**Republika e Kosovës**
**Republika Kosova - Republic of Kosovo**
***Qeveria – Vlada - Government***

*Ministria e Arsimit, Shkencës dhe Teknologjisë - Ministarstva za Obrazovanje Nauku i Tehnologiju - Ministry of Education, Science and Technology*

# KOSOVO EDUCATION STRATEGIC PLAN 2017-2021

Prishtina, July 2016

# Foreword

This is the second time the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MEST) has drafted a comprehensive strategic plan for the development of education in the Republic of Kosovo. The purpose of this Plan is to define the development directions of the Education System in the period of 2017-2021, with the purpose of making education serve the country's economic and social development. As such, the Kosovo Education Strategic Plan (KESP) 2017-2021 represents a continuation of the current plan, KESP 2011-2016, which is now entering its final year of implementation. The KESP 2011-2016 evaluation was the starting point for the next 5-year planning period, because it was deemed that we should consider the successes achieved during the current five-year period, but also draw lessons from failures.

Not by accident are the keywords of the new strategic plan: *inclusion, quality, and accountability*.

*Inclusion* has been in the spotlight of KESP 2011-2016, where undeniable successes have been achieved. Kosovo can compare with any country of the region, even with many developed European countries in terms of inclusion of children and young people in primary, secondary and higher education. However, during the next five years we will work to improve the inclusion of children in preschool education, as this is a vital period for child development. We will also work to increase the inclusion of children with special needs, as well as members of marginalised social groups, such as the poor, Roma, Ashkali, and Egyptians.

We have an obligation to build an Education System that provides *quality*, because we want Kosovo to be a society whose development is based on knowledge, and whose citizens possess the knowledge and skills that make them employable, both within the country and abroad. Through quality we develop our economy, create jobs, and become competitive, regionally and globally. We must therefore start implementing competency-based curricula, equip schools with Information Technology and teaching aids, improve the quality of textbooks, and above all, improve the quality of teaching at all levels of the education system. In higher education we will strengthen the quality assurance mechanisms, applying the accreditation criteria and procedures rigorously, but also helping higher education institutions meet quality standards.

*Accountability* is a prerequisite for the proper functioning of the education system. While MEST is responsible for development of policies, curriculum, inspection, and the provision of optimum conditions for work in schools in general, municipalities are responsible for school performance. Meanwhile, schools and their staff are accountable to the community for children's success. Therefore, together with municipalities, we will build a system that provides functional accountability at all levels of the Education System, including improvement of school management, making the teacher licensing system and school performance assessment functional, and increasing reliability of national tests aimed at assessing student knowledge and skills.

This document is the result of a teamwork led by MEST, but with broad participation of all stakeholders, such as local authorities, educational institutions, development partners, civil society organisations, and others. We are very grateful for their contribution. Special thanks go to GIZ Capacity Building in Basic Education Project (GIZ-CDBE), the German company PEM, and the Kosovo Education Center (KEC) for having supported the planning process from the beginning until its successful completion.

Prishtina, July 2016
Prof. Dr. Arsim Bajrami, *Minister*

## Acknowledgements

MEST wishes to acknowledge the support from GIZ CDBE which enabled the creation and production of this document; the contributions of the MEST Core Group, the Plenary Group and Working Group members, and the Development Partners and many other stakeholders who gave their time and energies to develop the Strategy; and the hard work of the PEM-KEC team who supported the entire process. Also, MEST wishes to acknowledge the support from the European Union funded project "Kosovo Education and Employment Network - KEEN" which has supported with expertise two working groups in the process of developing the Strategy.

# List of Abbreviations

| | |
|---|---|
| AE | Adult Education |
| AI | Administrative Instruction |
| AVETAE | Agency for Vocational Education and Training and Adult Education |
| CoCs | Centres of Competence |
| CVETAE | Council for Vocational Education and Training and Adult Education |
| EMIS | Education Management Information System |
| ENQA | European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education |
| EY | Early Years |
| FE | Faculty of Education |
| G&T | Gifted and Talented |
| GoK | Government of the Republic of Kosovo |
| GIS | Geographic Information System |
| GIZ-CDBE | GIZ Capacity Building in Basic Education Project |
| HE | HE |
| HEI | Institute of HE |
| HEMIS | Higher Education Management Information System |
| HoDs | Heads of Department |
| ICT | Information and Communications Technology |
| IEP | Individual Education Plan |
| ISCED | International Standard Classification of Education |
| KAA | Kosovo Accreditation Agency |
| KCF | Kosovo Curriculum Framework |
| KEC | Kosovo Education Center |
| KESP | Kosovo Education Strategic Plan |
| LLL | Lifelong Learning |
| LMIS | Labour Market Information Service |
| M&E | Monitoring and Evaluation |
| MEDs | Municipal Education Departments |
| MEST | Ministry of Education, Science and Technology |
| MF | Ministry of Finance |
| MPA | Ministry of Public Administration |
| MTEF | Midterm Expenditure Framework |
| N/A | Not applicable |
| NDS | National Development Strategy |
| NQA | National Qualifications Authority |
| NQF | National Qualifications Framework |
| PEST | Political, Economic, Social, and Technical |
| PIs | Performance Indicators |
| PRTDN | Prevention and Response Teams towards dropout and Non-Registration |
| QA | Quality Assurance |
| QM | Quality Management |
| SAA | Stabilization and Association Agreement |
| SEN | Special Education Needs |
| SO | Strategic objective |
| SPD | School Development Plan |
| SWAp | Sector Wide Approaches |
| SWOT | Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats |
| TPD | Teacher Professional Development |
| VET | Vocational Education and Training |

# Executive Summary

This strategic plan is the basic document for the development of the education sector in Kosovo in the period 2017-2021. The process of drafting KESP 2017-2021 began in June 2015 the organisational structure was established to draft the new strategic plan. The structure consisted of three levels: the Core Group, the Plenary Group and thematic subgroups.

The KESP Assessment 2011-2016 and a situation analysis carried out by the Core Group, with the help of six subgroups, has been the basis for the new five-year plan. The planning process was organised in seven thematic areas that cover all relevant segments of education in Kosovo:

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.

KESP has seven strategic objectives, one for each thematic area. Below is a summary of each Strategic objective (SO), while in the document a detailed description of the expected results and activities is presented:

**Strategic objective/SO 1: Participation and Inclusion**

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

Increased inclusion and dropout prevention in education takes time and cannot be achieved without full implementation of the legal framework. Therefore, this Strategic objective has clear links to other aspects of the KESP, in particular in relation to the creation of an integrated system for the collection, processing and use of data which will also enable monitoring of children with special needs and dropout children, and the improvement of the quality of teaching both through the provision of training programmes for inclusion, and the implementation of the basic ideas and goals of the KCF.

**Strategic objective/SO 2: Management of the Education System**

**Improving the quality and efficient management of the education system, based on transparency and accountability**.

In circumstances where the education system is decentralised, progress in education provision depends very largely, in addition to the availability of full financial and professional autonomy, on the development of management capacity at the central, municipal and school level. In the context of decentralisation, capacity building at local/school level must extend to bodies such as the school governing boards, which need to play a key role in the process.

**Strategic objective/SO 3: Quality Assurance**

**Developing a functioning quality assurance system, in accordance with international standards.**

In addition to creating a quality management system and developing the relevant processes and tools, capacity building at all levels will be necessary for making any new quality assurance system operational. Moreover, in the current climate in Kosovo, awareness raising activities that create an environment where accountability is fostered will also be needed.

**Strategic objective / SO 4: Teacher development**

**Enhancing teaching quality through an effective and sustainable system for teacher professional development and preparation.**

The principal focus in this area is therefore to build a sustainable system for teacher professional development, which would contribute to the implementation of school reform and impact directly on the improvement of student outcomes.

