVs in 2017. Accurate information regarding the supply of schools with computers is lacking, but it is evident that there were some investments in this regard. In 2017, it was also foreseen to encourage students and teachers to bring their personal ICT equipment to school, and to conclude agreements between MEST and ICT companies interested to provide affordable payment terms for leasing laptops, but no progress has been noted in this respect.

102 Interview with Shpresa Shala, director of the school “Xhemajl Mustafa” Pristina, 06.10.2017.

103 Jusuf Thaçi: Problems and flaws of textbooks, Pristina, January 2013. http://jetanekosove.com/repository/docs/Tekstet_ANALIZA_shqip_339320.pdf

104 <http://zeri.info/aktuale/170781/librat-plot-me-gabime-permbajtjesore-dhe-teknike/>

105 <http://www.koha.net/arberi/58992/prinderit-ankohen-se-ne-tekstet-shkollore-mohohen-te-drejtat-e-njeriut/>

106 <http://zeri.info/aktuale/173179/edhe-nje-skandal-me-tekstet-shkollore-kosova-ende-se-ka-shpallur-pavaresine/>

107 Interview with Islam Shabani, Director of MED in Fushë Kosovë, 16.10.2017.

108 Interview with Islam Shabani, Director of MED in Fushë Kosovë, 16.10.2017.

VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING (VET) AND ADULT EDUCATION (AE)



4.6. Objective 6: VET and AE

Aligning vocational education and training with the labor market needs within the country and beyond, and creating an open system for adult education.

SUMMARY OF THE MONITORING:

Around 47% of secondary vocational education students attend lessons in economic – law and health care profiles, with significantly lower employment opportunities, while the number of students in the profiles with better prospects for employment continues to be below the desired level. No proper actions have been taken by MEST and MEDs to change this situation.

Participation of girls in secondary vocational education is not at the desired level, and a high representation of males is noted in all profiles leading to the so-called qualifications “reserved for men”.

There are suitable teaching and learning materials available for 24 out of 135 profiles of vocational education, while in other profiles, there is a kind of “improvisation” by using materials prepared by teachers, which have not gone through any verification process. There is stagnation in addressing this problem.

During 2016 and 2017, a large number of cooperation agreements have been signed with companies to send students there for professional practice, but there is no accurate evidence of these agreements, or an accurate reporting on the extent to which these agreements have been implemented in practice. Information from the field point out serious problems in the implementation of professional practice, and supporting this aspect of student development based on the initiatives coming directly from school.

With few exceptions, career counseling and guidance is not present in vocational schools in Kosovo. However, preparations are being made to provide a level 5 qualification for career counselors.

EMIS has started to collect data on adult education in Kosovo. During the academic year 2016/17, 1,794 adults were included in secondary vocational education, out of which 617 were female. Unfortunately, there are no data on the inclusion of adults in various forms of informal education.

Despite the progress achieved in the provision of programs for adults, adult education remains the most underdeveloped sector in the education system, as the necessary preconditions for its management have not been established yet.

4.6.1. Enrollment and syllabi trends

Based on MEST statistical data, 52.5% of the students in upper secondary education attend schooling in one of 14 sectors and 135 profiles of secondary vocational education. Table 6 and Table 7 show that the most preferred sectors for students are the economic-legal areas with 14,1470 students (47.6% girls) and the sector of health and social care with 7,152 students (67.4% girls). In these two sectors, lessons are attended by around 47% of the enrolled students in vocational education and 63.6% of all the girls enrolled in vocational schools.

Other fields which are on demand are the field of machinery and metal processing with 5,099 students (4.9% girls), as well as, the field of electrical engineering with 7,761 students (24.9% girls). In these two fields, lessons are attended by around 28% of all the students enrolled in vocational education, but only 11.9% of the girls enrolled in this level of education.

Table 6. Number of students in secondary vocational education in the school year 2016/17 per sector

Sector	Grade 10		Grade 11		Grade 12		Total	
	T	F	T	F	T	F	T	F
	Sector of forestry and wood processing	27	3	16	4	9	0	52
Sector of mining, metallurgy and geology	118	52	106	42	119	31	343	125
Sector of machinery and metal processing	2,261	89	1,737	117	1,101	46	5,099	252
Sector of electrotechnics	3,059	693	2,608	688	2,094	555	7,761	1,936
Sector of geodesy and construction	966	339	727	204	576	181	2,269	724
Sector of traffic	656	120	573	115	375	47	1,604	282
Sector of textile and leather processing	227	198	211	187	169	135	607	520
Sector of chemistry, nonmetals and graphics	486	256	508	284	449	234	1,443	774
Sector of trade, hospitality and tourism	452	84	353	81	299	82	1,104	247
Sector of economics - law	5,603	2,577	4,723	2,359	4,144	1,953	14,470	6,889
Sector of health and social care	2,635	1,778	2,387	1,595	2,130	1,449	7,152	4,822
Sector of culture, arts and public information	361	247	300	204	235	143	896	594
Sector of agriculture and livestock	726	240	674	255	382	132	1,782	627
Sector of food technology	644	242	472	222	377	158	1,493	622
	18,221	6,918	15,395	6,357	12,459	5,146	46,075	18,421

(Source: VET Division, MEST)

Table 7. Percentage of students in secondary vocational education in the school year 2016/17 per sector

Sector	Grade 10	Grade 11	Grade 12	Total
	Sector of forestry and wood processing	0.15%	0.10%	0.07%
Sector of mining, metallurgy and geology	0.65%	0.69%	0.96%	0.74%
Sector of machinery and metal processing	12.41%	11.28%	8.84%	11.07%
Sector of electrotechnics	16.79%	16.94%	16.81%	16.84%
Sector of geodesy and construction	5.30%	4.72%	4.62%	4.92%
Sector of traffic	3.60%	3.72%	3.01%	3.48%
Sector of textile and leather processing	1.25%	1.37%	1.36%	1.32%
Sector of chemistry, nonmetals and graphics	2.67%	3.30%	3.60%	3.13%
Sector of trade, hospitality and tourism	2.48%	2.29%	2.40%	2.40%
Sector of economics - law	30.75%	30.68%	33.26%	31.41%
Sector of health and social care	14.46%	15.51%	17.10%	15.52%
Sector of culture, arts and public information	1.98%	1.95%	1.89%	1.94%
Sector of agriculture and livestock	3.98%	4.38%	3.07%	3.87%
Sector of food technology	3.53%	3.07%	3.03%	3.24%

(Source: VET Division, MEST)

Table 8 provides an overview of the situation of gender indicators in vocational education. The table shows that the gender parity index in the school year 2016/17 has slightly gone up in relation to the initial situation converging towards the target, whereas the representation of girls in the technical field remains a challenge and this issue has to be addressed in the coming years.

Table 8 Gender indicators in vocational education

Indicator	Initial state 2014/15	2016/17	Target 2021
Gender parity index in vocational education	0.63	0.67	0.7
Gender parity index in technical profiles	0.25	0.24	0.4

(Source: KESP 2017-2021, VET Division, MEST)

While the lack of interest to enroll increases the risk of closing down some profiles which are on demand in the labor market, there is a hesitation in reviewing the enrollment quotas in some over-populated profiles, such as the profiles in the field of economics and law and health and social care. The main reason for such a hesitation is to avoid the risk of creating redundancy and the lack of readiness to deal with the re-organization of vocational schools network. With the exception of some fields, secondary vocational schools continue to be treated as a second option for students who have not been successful in enrolling in gymnasiums.