**Strategic objective / SO 5: Teaching and Learning**

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

The implementation of the new curriculum in all schools is seen as central to improving the quality of learning in Kosovo. In addition to teacher training, this requires the preparation of textbooks and other teaching and learning materials, including electronic teaching materials that are in harmony with the KCF. This also pre-supposes that special attention should be paid to equipping schools with ICT equipment, as well as other teaching aids.

**Strategic objective / SO 6: Vocational Education and Training and Adult Education**

**Harmonising vocational education and training with labour market requirements in the country and abroad, and creating an open system for adult education.**

In terms of VET, the focus will be on improving the relevance of school programmes to labour market needs, the development of a VET specific core curriculum, aligned to the KCF, the systematic provision of high quality work experience and professional practice, and, specific to the Kosovo context, ensuring the sustainability of the Centres of Competence and their further development.

**Strategic objective / SO 7: Higher Education**

**Upgrading the quality and competitiveness of higher education through the promotion of excellence in teaching, scientific research, artistic creation, innovation, and internationalisation.**

The main priority in this area is the improvement of quality in higher education institutions. This has many facets including adapting study programmes to labour market requirements, the promotion of scientific research, and the facilitating of artistic work and innovation in higher education institutions. The quality of teaching and the need to increase academic mobility of academic staff and students, as well as participation in international programmes of higher education and scientific research, will also receive attention.

For each strategic objective an action plan was developed, as well as indicators of success to be used for monitoring the implementation of KESP. The action plans are summarised in a roadmap for the implementation of KESP. The KESP budget was also calculated, amounting to a total of €176.94 million.

# Content


**FOREWORD** ..... **2**
**ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS** ..... **3**
**LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS** ..... **4**
**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY** ..... **5**
**1. INTRODUCTION** ..... **8**
1.1. Strategic planning in education ..... 8
1.2. Alignment of the KESP with other policies and initiatives ..... 8
**2. METHODOLOGY** ..... **12**
**3. CONTEXT** ..... **14**
3.1. Challenges and opportunities in the current environment ..... 14
*3.1.1. Political considerations* ..... *14*
*3.1.2. Economic considerations* ..... *15*
*3.1.3. Social considerations* ..... *15*
*3.1.4. Technological considerations* ..... *16*
3.3. Organisation and structure of the education system ..... 18
3.4. Challenges and opportunities in education in Kosovo ..... 21
*3.4.1. Participation and Inclusion* ..... *21*
*3.4.2. The Education System Management* ..... *22*
*3.4.3. Quality Assurance* ..... *23*
*3.4.4. Teacher Development* ..... *24*
*3.4.5. Teaching and Learning* ..... *25*
*3.4.6. Vocational Education and Training and Adult Education* ..... *26*
*3.4.7. Higher Education* ..... *27*
3.5. Financing of Education in Kosovo ..... 29
3.6. Major interventions in the field of education ..... 30
*3.6.1. Programmes supporting improvement of the quality of education* ..... *30*
*3.6.2. Programmes supporting more effective linkage of education with the labour market* ..... *31*
*3.6.3. Programmes Targeting Vulnerable Groups* ..... *31*
**4. OUR VISION, MISSION, AND VALUES** ..... **32**
**5. OUR STRATEGIC APPROACH** ..... **34**
5.2. Alternatives considered ..... 37
**6. STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1: PARTICIPATION AND INCLUSION** ..... **40**
**7. STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2: THE EDUCATION SYSTEM MANAGEMENT** ..... **48**
**8. STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3: QUALITY ASSURANCE** ..... **58**
**9. STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 4: TEACHER DEVELOPMENT** ..... **66**
**10. STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 5: TEACHING AND LEARNING** ..... **75**
**11. STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 6: VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING AND ADULT EDUCATION** ..... **80**
**12. STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 7: HIGHER EDUCATION** ..... **89**
**13. KESP IMPLEMENTATION** ..... **99**
13.1. Mechanisms for implementation ..... 99
13.2. Roadmap for implementation ..... 99
**14. KESP IMPLEMENTATION BUDGET** ..... **102**

# 1. Introduction

## 1.1. Strategic planning in education

Strategic planning in education is a fairly recent phenomenon: it was really only in the 1990's that disillusionment with traditional planning, in particular the lack of ownership and involvement by key players, the lack of emphasis on monitoring and evaluation, and low levels of flexibility in terms of implementation, combined with insufficient regard for the changing environment, led to the widespread development of what was called 'strategic' planning. Strategic planning was, in many countries in transition, linked to the gradual introduction of Sector Wide Approaches (SWAp) in development cooperation from the mid-1990s onward.

The strategic planning approach is defined by UNESCO/IIEP as follows:
"A management tool to help an organization to improve its performance by ensuring that its members are working to the same goals and by continuously adjusting the direction of the organization to the changing environment on the basis of results obtained".

Effective strategic planning demands an overall sense of direction, high levels of awareness of the environment, a focus on results, input from a wide range of stakeholders, close and systematic monitoring and maximum flexibility in implementation.

The first comprehensive strategic plans for education produced in Kosovo were the Higher Education Strategy 2005-2015 and the Pre-University Education Strategy 2007-2017. In 2009 when Kosovo adopted the Education SWAp, it was decided that a comprehensive and unique plan for the whole Education Sector was necessary, which led to the development of the Kosovo Education Strategic Plan (KESP) 2011-2016. The plan was implemented in various parts fairly successfully – in others, result stayed far behind the expectations. This was demonstrated by the detailed Evaluation Report (November 2015). Both the process of developing KESP 2017-2021, and the resulting document, have benefitted from the lessons learned from the experience of developing, implementing, and reviewing KESP 2011-2016. In particular, there is now a greater understanding of the importance of integrating monitoring, evaluation and assessment within the objectives framework, and an increased appreciation of the role of the wider group of stakeholders in education.

## 1.2. Alignment of the KESP with other policies and initiatives

Considerable effort has been made to ensure that KESP 2017- 2021 is aligned with other relevant policies, initiatives, and strategies (*See scheme below*). At a national level it was deemed essential to harmonise with the National Development Strategy[1] which was prepared under the auspices of the Office of the Kosovo Prime Minister. The main link between the KESP and the NDS is through the first chapter - Human Capital Development. Key policies addressed by this NDS Chapter include measures to increase the participation of children in preschool education, enhance qualifications and teacher training, and improve the relevance of education to labour market requirements and strengthening of accountability mechanisms through teacher performance assessment, inspection and external tests. Another important initiative which had to be taken into account was the National Programme for the adoption of ACQUIS[2].

[1]Kosovo Government: National Development Strategy (January, 2016).
[2] Chapter 26: Education and Culture & Chapter 25: Science and Research.

The KESP also attempts to ensure alignment with Programme Priorities of the Government of the Republic of Kosovo[3] in the field of education and science:

- Structural reforms in education;
- Increased participation and equal access to education;
- Control, assurance and improvement of the quality of education;
- Management of educational institutions (including decentralisation of decision-making in education);
- International integration and cooperation;
- Promotion of science and research;
- Increased funding of education and science.

As part of development process for the KESP there was also an attempt to link systematically to strategies developed by MEST, including the Quality Assurance Strategy for Pre-University Education[4], the Inclusive Education Strategy which is currently in the approval stage, the Guide for Diversity Development and Inclusion in Schools and in the Education System[5] and the Draft Strategy on Career Guidance and Counselling. The development of the KESP has also taken into account work carried out by the National Qualifications Authority on quality assurance activities in vocational education and training institutions, and on developing occupational standards, and several sectorial and cross-sectorial strategies, such as the Communication Strategy, the Professional Practice Strategy, and the Kosovo Innovation Strategy 2016-2020.

In terms of the international dimension, the KESP also attempts to take account of relevant policy and strategy. In general terms, the development of the KESP took place in the context of an awareness of the four common EU objectives to address challenges in education and training systems by 2020, detailed in Education and Training 2020 (ET 2020)[6].

- Making lifelong learning and mobility a reality;
- Improving the quality and efficiency of education and training;
- Promoting equity, social cohesion, and active citizenship;
- Enhancing creativity and innovation, including entrepreneurship, at all levels of education and training.

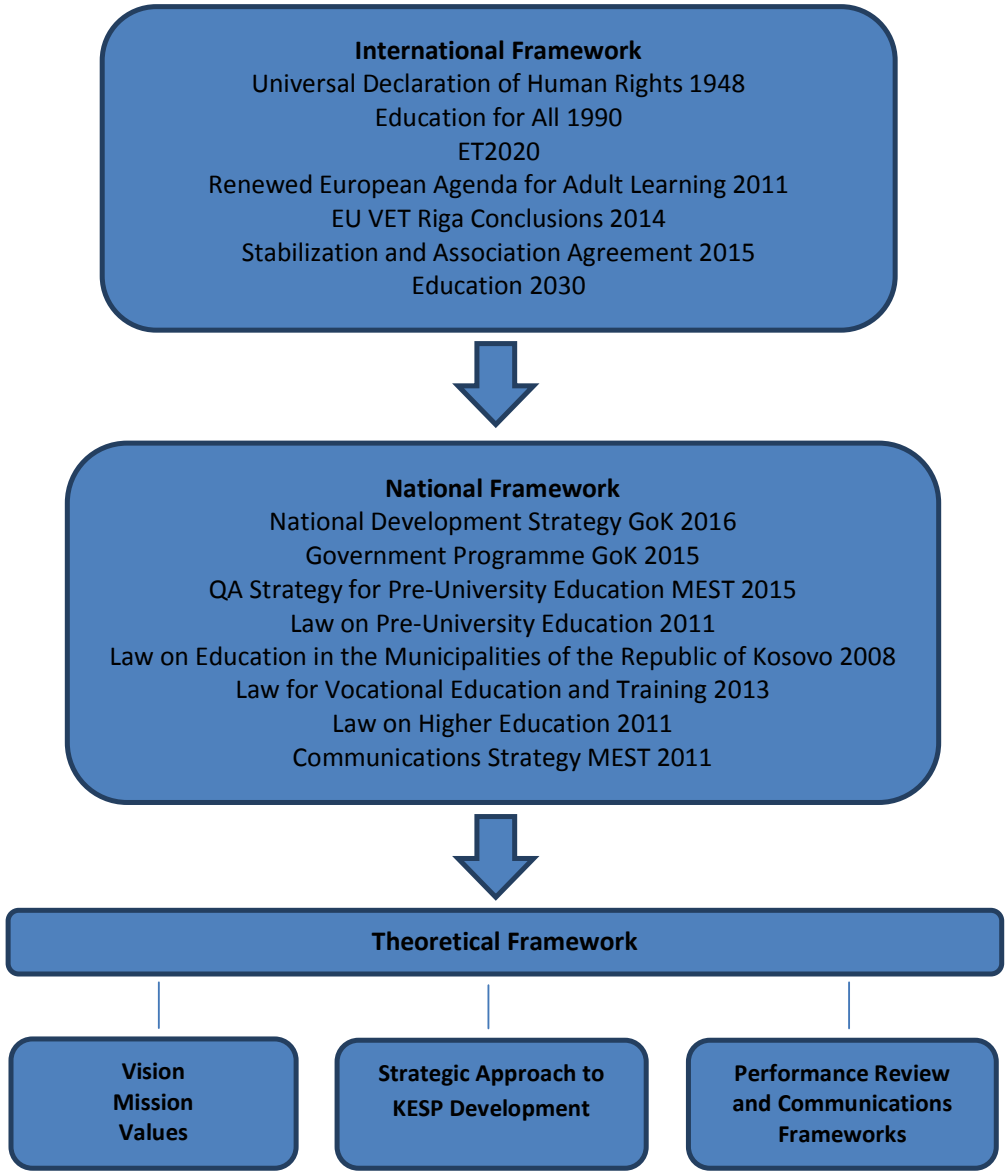
Additional priorities resulting from the 2014 EU 2020 stock taking exercise were also considered.

The sectorial agendas for Vocational Education and Training (VET) (the Copenhagen-Bruges process) and the Renewed European Agenda for Adult Learning (AL) require a more detailed identification of the deliverables/ priorities for the period up to 2020. The KESP has also attempted to align itself with these, in particular with the Riga Medium Term Deliverables for VET[7], such as promoting work-based learning in all its forms, and further developing quality assurance mechanisms in VET in line with EQAVET recommendation.

[3]Government of Kosovo: Government Programme (2015).
[4] MEST: Quality Assurance Strategy for Pre-University Education, Prishtina, December 2015.
[5]Guide for Diversity and Inclusion in Pre-University Education (Draft/2015).
[6]Strategic framework – Education & Training 2020 (http://ec.europa.eu/education/policy/strategic-framework/index_en.htm).
[7]http://ec.europa.eu/education/policy/vocational-policy/doc/2015-riga-conclusions_en.pdf.

Other EU policy recommendations are based on the findings of the latest reports from the Eurydice network [8]and from CRELL (the European Commission's Centre for Research on Education and Lifelong Learning.)[9] and these too were considered during the KESP development process.

**Regulatory and policy framework as point of reference for theoretical framework for KESP 2017 – 2021**




The development of the KESP also reflected the EU emphasis on a strong evidence-base and solid analyses as key elements for informed policy discussions and policy developments in education and training[10]. Moreover, the European benchmarks to be achieved by 2020[11] were taken into account:

[8]'The Teaching Profession in Europe: Practices, Perceptions and Policies', Eurydice (2015).
[9]Teaching Practices in Primary and Secondary Schools in Europe: Insights from Large –Scale Assessments in Education', CRELL, 2014.
[10]Education and training policies based on evidence, http://ec.europa.eu/education/policy/strategic-framework/indicators-benchmarks_en.htm.
[11]Europe 2020 indicators - education (Eurostat).

- At least 95% of children (from 4 to compulsory school age) should participate in early childhood education;
- fewer than 15% of 15-year-olds should be under-skilled in reading, mathematics and science;
- the rate of early leavers from education and training aged 18-24 should be below 10%;
- at least 40% of people aged 30-34 should have completed some form of higher education;
- at least 15% of adults should participate in lifelong learning;
- at least 20% of higher education graduates and 6% of 18-34 year-olds with an initial vocational qualification should have spent some time studying or training abroad;
- the share of employed graduates (aged 20-34 with at least upper secondary education attainment and having left education 1-3 years ago) should be at least 82%.

Other targets/indicators of interest to those responsible for the development of the KESP included those deriving from the Education for All (EFA) initiative which brings together organisations such as the World Bank and UNESCO, and those proposed by UN Member States for the Sustainable Development Goals[12] (SDGs), (in particular, Goal 4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all), and the Education Framework for Action (Education 2030). The set of thematic indicators developed by the UNESCO Technical Advisory Group were also considered[13].

Finally, those responsible for developing the KESP also bore in mind the results expected from IPA II,[14] in particular increased alignment of education and training programmes with labour market needs, and improvement of the inclusiveness of both the education sector and the labour market.

[12] http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/education/.
[13] Thematic Indicators to Monitor the Post-2015 Education Agenda, World Education Forum 2015.
[14] IPA II – Indicative strategy paper for Kosovo 2014-2020, European Commission, 2014.