During 2017, NQA has completed the process of verification of occupational standards, and in the meeting of its Steering Council, 15 occupational standards were adopted as national standards. Some of the approved standards are: police officer (level 5 according to KCF); police inspector/detective (level 5); cook (level 3), bartender (level 3), career counselor (level 5), etc.

4.6.2. Curricula and teaching and learning materials

Alignment of VET and adult education curricula with the Curriculum Framework for Pre-University Education and with the National Qualifications Framework is an important measure of KESP. The Curriculum Framework for pre-university education is an umbrella of entire pre-university education in Kosovo, in terms of determining the competencies which are to be achieved. The alignment between the Curriculum Framework and the National Qualifications Framework was concluded at the time it had been drafted, so there is no conflict between these two documents. This conflict can be easily caused by the Core Curriculum, in case it does not reflect the requirements of the Curriculum Framework.

According to Mr. Ajet Brajshori, the director of the upper secondary vocational school “28 November” in Pristina, there exists a draft document of the VET curricula alignment with the curriculum framework of pre-university education. Work on this document, which is still in the process of drafting, has started back in 2016 by the working group, consisting of MEST representatives and representatives of vocational schools. On the other hand, the deputy director of the vocational school “Hoxha Kadri Prishtina” in Pristina, Mr. Osman Zeqiri stated that he was not aware of the existence of a working group on the alignment of curricula¹⁰⁹.

One of the problems raised constantly regarding the VET performance system is the issue of teaching and learning materials which are not at the level of required quality and are missing in the majority of the profiles. Up to date, only 24 profiles are covered with teaching and learning materials, while for other profiles, the teaching and learning materials are lacking or they are developed by teachers but they are not structured. There are cases when teachers obtain materials from different sources and adapt them to their needs. The situation in the Centers of Competence is better, as the profiles were developed with donor support, including the development of teaching and learning materials. However, even these materials need to be reviewed and updated.

Based on the data collected until October 2017, it is evident that there is a stagnation in the implementation of some VET processes: the working groups for the selection of existing materials for each economic sector have not yet been established, there are no guidelines yet for the design of textbooks for vocational subjects, groups of authors for textbooks on vocational subjects have not been established yet, and the activity for the establishment of the working groups consisting of authors of selected materials for each economic sector has not been implemented yet.

4.6.3. Practical work

Practical training in schools and professional practice outside the schools remains one of the topics discussed at length but has not yielded satisfactory results. It can be concluded that there is an improvement in the participation of students in professional practice and there is an improvement in the relations school-enterprise, however, many problems still remain. As a consequence of not being able to carry out the professional practice, students fail to prepare themselves for the labor market and develop their practical skills for work. During 2017, it was foreseen to organize workshops aimed at building a platform for the collaboration of schools with enterprises, but this has not been implemented. On the other hand, a number of information sessions for VET schools were organized regarding the instruments deriving from the platform, which are being developed LuxDev Project in support to VET.

Some of the activities foreseen in the action plan and which could impact on better functioning of vocational schools were not implemented during 2017. For example, the transportation of students and instructors to companies to carry out their professional practice has not taken place, with the exception of some municipalities which have covered these travel expenses. Up to the reporting period, the regulation on the protection of students’ health during the practical work has not been completed. Other activities that have not been implemented are as follows: insurance payment for students, development of a training manual or organization of trainings for economic cooperation office staff, establishment of three cabinets for different vocational profiles in schools, drafting of a document with the criteria for the establishment of public-private partnerships in the field of education.

¹⁰⁹ Interviews with Ajet Brajshori, director of the technical school “28 November” and Osman Zeqiri, deputy director in the economic school “Hoxhë Kadri Prishtina” were carried out on 12th October 2017.

During 2016 and 2017, a large number of cooperation agreements were signed with different companies to send students to for professional practice, however, there is no accurate evidence of these agreements, or accurate reporting on the implementation level in practice.

The complex situation of the professional practice has been confirmed during our field visits. The school directors agree that it poses a great challenge. They stated that professional practice outside schools relies solely on the initiatives taken by a school, through private connections, and that there has always been a lack of institutional support. Companies do not accept a large numbers of students, therefore, schools are forced to send students to companies in smaller groups of 6-7 students.

4.6.4. Career Guidance and Counseling

The data show that career guidance and counseling is not functional in the VET system. In some municipalities, career guidance and counseling centers operate at municipal level, as in the case of Pristina, or career guidance and counseling offices are placed within schools, as in the case of the vocational school in Vushtrri. However, this has been achieved mainly through the initiatives of various projects, and it is not a result of a comprehensive plan. Some modalities on how these centers could operate have been provided by various projects such as EYE, LuxDev, etc. In this aspect, adult education is in a worse situation, where due to the lack of career guidance and counseling, adults are not supported at all when deciding whether to continue their interrupted schooling or undergo a re-qualification based on labor market needs.

Problems with career guidance and counseling are evident among the job-seekers, as well, and in most cases, career counselors working in employment offices lack information regarding opportunities for education, recognition of prior learning, or certification of jobseekers' knowledge.

Both vocational schools in Pristina which were visited by the research team, do not have career centers within their schools and do not have career counselors. The vocational school directors consider the functioning of these centers as necessary. They pointed out that the Career Center in Pristina, at the beginning had carried out many activities, such as exhibitions of students' projects, teacher training workshops, but nowadays, according to them, such activities do not take place.

Even though this activity appears in the KESP 2017 action plan, no teacher training on curricula development and career guidance was organized. Nevertheless, with the support of LuxDev, the provision of international qualifications of level 4 – 5 known as BTEC qualifications¹¹⁰, are expected in the Centers of Competence in Ferizaj and Prizren, and among them, the qualification for career counselors. On the other hand, as foreseen in the KESP 2017 action plan, during 2017, the occupational standard for career counselor was developed and verified and approved by NQA.

110 <http://qualifications.pearson.com/en/about-us/qualification-brands/btec.html>

4.6.5. Adult education

Based on the data collected, it is reported that there is a regulation on the management of own source revenues for the institutions of vocational education and training and adult education, but in the practical sense, these institutions have had difficulties in managing their own source revenues. This complaint has been raised by the Centers of Competence which, during the period of being under the management of the municipalities, they managed their own source revenues while now, under the AVETAE, their funds were transferred to the budget of the Ministry of Finance, and, consequently, they were unable to have access to these funds. However, as of 2018, the Centers of Competence will be in a position to manage their own source revenues.

Although foreseen in the action plan of KESP 2017, the review of VET institutions' programs providing adult education has not taken place. Based on the data collected until October 2017, it is evident that there are human and infrastructural capacities for the management of adult education. EMIS has begun to collect and report data also on adult education, enabling the follow-up of the situation in this sector. Thus, during the school year 2016/17, in the upper secondary vocational education, 1,794 adults were involved, out of which 617 were female¹¹¹. Unfortunately, there are no data available on the involvement of adults in various forms of informal education.