## 2. Methodology

Development process for KESP 2017-2021 began in June 2015 when MEST initiated KESP 2011-2016 evaluation with the help of the Education Pooled Fund project. At the same time, the organisational structure was established to draft the new strategic plan consisting of three levels:

- Core Group that was responsible for the overall process management and the quality of the final product. The group consisted of MEST department directors, Advisers from the Cabinet of the Minister, a representative of the Education Collegium from the Association of Kosovo Municipalities, and was led by the General Secretary of the Ministry.
- Plenary Group consisted of Core Group members and other representatives from the MEST, municipalities, academia, and civil society. The role of this Group was to ensure the link between the Core Group and subgroups.
- Subgroups - there were six sub-groups altogether covering seven thematic areas of the KESP, as listed below. The subgroups members were subject matter experts from MEST, municipalities, academia, civil society and development partners.

The GIZ Project on Capacity Development in Basic Education (GIZ CDBE) hired a consortium consisting of the German Company PEM Consulting and the NGO Kosovo Education Center (KEC), to provide expertise during the KESP development process. Planning work began in late September 2015 with the development of an implementation plan for the planning process itself. The legislation on strategic documents drafting, as well as other strategic documents that the new KESP should relate to, were also consulted.

This implementation plan was approved at the Core Group meeting on November 18, 2015. At this meeting, it was decided that the approach to the planning process should be thematic, which differs from the sub-sectorial approach which was followed during the drafting of KESP 2011-2016. Thus, seven thematic areas were identified: 1) Participation and Inclusion; 2) Education System Management; 3) Quality Assurance; 4) Teacher Development; 5) Teaching and Learning; 6) Vocational Education and Adult Education; and 7) Higher Education.

Upon completion of the KESP 2011-2016 evaluation process, and after the presentation of the evaluation results at a conference held on November 26, 2015, conditions were created to start with the key planning activities for KESP 2017-2021.

From January 2016, the process of developing KESP 2017 to 2021 was also supported by the EU-funded project "Kosovo Education and Employment Network - KEEN" which provided expertise for two working groups during the development of the Strategy: "Participation and Inclusion" and "Vocational Education and Training and Adult Education".

Below we present the main steps of this process in a chronological order:

1. Situation analysis was a process developed through the use of planning methods such as SWOT and PEST. Conclusions drawn from the KESP 2011-2016 evaluation were also used. The situation analysis result was summarised in a work report drafted by the Core Group.
2. Defining the vision, mission and strategic objectives. Once the Core Group agreed on drafting the vision for education, it drafted the mission for its implementation; strategic objectives were set for each of the seven thematic areas. Strategic objectives were broken down into outcomes

while defining potential activities for each outcome, and success indicators. For this purpose, two Core Group workshops, two subgroups workshops and one plenary group workshop took place. The outcome of this phase was summarised in a document drafted by the Core Group.

3. KESP draft development was done using the work carried out in first two phases. This draft reflects all changes suggested by the Core Group at the end of the second planning phase.
4. On 5 May 2016 a national conference for discussion of KESP draft took place. More than 100 participants representing all government sectors, education institutions, civil society, development partners and other relevant stakeholders shared their observations on the KESP document, which were consolidated in a new draft by the expert team.
5. On May 21-22 another extended Core Group workshop took place to review comments from the conference and make final changes in the draft KESP document, with exception of changes in the field of vocational education and training made two weeks later following a separate workshop of the working group for this specific priority. In the meantime, comments from OSCE and the Council of Europe where included in the revised version. Also, success indicators were finalised and discussed with the Core Group and other structures within MEST in this period of time.
6. The budget planning process took place in June 2016. In this period two planning workshops were organised with participation of the extended Core Group. In parallel, the implementation plan for KESP for the period 2017-2021 was developed.
7. The final version of the KESP document was compiled in July 2016 based on guidance of the Core Group. In this phase, certain parts of the document were shortened and reorganised.

# 3. Context

The pace of change which confronts all societies in the 21st Century represents a formidable challenge for governments and planners at all levels. Nowhere is this more true than in the field of education and training which has the responsibility, both on economic and on humanitarian grounds, for facilitating the development of citizens. If the education and training sector is to be in a position to respond effectively to changes in the environment, it is extremely important that those leading the development of strategy have a sound understanding of the external and internal context in which they are operating.

As part of the development of KESP 2017-2021, therefore, considerable attention was paid to analysing the context in which the new plan was being prepared.

## 3.1. Challenges and opportunities in the current environment

Analysis of external factors affecting the development of KESP 2017-2021 led to some interesting conclusions. During the discussions in the Core Group it became clear that most of the identified factors could have an average or high impact on the implementation of the KESP. The Core Group used the PEST method[15], which identifies political, economic, social and technological factors, for the analysis; the main findings of this discussion, which are presented below, provided a useful background to deliberations during the process of developing the KESP.

### 3.1.1. Political considerations

The Stabilization and Association Agreement (SAA) sets the frame for Kosovo to cooperate with the EU in improving the quality of education at all levels, with the aim of improving skills, employability, social inclusion and promoting economic development. The SAA pays special attention to cooperation for achieving inclusiveness and equality in education, with specific reference to, for example, gender, ethnicity, religion, and disability. It is expected that cooperation between the EU and Kosovo should take the form of technical assistance for implementation of certain KESP measures. This Strategic Plan, therefore, will be the topic of regular consultations with the EU and subject of review in Progress Reports.

The implementation of the KESP itself largely depends on the implementation capacity of municipalities, in particular of the Municipal Education Directorates (MED). Despite the fact that the transfer of authority in the field of education from central to local level took place in 2008 and 2009, not all municipalities have managed to date to build their adequate capacities to meet their obligations in this area. This affects the implementation of KESP measures, since it is not possible for MEST to directly apply all measures without solid support from the municipal level. Moreover, it is of paramount importance to promote wider understanding of the fact that that increased autonomy needs to be matched by increased accountability and quality management. The KESP therefore, contains measures for further municipal capacity development.

Schools teaching in Serbian language in Kosovo continue to operate outside the Kosovo education system, despite the fact that the current legislation provides great opportunities for accommodating the specific needs of the Serbian community. The Republic of Kosovo will continue its current efforts to integrate the Serbian community with the help of international partners. KESP measures suit all

[15] PEST analysis ("Political, Economic, Social and Technological") describes a framework of macro-environmental factors used in the environmental scanning component of strategic management

communities, but if there is a need to address specific issues relating to the integration of Serbian community at a later stage, MEST will make efforts to accommodate them in the annual action plans.

Free movement within European borders is an opportunity for young people who have completed their education to look for jobs outside Kosovo's borders. Since it is expected for such movement to be made possible in the near future, the education system must be adapted to the requirements of the European labour market, focusing on quality enhancement, so that graduates can meet the standards of employers from EU countries.

### 3.1.2. Economic considerations

The economic situation in the country is characterised by stagnation in economic development, which results in the inability to create new jobs. On the other hand, labour market requirements can change very quickly. The importance, therefore, of improving the quality of education and training, of increasing skill levels among the general population, and of placing sufficient emphasis on Lifelong Learning, cannot be underestimated.

The poor economic and social conditions in which a considerable number of Kosovo citizens live has significant implications for the country in terms of the costs of addressing such problems: for example, to supply all students with free textbooks for compulsory education costs the state budget 7 million Euros a year; and subsidising higher education and dormitories through the application of lower fees also has considerable cost implications. If there are no significant improvements in the economic situation, expenditure of this nature will necessarily continue, which means that there will be fewer funds available for the implementation of the KESP.

According to the World Bank[16], public spending on education has increased significantly, from 3.3% of GDP in 2007 to 4.1% in 2012. Irrespective of this growth, Kosovo still spends less than the average of countries in Europe and Central Asia (4.6%) or the average of countries with middle and high income (5%). Among the Southeast European countries, Kosovo spends more than Albania (3.3%) and Macedonia (3.5%), but less than Croatia (4.4%) and Serbia (4.7%). Countries with younger populations such as Kosovo have the tendency to have higher levels of spending on education as a percentage of total public expenditure than those with older populations. It is desirable, therefore, that efforts should be made to achieve a more effective use of the available resource, as well as a gradual increase in education spending, in order to facilitate the improvement of the education system.