In the context of increasing the supply of education in level 5 qualifications, the data collected show that the study foreseen in the KESP 2017 action plan regarding the need for the provision of level 5 qualifications has not been carried out yet, and no analysis of the applicable legislation, and the needs analysis for level 5 qualifications has been conducted. On the other hand, as foreseen in the action plan of KESP 2017, few level 5 programs have been developed, not by public vocational schools, but by other informal public providers and a private VET providers. Two programs have been developed in collaboration with Pearson by LuxDev funded project, in the CoC Ferizaj the level 5 program for Assistant to children with special education needs has already started, and in the CoC Prizren, the program for Career counselor starts in October 2017. Other level 5 programs were launched in the sector of accounting, IT, etc.

111 Statistics on education 2016/17, MEST, June 2017.

HIGHER EDUCATION



4.7. Objective 7: Higher education

Increasing the quality and competitiveness of higher education by encouraging excellence in teaching, scientific research, artistic creation, innovation and internationalization.

SUMMARY OF THE MONITORING:

Despite the fact that the number of higher education institutions has fallen from 36 to 31, Kosovo remains the country with the highest number of institutions per 1 million inhabitants compared to any other country in the region.

The draft law on higher education, which was submitted to the Kosovo Assembly for adoption in October 2015 has not been approved yet. There were no actions undertaken to implement the legal norms for financing higher education institutions based on their performance.

The number of students enrolled in higher education has continued to grow, both in public and private sectors. The gross enrollment rate in higher education is 84.23%, which ranks Kosovo on the eighth place in the world, and exceeds all European countries, except Greece, Spain, Belarus and Finland.

The timely graduation rate for the generation of 2013/14 is 43.68% which is still far from the set target of 60%.

The number of qualified academic staff in the higher education institutions is insufficient - while the "teacher-student" ratio at the country level is 1:41, in the public sector it remains even more unfavorable - 1:60.

Although there are some improvements in the implementation of selection criteria for academic staff, there have been no concrete actions to address flagrant violations of academic integrity by any higher education institution in Kosovo.

As a result of efforts of KAA to implement accreditation criteria, the number of accredited programs has decreased by more than a quarter since 2015. KAA has insisted that each study program should have three teachers with doctoral degrees, and not allowing the same teacher to be involved in more than one program. Despite the initial success, the KAA Board was discharged in September 2017 following the request of the Kosovo Prime Minister, with the justification that KAA bears the responsibility for the situation in higher education.

Higher education institutions in Kosovo continue to lag behind the institutions in the region in as far as international ranking is concerned. The Webometrics edition of December 2017 classifies the University of Pristina in 3,960th place, whereas all other higher education institutions in Kosovo are ranked lower. The UP lags far behind other public universities of the capitals of the Balkan countries, with the exception of universities from Tirana.

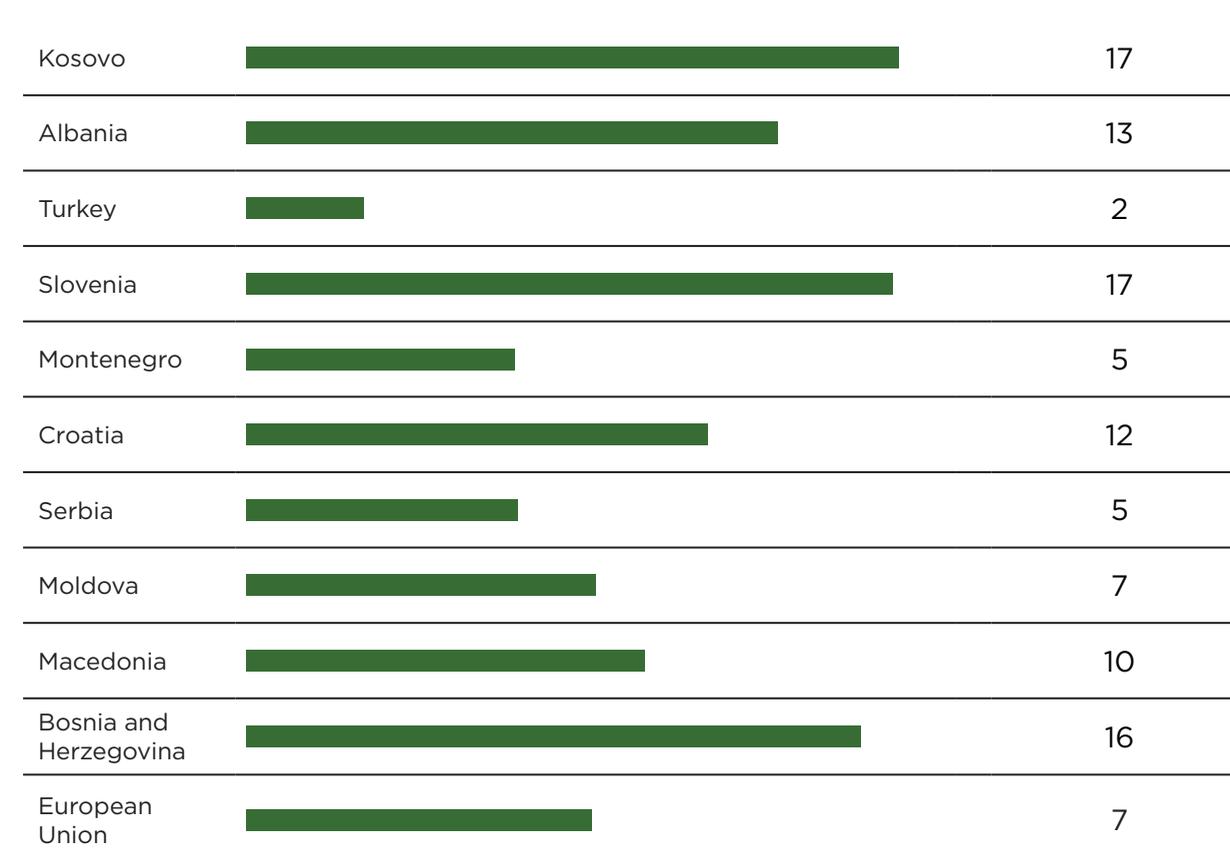
Discrepancies between the supply of higher education programs and labor market demands continue both in terms of content and quality, as well as in the aspect of guiding students in those fields of study where there is a high need for workforce.

4.7.1. Institutional structure of higher education

In 2017, the higher education system in Kosovo consisted of 30 accredited institutions of higher education, out of which 9 public and 21 private institutions¹¹². The University of North Mitrovica has to be added to this list, which provides programs in Serbian language, but continues to develop its activity within the Serbian education system. The number of 31 higher education institutions represents a decrease compared to 2015, when, there were 36 higher education institutions in Kosovo. This decrease was caused due to the fact that a number of institutions ceased their activities, either because of not being able to get accreditation or for other reasons.

Despite this, Kosovo continues to be a country with a large number of higher education institutions per 1 million inhabitants. Chart 1 provides a comparison with some European countries. In the given conditions, this is due to the lack of control by the state and insufficient commitment to quality assurance, which is elaborated in Section 4.7.3.

Chart 1. Number of higher education institutions per 1 million inhabitants



Sources: Data obtained from Kosovo Accreditation Agency, Eurostat and www.webometrics.info

112 <http://www.akreditimi-ks.org/new/index.php/sq/2015-09-16-11-39-57/2015-09-16-11-54-07>.

The new draft law on higher education was approved by the Government of Kosovo in October 2015, but could not be adopted by the Kosovo Assembly due to the disagreement of representatives of the Serbian community in the Assembly and the lack of support in the Parliamentary Committee on Education. Kosovo Government set up following the June 2017 elections is in the process of reviewing the draft law, and is expected to be forwarded again to the Assembly for adoption.

The Law on regulated professions approved at the end of 2016 has not started to be implemented yet, although 3 months after its entry into force, sub-legal acts were supposed to be enacted for the implementation of the law and new bodies stipulated by the law to be functionalized.

During the period 2015-2017, the Higher Education Information Management System (HEMIS) was developed, which enables the generation of necessary data for situation analysis in this sector and informed decision making. This step represents an improvement in relation to the previous situation, which can be seen from the two recent statistical summaries on education for the years 2015/16 and 2016/17¹¹³, providing useful data on higher education, although there is room for further improvement. However, the publication of complete data has not started dyet in line with HEMIS concept, whereas our monitoring team has not received any response to the request to access HEMIS data.

The Law on Higher Education envisages the establishment of effective mechanisms for transparent funding which promotes accountability. This funding is established based on the three-year plans which are subject to negotiations between higher education institutions and MEST. Unfortunately, there were no actions taken towards the implementation of the norms of this law, and the funding of higher education on the basis of fixed budget amounts and the requests of higher education institutions continued.

4.7.2. Students in higher education

The trend of increasing interest in higher education studies continues in Kosovo. In the academic year 2016/17, 123,243 persons attended the studies in the accredited higher education institutions in Kosovo, out of which 52.1% were female (Table 9). If 10,000 students of the University of North Mitrovica¹¹⁴, are added to this number, then it can be calculated that there are **at least 133,243 students in Kosovo**.

113 Statistics on education 2015/16 and statistics on education 2016/17, KSA.
114 https://pr.ac.rs/univerzitet/univerzitet_danas/

Table 9. Students in accredited higher education institutions in the academic year 2016/17

Institution	Bachelor		Master		Total	
	T	F	T	F	T	F
University of Pristina	38,974	21,932	9,504	5,320	48,478	27,252
University of Prizren	6,796	4,056	663	293	7,459	4,349
University of Peja	7,199	2,988	1,274	713	8,473	3,701
University of Mitrovica	3,015	1,493	270	120	3,285	1,613
University of Gjilan	3,517	2,267			3,517	2,267
University of Gjakova	2,775	2,124			2,775	2,124
University of Applied Sciences Ferizaj	1,333	632	86	47	1,419	679
Faculty for Islamic Studies	355	144	22	6	377	150
Public Safety Academy	179	53			179	53
Public institutions	64,143	35,689	11,819	6,499	75,962	42,188
Private colleges	41,988	19,509	5,293	2,558	47,281	22,067
Total	106,131	55,198	17,112	9,057	123,243	64,255

(Source: Statistics on Education 2016/17, KAS, June 2017)

There has been an evident trend of growth in the last five years (see Chart 2). It should be taken into consideration that the Kosovo Agency of Statistics reported, for the first time, the data of private higher education institutions for the academic year 2015/16, hence the increase of the number of students in this sector for nearly 10,000 compared to the previous year, may be considered a “correction” of mistakes that came up from the partial collection of data until the academic year 2014/15.

These data provide new indicator values regarding the participation in higher education, as presented in the Table 10. The first indicator has been modified in accordance with the Education Indicator Framework recently published by MEST¹¹⁵ and it shows the overall student enrollment in higher education, regardless of age, expressed as a percentage of the population aged 18-22 years old¹¹⁶. Due to the change, we calculated the indicator value for 2014/15 (initial state), as well as, its value for 2016/17. Whereas, the second indicator, the number of students per 100,000 inhabitants, is also part of the education indicator framework¹¹⁵ and had been used earlier in the same form.

Chart 2. Students in higher education institutions in the last five years



(Source: KESP assessment 2011-2015, Statistics on education 2015/16 and 2016/17)

115 Education indicator framework in Kosovo, MEST, October 2017.
116 In KESP, this age group was 20-24 years old, in line with Eurostat indicator.

The change in the two above mentioned in relation to the situation in the academic year 2014/15, is quite significant, for at least two reasons. The first reason is the increase of the number of students for about 10,000 persons from the academic year 2014/15 to the academic year 2015/16 as described above. Whereas, the second reason is related to the changes in the evaluation of the population. The new population forecast, published by KSA¹¹⁷, estimates that the total population of Kosovo and the population aged 18-22 years old is less than the previous estimate had shown¹¹⁸.

Nevertheless, the new data are more reliable, hence it can be concluded that Kosovo with the share of 84.23% in higher education is among the countries with the highest participation in the world. This can be also seen in Chart 3, where UNESCO data on the participation in higher education for 2013 or 2014 have been presented. Kosovo is ranked in the eighth place in the world in regard to the enrollment rate in higher education, and it exceeds all European countries except Greece, Spain, Belarus and Finland.

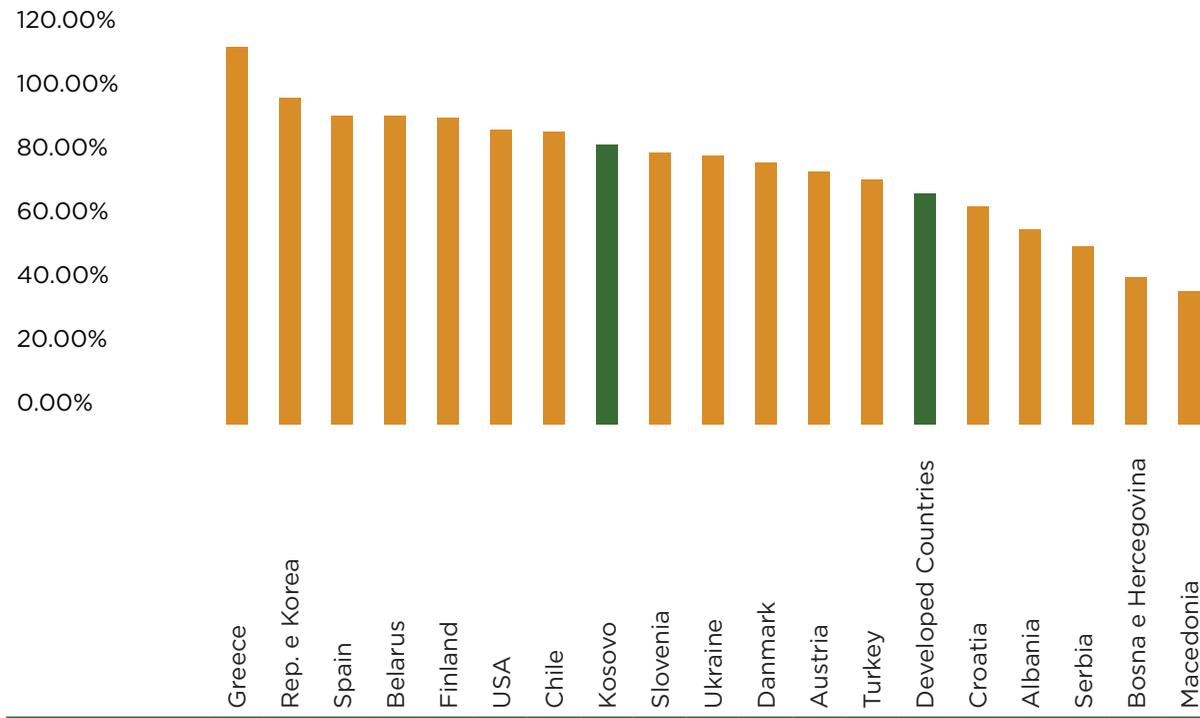
Similar results are obtained by comparing the number of students per 100,000 inhabitants with other countries.