### 3.1.3. Social considerations

Kosovo is going through a phase of significant demographic change. Based on population projections, there will be a considerable decline in the number of pupils in primary and secondary level. Reduction of the number of students will result in the reduction of the number of classes in schools, reducing the need for teachers and potentially reducing the number of schools. On the other hand, movement of population from rural to urban areas will result in a bigger load on urban schools, and a lower number of students, especially in remote rural areas. These demographic changes are likely to lead to the need for a significant rationalisation of the school network, and may necessitate a revision of the planning during the implementation period of the new strategic plan.

[16] World Bank Group: Country Snapshot-Kosovo. Prishtina: The World Bank Country Office in Kosovo, 2015. http://www.worldbank.org/content/dam/Worldbank/document/eca/Kosovo-Snapshot.pdf

The emphasis on the need for much more systematic adult education and LLL, highlighted above in terms of the economic context, is also echoed in the social context where poor levels of education and training links directly to social exclusion for a number of groups.

In general, the image of education in the eyes of the citizens is not good and there is a demand for improved quality in education. This is reflected in public debate and negative media coverage about the quality of education. Since Kosovo now participates in international testing (PISA) that allows for comparison with other countries, the demands to improve the quality of education may reflect a lack of understanding for the situation in which the country and its education system find themselves. However, such demands must be seen as a positive incentive to implement the new KESP, and move with accelerated steps towards improving the situation.

Cheating is a negative phenomenon observed at all levels of the education system in Kosovo. It is worrying that pupils and students make efforts to cheat in exams by using the most sophisticated technology, whilst educational institutions make insufficient efforts to prevent this phenomenon. Furthermore, social condemnation of this phenomenon is insufficient to identify it as an inadmissible act. It is the duty of the education system to fight deception and cheating, but it cannot be done without the general support from the society and citizens for the strict application of a transparent set of rules and procedures. It is essential, therefore, that work is done to raise awareness of this issue, thus ensuring that the assessment results provide a realistic picture of the possession of knowledge and skills by pupils and students.

### 3.1.4. Technological considerations

In the past ten years, road infrastructure in Kosovo has improved significantly, contributing to cutting travel time from home to school. With further improvements, there may not be a reason for the existence of many schools that serve smaller communities consisting of several dozen families. If we add to this the decline in birth rate, we can then predict that the improved road infrastructure will bring us to the reorganisation of the school network in some municipalities, which may require additional investment.

Kosovo is a country with a high rate of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) use. According to a report of the Kosovo Association of Information and Communication Technology (STIKK)[17], it is estimated that 76.6% of Kosovo population are Internet users, mainly for entertainment purposes. This is at the level of developed countries. On the other hand, in Kosovo schools there is one computer per 46 pupils, while 57% of the teaching staff have ECDL training. Such a situation requires swifter movement towards the application of ICT in classrooms, because the opposite may reduce the importance of the school to students' future. It is expected that the use of ICT in the next five years will take other dimensions, which, for now, cannot be predicted; therefore it may happen that KESP would need to undergo changes at a later state to facilitate quicker integration of ICT in schools.

Increased funding of scientific research activity can bring research capacity building in the field of education; meanwhile this may result in new research leading to new practical recommendations for addressing the problems in education. Therefore, it may be necessary to make due changes and amendments to the KESP as a result of recommendations based on further research.

[17] Internet Penetration and Usage in Kosovo, STIKK, 2013. Retrieved from http://www.mfa-ks.net/repository/docs/STIKK_raport_eng_2013_short_web.pdf

## 3.2. KESP 2011-2016 evaluation

KESP 2011-2016 was the first comprehensive Strategic Plan for Kosovo, and did not include a built in review and evaluation mechanism. For this and a number of other reasons, the evaluation of the 2011-2016 KESP was a challenging task. Nonetheless, the Evaluation Report which was published in November 2015 offers some extremely useful insights into developments in the Education System in Kosovo over the period, and provided a document which served as part of the baseline for the development of the 2017-2021 KESP.

The main findings of the evaluation of KESP 2011-2016 were as follows:

1. Some notable improvements have been observed in the policy-making process in pre-school education. However, the implementation cycle did not register any significant increase in pre-school enrolment levels. Future planning should place greater emphasis on this sub-sector and aim at increasing enrolment in pre-primary education by an additional 5000 children and double the percentage of children in pre-school (0-4) programmes.
2. Kosovo has achieved a high level of enrolment in pre-university education and is comparable to European levels, and pupil achievement in external examinations has increased modestly. However, mechanisms and practice of quality assurance and accountability remain undeveloped and the process of implementing the new curriculum is far from meeting the deadline specified in planning. The sub-sector is being influenced by a decline in birth rates and this has significant implications for school infrastructure and teacher number. Despite the progress achieved in the process of transferring the responsibilities from the central to local level, the process of transferring financial responsibilities to schools has encountered significant obstacles.
3. Around half of pupils in upper secondary education choose a vocational education profile. However, the linkage of vocational education to the labour market remains a challenge and quality assurance mechanisms remain underdeveloped. The teacher-student ratio has improved in recent years but the number of staff responsible for career orientation and quality management needs to be increased. A number of occupational standards have been developed over the last five years but more efforts are need to complete the entire framework. VET curricula need to be reviewed both to ensure that they are compatible with labour market demands and to promote module-based learning.
4. Some positive developments were noted in teacher re-qualification programmes but further progress is needed to ensure that all teachers meet the minimum teaching standard. During recent years teachers' salaries have increased and created preconditions for attracting qualified teachers and improve accountability. However, currently about 40% of teachers do not have adequate qualifications as specified by the relevant administrative instruction on the teaching.
5. Significant progress was achieved in increasing the enrolment of students in higher education and Kosovo is now at the top of European countries for the number of students per 100,000 inhabitants. However, the percentage of students graduating remains low and the rapid increase in the number of students posed challenges in quality management. Kosovo became a member of ENQA in 2014, confirming that Kosovo implements the European Standard Guidelines in external quality assurance. However, there are still challenges in internal quality mechanisms, and the implementation of a standardised and unified financial management practice at all

public institutions remains a challenge. Government spending on scientific research is very low (0.1% GDP).

6. One of the primary challenges in the education sector is building a sustainable system for the promotion of adult education and lifelong learning and provision of funding for this priority. Currently there is no funding scheme or funding formula for adult education. Functioning and capacity building of the Agency for Vocational Education and Training and Adult Education (AVETAE) as well as its Council is a challenge and is a prerequisite for creating a more coherent approach to adult education. Moreover, there is no capacity of staff to address the needs of adult education and implementation of the priorities of this sub-sector is mainly done within vocational education and by non-governmental organisations and businesses.

7. The education system has low access to information and communication technology (ICT) and contemporary technology is not integrated appropriately in curriculum, teaching or education system management**.** The implementation of the strategy for incorporation of information and communication technology did not progress as foreseen in the initial plan. The computer-pupil ratio in Kosovo is 1: 46 and much lower compared to the EU average where 3-7 pupils use a computer. The integration of ICT in learning and teaching remains an important priority that needs to be addressed in the next planning cycle.

8. The main challenge in the management of education system remains the coordination of plans and priorities within a coordinated framework of planning and monitoring. The inclusion of municipalities, higher education institutions and the private sector is essential for the advancement of the implementation of educational plans. Capacity for collecting and processing data on education has improved significantly but further capacity development is required in providing more detailed data on students and pupils, integration of reporting databases, external examination results and the impact of education on employment. A more coordinated approach to data reporting, and reporting according to international practice and indicators (UNESCO/OECD/EU needs to be promoted.

The Evaluation Report also produced a very useful "KESP 2011-2016 Implementation Index" which rated implementation, in terms of achieving the objectives and implementing activities listed in the KESP, in the various sub-programmes of the KESP. Although the index scale does not necessarily represent the situation in each sub-sector, it provided a very useful reference point for the development of the 2017-2021 KESP. The Evaluation was also able to produce clear recommendations for future action within the education sector.

However, the Evaluation did not provide any analysis of factors which helped/hindered the implementation of KESP 2011-2016. Moreover, the evaluation process did not formally attempt to evaluate how KESP 2011-2016 functioned as a strategic plan: Was the structure useful? Was the approach effective? Fortunately, some of these issues were raised in discussions and this provided useful guidance with regard to changes in the structure of the KESP 2017-2021.

## 3.3. Organisation and structure of the education system

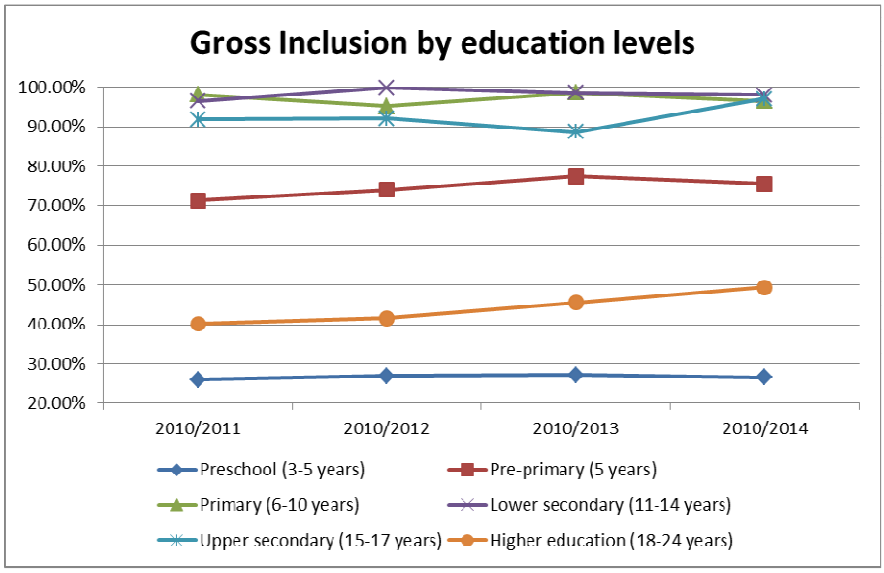
The public education system in Kosovo operates through a network of 43 pre-school institutions, 985 primary and lower secondary schools, 119 upper secondary schools, and nine public higher education institutions. In addition, there are 10 licensed private institutions offering primary and

secondary education, as well as 30 licensed private higher education institutions. There are also a number of private institutions offering pre-school services.

The education system in Kosovo is structured as follows:

- Pre-School Education (ISCED[18] 0, children aged <6)
- Primary Education (ISCED 1, grades 1-5, children aged 6-10)
- Lower Secondary Education (ISCED 2, grades 6-9, children aged 11-14)
- Upper Secondary Education (ISCED 3, grades 10-12, children aged 15-18)
- Higher Education (ISCED 5-8)

In recent years (*see chart below*), considerable progress has been made in improving access to education, although a gender balance has not yet been reached, particularly in upper secondary education.




Source: KESP 2011-2016 Evaluation Report

The most notable progress in gross enrolment rates has been at the pre-primary, upper secondary, and higher education levels. While there has been no significant increase in pre-school enrolment levels, there has been a notable improvement in the gross enrolment level of children aged 5 in pre-primary education. Enrolment rates in primary and lower secondary education is almost universal, and upper secondary gross enrolments stand at 84.7%. Around half of pupils in upper secondary education choose a vocational education profile. The number of students in higher education has increased to around 122,000, putting Kosovo at the top of European countries with 6,669 students for 100,000 inhabitants.

The general structure of the education system is illustrated in Figure 1

[18] ISCED – International Standard Classification of Education as adopted by the UNESCO General Conference at its 36thsession in November 2011.

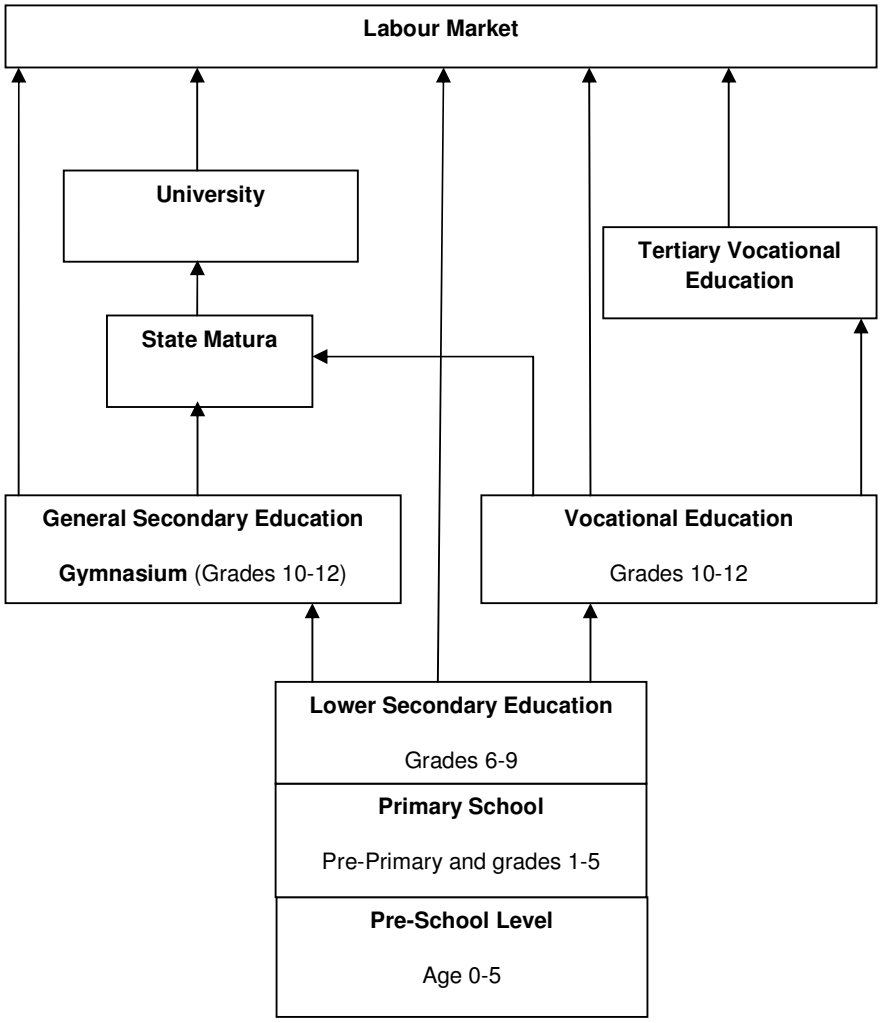



Figure 1. General Structure of the Education System in Kosovo (adapted from Butler et al.2009 and update in 2015)

## 3.4. Challenges and opportunities in education in Kosovo

The situation analysis was based on the assessment of KESP 2011-2016 carried out by MEST, as well as on a SWOT analysis of seven thematic areas carried out with participation by all stakeholders. The results of the situation analysis are presented below.

### 3.4.1. Participation and Inclusion

The MEST data shows that the inclusion rate in primary, lower secondary and upper secondary education has improved. However, inclusion in the pre-school level remains a concern, particularly at the level 0-3, and is far from meeting European standards of participation. The MEST data shows that gross enrolment rate of children of age 0-5 years in pre-schools and pre-primary schools during 2014/15 was 15.7%.

Data indicates that the participation of children aged 0-4 years in licensed pre-school institutions is only 2.8%, rising to 29.6%[19] for age 3-5 years. However, participation of children in pre-primary education gives a more positive picture, currently at 79.6%[20].