Table 10. Participation indicators in higher education

Indicator	Initial state 2014/15	State 2016/17	Comments
Gross enrollment rate (number of students as the percentage of the age group population 18-22 years old)	68.10%	84.23%	In the academic year 2016/17, there are 133,243 students. Whereas, the population of Kosovo aged 18-22 years old in 2017 is estimated at 158,102 inhabitants.
Number of students in 100,000 inhabitants	6,669	7,471	In the academic year 2016/17 there are 133,243 students. Whereas, the population of Kosovo in 2017 is estimated at 1,783,531 inhabitants.
Gender parity index in higher education	1.01	1.09	The University of North Mitrovica has not been included since the data are not provided by gender.

117 Kosovo population forecast 2017-2021, KSA, December 2017.
118 Kosovo population forecast 2011-2061, KSA, December 2013.

Chart 3. Gross enrollment rate in higher education



(Source: UN Data - http://data.un.org/Data.aspx?d=UNESCO&f=series%3AGER_56)

Tables 9 and 10 show that the participation of females in higher education continues to be at a satisfactory level. Females constitute 55.5% of the total number of students in the public sector and 46.7% of students in the private sector. The causes of such a discrepancy are worth analyzing in the future.

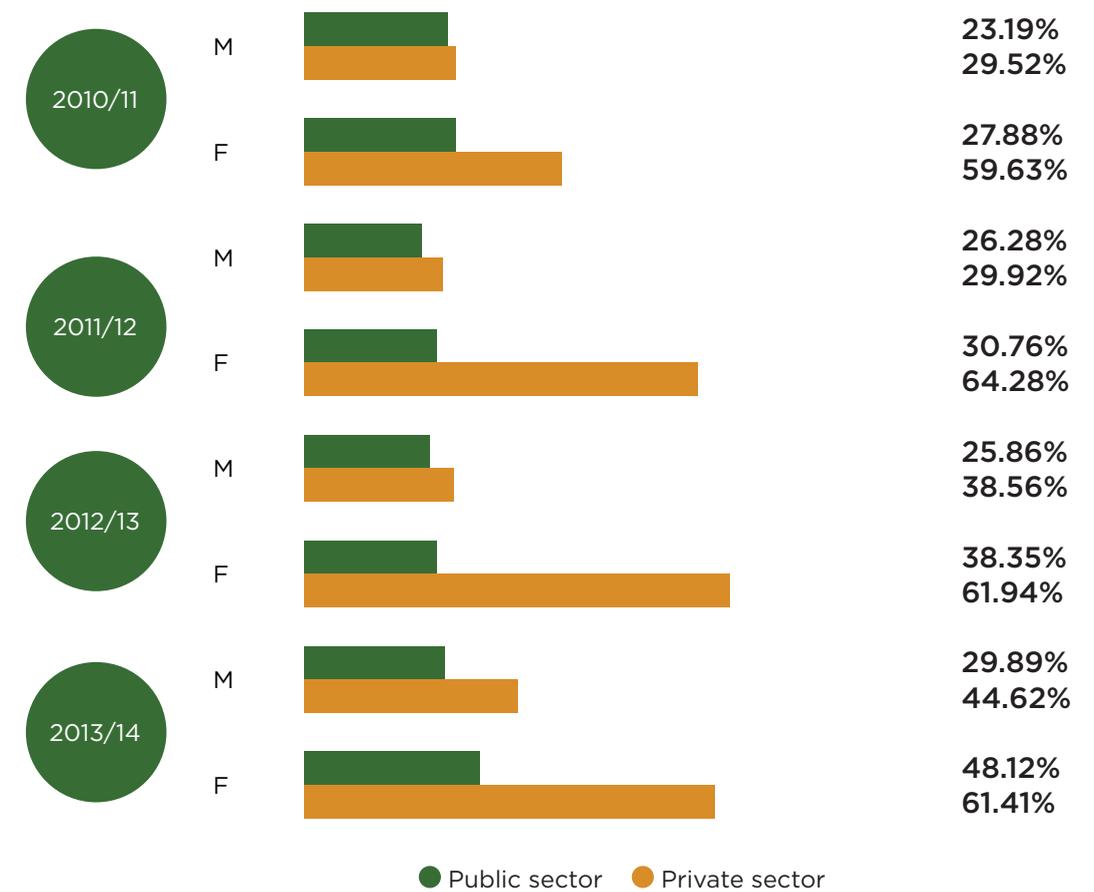
Kosovar students is not satisfactory. Chart 4 shows an analysis of the status of the generations enrolled in the academic years 2010/11 -2013/14, by comparing the number of enrolled students in those years with the number of graduates three years later. It is understood that all studies do not last for three years, however, the number of graduates after this period is taken as a measure of the effectiveness in studies. The chart shows that females respond better to their obligations than males, and that, the graduation rate in the private sector is significantly higher than in the public sector. In general, the timely graduation rate for the generation of 2013/14 is 43.68%, which corresponds to the level of the initial status defined by KESP (43.29%)¹¹⁹. OECD data of 2004 show that the timely graduation rate in OECD countries is 70% and in EU countries it is 69%¹²⁰.

119 See KESP action plan 2017-2021, MEST, September 2016, p. 41.
120 <http://www.oecd.org/edu/skills-beyond-school/39245059.xls>

4.7.3. Academic staff

As shown in Chart 5, public higher education institutions continue to have an insufficient number of regular academic staff. The “teacher-student” ratio in the public institutions is 1:60, with universities in Prizren, Peja, Gjilan and Gjakova being in a very bad situation, while the situation in the University of Prishtina remains at the level of the last several years - 1:53. Whereas, the situation in the University of Mitrovica is a bit better.

Chart 4. Timely graduation rate of student generations 2010/11-2013/14



Burimi: Vlerësimi i PSAK 2011-2015, Statistikat e arsimit 2015/16 dhe 2016/17

The insufficient number of qualified academic staff affects directly the quality of higher education. Thus, a research carried out by “Perportr” reports on a large number of diploma thesis being supervised by some professors of the University of Pristina, who teach in the programs in which the “teacher-student” ratio is unfavorable¹²¹. Based on this research, a professor, who also holds a senior management position in the UP, has mentored 148 diploma thesis for two and a half years, or 60 diploma thesis average within a year. Undoubtedly, such situations can send wrong messages to students who may seek “alternative ways” to prepare their diploma thesis, considering the possibility of plagiarism and cheating. Another risk that may arise from the insufficient number of qualified academic staff is that, when dealing with large groups of students, a teacher fails to pay due attention to individual needs of students, hence the assessment process of student performance is superficial

Chart 5. Number of students per teacher

University of Prishtina		53
University of Prizren		141
University of Peja		117
University of Mitrovica		31
University of Gjilan		91
University of Gjakova		74
University of Applied Science		57
Faculty of Islamic Studies		42
Public Safety Academy		20
Public Institution		60
Private colleges		27
Total		42

(Sources: Statistics on education 2016/17)

121 Bargaining with diploma thesis, Preportr bulletin, 2017.

The issue of selecting academic staff continues to be at the center of the attention of public opinion. During the academic year 2016/17, this process was monitored at the University of Pristina by the Organization for the Enhancement of Quality in Education (ORCA), and, according to it, there is an improvement in the evaluation of the academic credentials of the candidates by the UP bodies¹²². Based on the ORCA report, “discrepancy margin between the findings of ORCA and UP management, and consequently, the Senate decisions is about 5%”. On this occasion, it should be mentioned that ORCA has mainly monitored the fulfillment of the requirement regarding the minimum number of publications in international journals required for selection of certain academic titles, paying due attention to the reliability of the journals where they have been published. Insistence on fulfilling this condition and monitoring the work in the UP by civil society organizations has resulted in public reaction by some UP teachers, who consider that this approach could damage the university, and in particular social and human sciences¹²³¹²⁴¹²⁵.

Despite numerous condemnations accumulated over the last few years, there has been no concrete action to address the flagrant violations of academic integrity by any higher education institution in Kosovo. In particular, in the University of Pristina, no actions whatsoever have been undertaken against the professors implicated in flagrant cases of academic fraud, who continue to work unhindered and even hold management positions in the UP.

In the recent years, concrete steps have been undertaken to improve the quality of teaching in the UP, by re-activating the Center for Excellence in Teaching through the support of the USAID-funded Transformation Leadership Program.

4.7.4. Quality assurance in higher education

The quality of higher education continues to be a topic of public debate in Kosovo, and there is a general consensus that it is far from being called acceptable. In 2016 and 2017, the Kosovo Agency for Accreditation (KAA) has demonstrated a stricter stance in the process of accreditation of institutions and higher education programs, resulting in a decrease of the number of accredited programs at all levels, as shown in Table 11.

KAA has been focused on meeting the conditions for regular academic staff, demanding that each study program should 3 teachers with doctoral degree and not allowing the same persons to be carriers of two different programs. Despite the fact that the KAA has not investigated whether the qualifications of academic staff are adequate for concrete programs, a significant number of higher education institutions did not manage to provide three doctors of science for each program. It should be mentioned that the KAA has opposed resolutely the efforts to register as program bearers the persons from Macedonia and Albania, who continue to live and work in the institutions of these two neighboring countries.

122 Analysis of the process of selection of academic staff following the public job advertisement 3/671 2016-17 in the University of Pristina, ORCA, November 2017.

123 Shemi Krasniqi, “Princes with pincers”, Koha.net, 30 November 2017. <http://www.koha.net/veshtrime/60573/princat-me-pincete/>

124 Arsim Canolli, “University and academic integrity”, Koha.net, 13 December 2017. <http://www.koha.net/veshtrime/63238/universiteti-dhe-integriteti-akademik/>

125 Muhamet Hamiti, “Apology for immeasurable values of the University”, Klankosova.tv, 18 December 2017. <http://klankosova.tv/kolumne/apologji-per-vlerat-e-pamatshme-te-universitetit/>

Table 11. Accredited programs by KAA

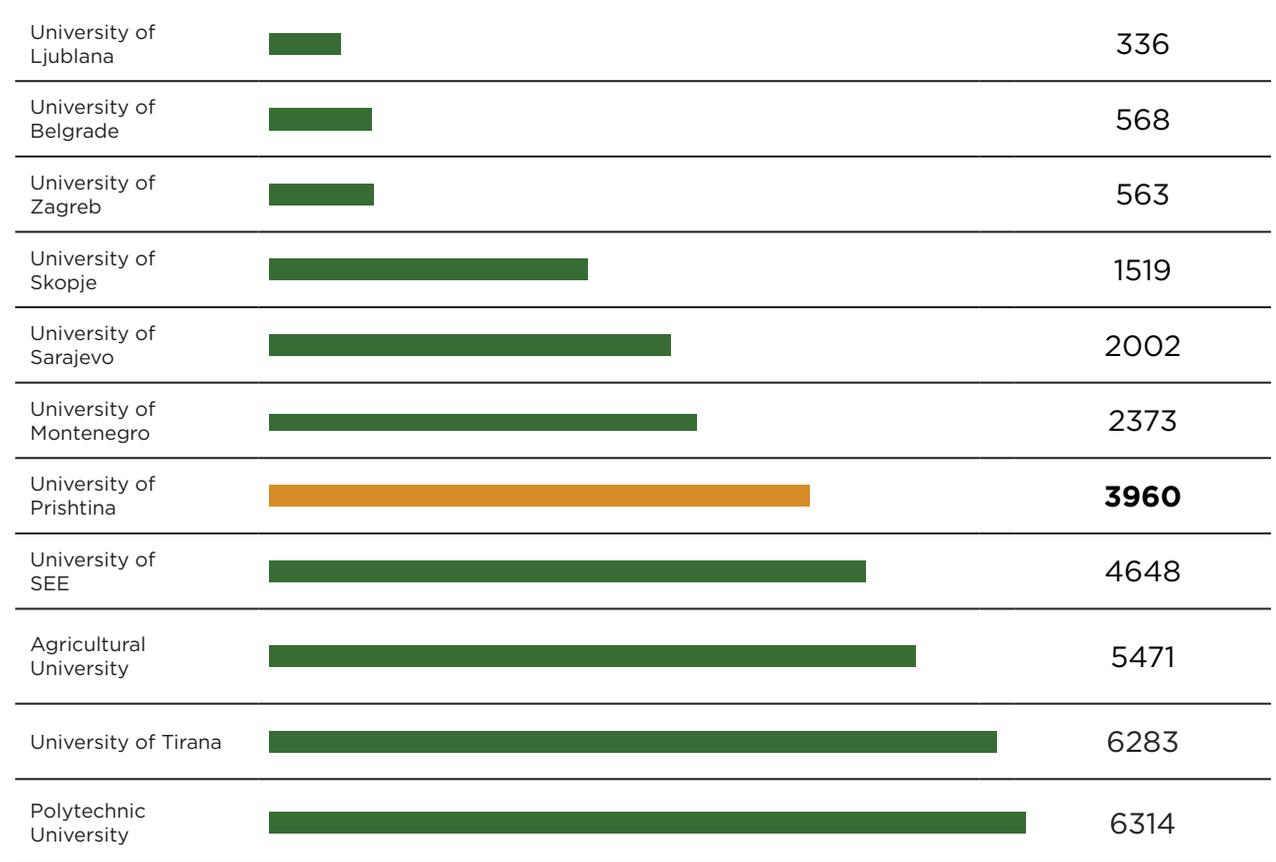
Academic year	Bachelor	Master	Doctorate	Total
2010/11	196	113	1	310
2011/12	212	129	12	353
2012/13	240	154	25	419
2013/14	270	181	26	477
2014/15	262	180	26	468
2017/18	217	107	20	344

(Source: KAA information)

Despite the initial success, the KAA Board was discharged in September 2017 following the request of the Prime Minister of Kosovo, with a justification that this institution is responsible for the situation in higher education. Whereas, the new Board which was appointed by the Minister of Education, Science and Technology has not passed through the ratification procedure in the Assembly yet. This has resulted with KAA Board being dysfunctional, endangering the functioning of KAA as a key factor for quality assurance in higher education.