Primary and lower secondary education is compulsory, therefore the participation rate of students in these levels was always high, with roughly 96% in primary and 98% in lower secondary, while the participation rate in upper secondary education during the school year 2014/2015 was84.5%[21].

**Main challenges:**

- Low participation rate in pre-school.
- Lack of functioning of licensing and monitoring of pre-school private education institutions.
- Insufficient inclusion of disabled children in education system.
- Low participation in education of children from marginalised groups.
- School dropout is still significant.

There has also been a move to increase the inclusion of children with special educational needs in mainstream schools and in 2013, 6093 students were included in mainstream schools[22]. Despite this, the inclusion of children with special needs in mainstream education remains very low, and MEST has prepared an Action Plan for Inclusive Education 2016-2020.

In Kosovo, different communities are fully integrated in the education system, except for students who attend school in Serbian language. However, despite considerable efforts on the part of MEST, the EU Progress Reports for Kosovo continue to highlight the difficulties faced by children of marginalised groups, as well as different ethnic groups, and low levels of attendance particularly among Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian students remain a concern.

Measures taken over recent years have contributed to a decreased dropout rate, from 0.48% in 2011, to 0.12% in 2014,[23]. However, attendance data discrepancies and the level of dropout are still an issue, and the rate of Early School Leavers[24] has so far not been monitored.

During the past two years, the migration, and subsequent return, of a large number of Kosovan citizens has led to an issue with the integration of returnee children in the education system.

[19] http://mashtsmia-001-site1.smarterasp.net/Raport%20Statistikor%20me%20Tregues%20Arsimor%202014-15.pdf
[20] http://mashtsmia-001-site1.smarterasp.net/Raport%20Statistikor%20me%20Tregues%20Arsimor%202014-15.pdf
[21] http://masht.rks-gov.net/uploads/2015/12/raport-statistikor-me-tregues-arsimor-2014-15.pdf
[22] Work summary of the Division of Special Needs Education for the period of 2008 -2014.
[23] KESP 2011-2015 Evaluation Report.
[24] Early School Leavers: youth in the age between 16 and 24 years who have only finished lower secondary school and are currently not enrolled in any education or training.

Cooperation needs to be intensified in the future between MEST and MEDs in order to coordinate catch-up activities for returnee students.

The provision of opportunities for lifelong learning, an important aspect of participation and inclusion, is dealt with in 2.4.6.

### 3.4.2. The Education System Management

The legal framework has been completed to a satisfactory level for the functioning of the primary and secondary education systems. However, there is a need for full implementation and review of parts of legislation, in order to avoid possible conflicting policies and to increase their impact in practice in order to ensure a coherent approach to educational reform and achieve maximum results with the available resources.

The recent emphasis on autonomy at municipal and school level in the education system in Kosovo brings with it the corresponding need to develop accountability and quality assurance. Improvement, therefore, in education management, including financial management, is an essential component of KESP 2017-2021. Linked to that comes the need for significant capacity building, particularly at municipal level where the organisational structure within MEDs in general is inconsistent with the main areas of (new) responsibilities received by them after the promulgation of the 2008 Law on Education in Municipalities, and the launch of the on-going curricular reform.

Similarly, there is a need to shift the focus towards the development of the school as an organisation, and to build coherent and sustainable mechanisms for putting accountability and support in place at the school level. At the same time, the new curriculum reform, which aims at increased autonomy at the school level in terms of defining and delivering of educational content, results in the need to strengthen planning and management processes in schools, including further work on the clarification of the status of school directors as a career position, and on developing quality mechanisms for the appointment of school directors and for monitoring of their performance.

MEST has developed the GiS database, which holds data collected about the infrastructure of each school (level 1-12), in order to facilitate investment planning and policy development. MEST has also developed standards for school construction for levels 1-12, and such standards will have to be developed for other levels. Between2011-2015, school infrastructure reached 3.6 m²/stu

the need nou n

the need n

jGI'eANW:ZqCDjB'mANW:GBBjjB'eANW:ZqCDjB'nAI:WjjGz'tANz:WqZCZ' ANDB:jqZz'pAI:WjjGz'rAz:WZWCz'oANG:ZWWGj'cA□$8oqIW:GCZ.W.$□o□'

The development of child-friendly, safe and healthy environments including the development and maintenance of school infrastructure in line with the relevant standards, and the full implementation of the protocol for the prevention of violence in institutions of pre-university education, remains an important priority for the coming period.

In the current context, where MEST is responsible for planning and policy management and monitoring of the education system, data-based decision-making is essential. MEST publishes regular annual and periodic internal statistical reports, and has developed a framework for a new statistical annual report which gives the general public access to data. However, there are considerable limitations relating to student data. The World Bank loan of 11 million US$ will allow the scope of data collection to be expanded considerably.

Development of partnerships between different education sector levels and stakeholders is also a priority, including greater links with external partners in order to increase public responsibility for education, and the empowerment of the school governing boards and student councils.

### 3.4.3. Quality Assurance

The Government of the Republic of Kosovo approved the "Quality Assurance Strategy for Pre-University Education in Kosovo 2016-2020" in December 2015. The aim of this strategy is to introduce a comprehensive quality assurance system in Kosovo's pre-university education sub-sector, and to contribute to the improvement of educational services and outcomes.

This strategy has four different components, represented through respective strategic objectives:

Objective 1: Build effective quality assurance mechanisms.
Objective 2: Promote the development planning at school and municipal level.
Objective 3: Quality assurance capacity building at all levels.
Objective 4: Raise awareness of stakeholders about quality assurance.

**Main challenges:**

- The credibility of national test results.
- Quality of state tests.
- Cheating in school and in tests.
- Analysis of the national test results and using them to improve quality.
- Participation in international tests and using the results for educational policymaking.

Each strategic objective is broken down into measures. The budget for implementation of the Quality Assurance Strategy 2016-2020 is around 8.2 million Euros.

Given that the strategy already exists and was drafted on the basis of a thorough situation analysis, the initial idea was simply to integrate it into KESP 2017-2021. However, during KESP planning a little more attention was focused on an issue that has received less attention within the Quality Assurance Strategy – the issue of external student assessment.

MEST and MEDs have now gained experience in the organisation of various national tests. Despite obvious weaknesses, continuous efforts were being made to improve test administration, and in 2015, Kosovo participated for the first time in international PISA assessment. However there is still much work to do on the administration of national tests: the phenomenon of mass cheating remains, the use of analysis of national test results as a basis for quality improvement must be

developed. Also, the quality of test administration, the reliability of tests as measuring instruments, and accommodation of students with special needs all remain challenges for the future.

### 3.4.4. Teacher Development

Teacher development has been one of the priorities of education system in Kosovo in recent years. Teacher licensing was thought of as one of the main mechanisms to develop teaching quality, to motivate teachers towards better performance, and to address cases when the performance was not at the desired level. The teacher licensing system, as it is planned, entails a mechanism of professional development obligatory for each teacher, and performance assessment of every teacher, as two crucial elements. Advancement in the licensing scheme was meant to be related to increased salary as a motivational instrument of good performance.

**Main challenges:**

- Incomplete implementation of the teacher licensing system: performance based assessment and licensing still missing.
- Limited offer of the required teacher professional development.
- Lack of strategy for implementing teacher performance assessment.
- Lack of a coherent approach to teacher development system including coherence between the development of in 'pre-service', 'career start' and 'career development'.
- Weak interaction between different elements of teacher career management and connection of good teaching standards with practical actions in teacher development and licensing.

The legal framework for teacher licensing, promotion and performance assessment[25] has been developed, but not yet implemented. However, recently, teacher professional development activities have been conducted on a regular basis by various different projects. It is clear that the target that every teacher must meet a certain number of professional development hours (at least 100 hours over a five year period) will be a challenge.