The only international ranking covering higher education institutions in Kosovo is Webometrics, which is implemented by a research institute in Spain. Webometrics measures the size and web presence of higher education institutions and has a very good correlation with other international rankings with the most prestigious higher education institutions in the world. The Webometrics edition of December 2017 classified the University of Pristina in the 3,960th place, while all other higher education institutions in Kosovo are ranked lower. A comparison in terms of ranking of the University of Pristina with the universities of the other Western Balkan capitals, with the exception of the universities of Tirana, shows that the current position of higher education in Kosovo is below the desired level (Chart 6).

Chart 6. Webometrics ranking of universities in the region, December 2017



Source: www.webometrics.info, ranking, December 2017.

4.7.5. Link with the labor market

Various studies show that the key problems hindering the economic development in Kosovo are the underdeveloped economy with low capacity to generate new jobs and the lack of skilled workforce¹²⁶. Employers who were interviewed within the frame of a USAID-funded study have unanimously stated that vocational education and higher education curricula have no relevance to the labor market in Kosovo, and that there are no systems in place linking the curricula with the labor market¹²⁷. In some faculties of the UP, industrial boards have been established aimed at addressing these problems in terms of content, while consultative mechanisms exist in some other higher education institutions.

126 Statman, J., Huijbregste, A., Pupovci D., Mullahatihiri V.: Kosovo Workforce Readiness Assessment, USAID, 2015. http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PA00KH27.pdf

127 Ibid.

However, the key problem in linking the higher education system with the labor market lies in the discrepancy between the supply and demand, respectively the programs provided by higher education institutions and labor market needs. Table 12 provides an overview of the accredited programs according to study fields defined by Eurostat¹²⁸. The table shows that around 70% of the study programs belong to education sector, arts and humanities, social studies and health.

Table 12. Accredited programs in the academic year 2017/18 according to study fields

Study field	Public sector		Private sector		Total	
Education	10.45%				6.46%	
Arts and Humanities	14.09%		10.29%		12.64%	
Social Sciences, Business and Law	31.36%		51.47%		39.04%	
Natural Sciences, Mathematics and Computing	9.55%		2.94%		7.02%	
Engineering, Production and Construction	21.36%		13.24%		18.26%	
Agriculture and Veterinary	5.00%		0.00%		3.09%	
Health and Wellbeing	5.91%		17.65%		10.39%	
Services	2.27%		4.41%		3.09%	

(Source: AKA, <http://akreditimi-ks.org/docs/Reports/AllSP53.pdf>)

An analysis of labor market needs implemented with the support of the European Union¹²⁹ points out the need for different skills according to study fields, referring to employment data during the period 2002-2013. The results are presented in the table 13 where, in addition to employment data, there are also data on the enrollment of new students in public higher education institutions, taken from the enrollment advertisements published for the academic year 2017/18. These data have been presented in the absence of data provided by HEMIS regarding the enrollment of all students according to the study field.

Table 13. Job positions in the period 2002-2013 and students according to study fields

Study field	Job positions 2002-2013	Enrollment of new students in public sector
	2017/18	
Education	2017/18	8.37%
Arts and Humanities	1.00%	5.91%
Social Sciences, Business and Law	28.00%	48.19%
Natural Sciences, Mathematics and Computing	1.00%	7.33%
Engineering, Production and Construction	28.00%	16.30%
Agriculture and Veterinary	4.00%	5.08%
Health and Wellbeing	3.00%	3.47%
Services	27.00%	5.33%

Sources: Labour market assessment - Kosovo 2015, ALLED, advertisement for admission in bachelor studies in public higher education institutions 2017/18)

128 Fields of Training; the Classification - Cedefop - Europa EU, 1999. www.cedefop.europa.eu/files/5092_en.pdf

129 Labour market assessment - Kosovo 2015, ALLED. http://www.alledkosovo.com/publications/Labor_Market_Needs_Assessments.pdf

By comparing the data in the table, it is evident that there is a hyper-production of staff in some fields, such as social sciences, where the labor market demand is considerably smaller than the supply. On the other hand, there is a need for more staff in the field of engineering and services (personal services, transport, security services, environmental protection, etc.)

5. Conclusions

The findings of this analysis show that education is given an important place in the government policies, however, there is a stagnation in the implementation of relevant policies, including the Education Strategic Plan in Kosovo 2017-2021. Stagnation is not related only to the lack of budget, but also to organizational issues, and particular commitment is needed by MEST to implement these strategic measures, and a high level of coordination with other institutions at central and local levels. As an illustration, the Government of Kosovo has approved KESP with a budget of € 176.9 million for five years, ascertaining the existence of a gap of € 89.6million, but there were not any concrete actions to obtain these funds, although the amount required for 2017 was only € 9 million. Furthermore, no coordination mechanism for the implementation of KESP has been established.

Following the publication of PISA test results in December 2016, problems in education have become the topic of debate in the society. However, in many cases, such debates were directed towards finding the ways to improve the performance in the PISA test, ignoring the fact that performance in this test is a reflection of the situation of education in the country, and that a comprehensive intervention is required in all segments of the system to improve this situation. Therefore, the shock caused by PISA test results in Kosovar society has not been translated into social mobilization for the implementation of KESP.

However, a number of KESP measures have been implemented in the frame of regular activities of MEST, municipalities and other institutions, and some performance indicators have been achieved or exceeded as a result of developments in recent years. The main conclusions as per seven areas covered by KESP are given below.

1. Participation and inclusiveness

Kosovo has achieved a satisfactory level of participation in compulsory education, including upper secondary education, whereas participation in pre-school education remains a challenge for the entire society, mainly due to the lack the institutions with affordable cost. School drop-out is at a very low level, apart from Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities, an issue which requires special attention.

Children with special education needs and children with special talents remain the most marginalized categories in pre-university education. While there is no effective data collection system for children with special education needs which would ensure participation of these children in education, in the case of children with special talents, there is a lack of organized action, with the exception of some civil society initiatives aimed at advancing the talents of these children.

2. Management

There has been no progress in regulating the status of school management staff, who continue to be under the direct dependence of municipal mayors. There is also no employment system for education workers which would guarantee adherence to the criteria and impartiality when deciding to employ teachers.

There has been a stagnation in adopting the necessary legislation for the implementation of education reform. Concrete examples of this are: the Law on Education Inspectorate and the Law on Higher Education, which have not been approved yet by the Kosovo Assembly, despite the fact that all necessary procedures have been finalized by the Government.

Construction of new school and preschool facilities has been carried out as planned, including the supply of schools with furniture, whereas there are no reliable data on the renovation of the existing school facilities. While in rural areas there are many schools that have remained unutilized due to the movements of the population, in urban areas there is an urgent need to erect new schools. MEST intends to apply whole-day teaching in schools, and this requires from schools to work only in one shift only.

3. Quality assurance

The first steps have been taken in building quality assurance mechanisms in pre-university education. 140 quality coordinators have been appointed in primary and secondary schools, and, starting from January 2018, a budget has been allocated for 560 out of, a total 1,100 coordinators, the number which corresponds with the number of schools in Kosovo. However, the appointment process of the coordinators has elements of formalism, and some of the appointed coordinators are unable to perform their duties due to other obligations.

Legal preconditions to assess the performance of schools have been created. A self-assessment methodology for schools has also been developed, and it was piloted in 63 schools, as well as an external assessment methodology on which 16 education inspectors have been trained.

No actions have been taken on the establishment of the Agency for Curricula, Assessment and Standards, despite the fact that the establishment of this agency has been foreseen by the law of 2011.

Administration of national tests remains poses a weak point in their effective implementation. This year, as in the previous years, MEST has not taken radical steps to improve administration.

4. Professional development of teachers

Although legal acts and policies that regulate the professional development of teachers have been adopted, this process still lacks proper coordination and support regarding the needs analysis. Selection of trainings largely depends on the perceptions of MEST and MED officials, and the priorities of donors.

The performance appraisal process of teachers has not started yet. Furthermore, there is no clear action plan to develop this process in the future, despite the fact that work has been done on the preparation of the necessary documents and on the training of inspectors. Teacher licensing is done only for the level of career license, where performance assessment is not required. Although foreseen in the action plan of KESP 2017, the drafting of the AI on harmonization of salary grades with the payroll system has not been implemented due to the lack of budget. Salary increase continues to be done in a linear manner and not in the function of improving the quality of teaching.

5. Teaching and learning

Implementation of the new curriculum started despite the lack of textbooks and teaching aids that are in line with the requirements of the new curriculum. Schools reported facing significant difficulties in implementing the new curriculum which is a consequence of insufficient preparations and lack of continuous professional support.

The process of drafting new textbooks has not been defined yet, and the competition for new textbooks has not been announced, including the proposals of the publishing houses which have not been received nor reviewed yet. In addition, there are still some dilemmas whether the textbooks are going to be designed by local publishers, translated from foreign languages, or taken from Albania.

6. VET and AE

Around 47% of the upper secondary vocational education students attend learning in economic-law and health care sectors, with significantly lower opportunities for employment, whereas the number of students with better prospects for employment continues to remain below the desired level. There are no proper actions by MEST and MEDs to change this situation.

Appropriate teaching and learning materials are available for 24 out of 135 profiles of vocational education, while in other profiles there is a kind of “improvisation” with the materials prepared by teachers, materials which have not gone through any verification process. There is stagnation in addressing this problem.

Information from the field reveal serious problems in implementing professional practice and supporting this aspect of student development by schools. With few exceptions, Career counseling and guidance continues to be absent in vocational schools in Kosovo.

Despite the progress made in providing programs for adults, adult education remains the most underdeveloped sector in the education system, since the necessary preconditions for its management have not been established yet.

7. Higher education

The gross enrollment rate in higher education is 84.23%, ranking Kosovo in the eighth in the world, and it exceeds all European countries except Greece, Spain, Belarus and Finland. The timely graduation rate for the generation of 2013/14 is 43.68%, which is still far from the set target of 60%.

The number of qualified academic staff in higher education institutions is insufficient – whereas the “teacher-student” ratio at the level of the country is 1:41, whereas in the public sector this ratio is more unfavorable - 1:60. Although there are some improvements in the application of selection criteria for academic staff, there have been no concrete actions in addressing flagrant violations of academic integrity by any higher education institution in Kosovo. Discrepancies between the supply of higher education programs and labor market demands continue to prevail, both in terms of content and quality, including the aspect of guiding students in those study areas where there is a need for workforce.

Despite some positive steps undertaken in the implementation of quality standards, the KAA Board was discharged in September 2017 following the request of the Prime Minister of Kosovo, justifying the decision that KAA bears the responsibility for the situation in higher education.

The following recommendations can be drawn from the findings of the analysis:

- 1** MEST should establish a mechanism to coordinate the implementation of KESP 2017-2021, led by the Minister or Deputy Minister, with the participation of senior officials of MEST, representatives of local government and other institutions that have obligations regarding the implementation of KESP, representatives of development partners and civil society, and education experts. The task of this mechanism would be to draft annual plans on the implementation of KESP, review the progress achieved and advice on the steps which need to be undertaken to ensure the full implementation of the strategic plan
- 2** Particular attention with regards to participation in education should be given to the pre-school level, with continuation of investments in infrastructure and increase the inclusion in the pre-primary level. Learning centers for Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian children should be supported to enable their participation and success in education, and continue with the provision of scholarships for upper secondary school students of these communities.
- 3** MEST should adopt clear and unified criteria and procedures for the recruitment of school directors and teachers in pre-university education, in order to minimize the possibility of unmerited and political employments in the education system.
- 4** The Kosovo Assembly should adopt the Law on the Education Inspectorate to pave the way for the functionality of external quality assurance. Schools should also be supported to implement their own internal quality assurance function.
- 5** The administration of the achievement test and the state matura exam should be carried out in such a way as to ensure reliability of the results, even by taking radical measures against those who violate the test rules, including the administrators.
- 6** Despite the unsatisfactory results of the PISA test, MEST efforts and efforts of all other relevant factors should be directed towards the essential improvements of the situation in the education system rather than mechanical improvement of the test results. In addition, MEST should ensure a credible administration of PISA test so that the result reflects the real situation in the education system.
- 7** The linear salary increase of education employees should be stopped because it does not yield any single positive effect. In order to motivate teachers to perform better, teacher licensing system should become operational urgently, and the salaries should be linked to the license level.
- 8** MEST should make special arrangements to monitor the implementation of the new curriculum and provide assistance to schools in its implementation. The problem of textbooks and other teaching and learning materials should be also solved to support the implementation of the curriculum. It is necessary to develop a plan for equipping schools with technology and make effective use of it.
- 9** In cooperation with the MEDs, a review of the network of vocational education schools should be undertaken in order not to create structural unemployment by enrolling a large number of students in sectors where employment prospects are minimal, while in some other sectors needed by labor market there is a shortage of students. It is also necessary to improve professional practice and career counseling so that students are as prepared for the labor market.
- 10** Due to the huge number of students and the small number of qualified academic staff, the situation in higher education is not sustainable. Thus, KAA is required to establish clear quality criteria, in terms of infrastructure, content of the curricula, and in terms of the number and quality of academic staff, and insist that these criteria are met by all higher education institutions, be it public or private. For this purpose, KAA should have capacities for continuous monitoring of higher education institutions, as envisaged by the legislation, and ensure its autonomy from political influences.