Important steps have been made in establishing mechanisms for sustainable implementation of professional development. A mechanism has also been developed for determining the procedures and responsibilities of each stakeholder in implementing a sustainable system of professional development, assigning roles and responsibilities to each stakeholder in the process.[26]

According to the provisions of the Administrative Instruction No. 16/2013, the existing provider-led teacher professional development model should be expanded to include alternatives, such as a school-based professional development approach, without ignoring monitoring and accreditation mechanisms of professional development programmes and integration within the broad scheme of teacher licensing (at the central level). It will be necessary to develop a continuous process of needs assessment for teacher professional development, to be conducted at the central level, and at school and municipal level. Professional development should be managed under a broader central framework which connects it with on-going school curriculum reform and results obtained as per students' achievements.

[25] Administrative Instruction No 14/2013: Teacher Performance Assessment and Administrative Instruction 25/2014: Teacher Licensing.
[26] Administrative Instruction No. 16/2013 on Implementation of Teacher Professional Development.

Professional development and the licensing system must be driven by a set of a good teaching principles and standards so that teacher licensing can move towards working as a mechanism for improving teaching quality in Kosovo. Despite progress in advancing the professionalization of the teacher's role, further development is needed in two directions: firstly, a mechanism should be established for all public institutions that train new teachers so that they all base their work on unified national teacher education standards; secondly, standards for 'pre-service' and 'in service' teacher education should be specified, including making connections between them.

### 3.4.5. Teaching and Learning

To increase the quality of education in Kosovo and harmonise it with the trends of developed countries, in 2011 MEST approved the Kosovo Curriculum Framework (KCF). This framework enabled the transition from objective and content-based teaching and learning, to modern teaching and learning methodologies based on results and student competencies development.

After the approval of the Curriculum Framework, the legal framework and supporting documents were drafted for its implementation. According to MEST planning it was expected that the curriculum would be implemented in all schools in Kosovo during the period of 2011-2014. During 2014, the piloting of the curricula first was implemented in 10 schools and after one year it was expanded to 92 schools, in 30 municipalities. Some of the problems which affected its slow implementation of the new curriculum include: the small number of trainers and their inadequate qualifications to train, mentor and monitor teachers during the implementation of the curriculum in the classroom; limited professional and financial capacities in the educational system; and the delays in preparation of supporting materials for implementation of the curriculum, as well as the lack of suitable textbooks.

Standards have been developed for the drafting of textbooks[27] which could serve as a basis for the revision of the existing textbooks, and for drafting new textbooks. However, MEST must provide funds for this to happen. In order to minimise costs and provide maximum flexibility, MEST should investigate the development of digital materials.

MEST has developed a draft e-learning strategy and has equipped schools with various teaching aids. A considerable number of schools in Kosovo have been provided with computers, projectors, equipment, as well as other tools that provide for development of student competencies. MEST statistics show that 4tch could serv nd monitor t

### 3.4.6. Vocational Education and Training and Adult Education

VET is regulated through a very large number of laws and education policies which are often contradictory and which need to be harmonised as a matter of urgency.

In general, enrolment in VET-schools is seen as a second option for those who have not managed to enrol in general secondary schools/gymnasiums, and the numbers of students enrolling in vocational schools in recent years has dropped, and is now below 50% of the upper secondary student population. The relation between vocational education and the labour market remains a challenge that requires immediate action because at least 30% of vocational schools specialise in trades for which there is little demand in the market.

**Main challenges:**

- Current VET does not comply with labour market needs.
- Lack of specific VET Core Curriculum.
- Inclusion of the entire VET system in the Kosovo Curriculum Framework.
- Limited opportunities for practical training within the school and in enterprises.
- Insufficient budget and inadequate formula for VET.
- Very limited offer for level 5 of the KCF.
- Ensuring the sustainability of Centres of Competence.
- Lack of effective and open system for Adult Education.

The budget per student in VET is insufficient to cover basic needs. Moreover, public vocational schools have serious limitations in terms of income generation. The financial constraints impacting on VET hamper investment opportunities in infrastructure and in equipment, even for those specialist skills for which there is a demand in Kosovo.

The National Qualifications Authority (NQA) is functional despite its small number of staff, and is responsible for the external quality assurance of the vocational schools. The NQA has been providing training for quality assurances coordinators and has also, to date, completed the validation of 19 qualifications and the accreditation of over 33 private institutions offering VET education, and the standards for over 40 professions.

Centres of Competence have been established, with some very positive developments in terms of infrastructure, capacity building, development of occupational standards, and competency-based modular curricula and teaching materials. However, their financial sustainability must be ensured. The Agency for Vocational Education and Training and Adult Education (AVETAE) was established in 2014, and currently remains in its pilot phase until September 2016.Its role in the VET system is then expected to be further clarified.

Despite some progress in the practice of labour market data collection, and the drafting of the Strategy on Career Education and Guidance 2015-2019, the lack of career guidance and counselling centres at school, municipal and national level, and the lack of information from the labour market, remain significant challenges. Similarly, despite the excellent work by MEST on the Strategy for Professional Practice 2013-2020 and the production of two Guides for companies and vocational schools in order to provide the opportunity for greater cooperation, there is, so far, no inter-ministerial agreement to facilitate this cooperation and enable the development of student internships.

Issues which need attention in VET include capacity building of teaching staff, ensuring cooperation between schools and enterprises, review of existing occupational standards, and introducing the missing standards. Other challenges are the development of Core Curriculum for VET, the framework for vocational profiles, modularisation of the existing VET curricula and development of new competency-based modular curricula according to professional standards, the quality of practical teaching and training in VET schools, and support for VET teachers from professional development programmes.

In terms of Adult Learning, there is awareness that 'Making lifelong learning and mobility a reality is the first objective of ET 2020. However, the almost total lack of structures and expertise in the field of adult learning in Kosovo combined the pressing need to improve the quality of statutory provision, means that it is not feasible to prioritise developments in LLL in Kosovo in the short and medium term. Nonetheless, there will be some attempts via KESP 2017-2021 to begin to tackle this area.

### 3.4.7. Higher Education

Currently, there are 39 accredited and licensed higher education institutions operating in Kosovo, of which 9 are public and 30 private institutions. Thus, Kosovo has 20 higher education institutions per 1 million inhabitants which greatly exceeds the EU average[28].

The number of students in Higher Education in Kosovo has increased from about 40,000 in 2004 to 122,000 in 2015. Kosovo has 6,669 students per 100,000 inhabitants, which is nearly double the EU average[29]. Participation of women in higher education has increased, and the female student population now stands at 50.2% of the total. In addition, Kosovo offers preferential treatment for enrolment in higher education for candidates coming from non-Albanian ethnic communities.

The number of study programmes has also increased significantly. [30] However, all research in Kosovo indicates that there is a major disparity between the supply of higher education system and labour market demands, as becomes clear from an examination of the Table below:

Percentage of students by fields of study

| Field of study | Public | Private | Total |
|---|---|---|---|
| Education | 9.2% | 0.0% | 6.8% |
| Humanities and Arts | 10.8% | 6.4% | 9.7% |
| Social Sciences, Business and Law | 48.1% | 63.7% | 52.1% |
| Natural Sciences, Maths and ICT | 5.5% | 10.2% | 6.7% |
| Engineering, Production and Construction | 14.0% | 7.5% | 12.3% |
| Agriculture and Veterinary | 2.6% | 0.0% | 2.0% |
| Health and Welfare | 6.9% | 7.7% | 7.1% |
| Services | 2.8% | 4.5% | 3.3% |

Source: Partial data from higher education institutions

[28] Data from Kosovo Accreditation Agency, EUROSTAT and www.webometrics.info.

[29] Calculations have been made based on data from EUROSTAT and MEST.

and Web of Science) in the period 2003-2013[31], Kosovo is far from meeting the European standards for research development. However, a Kosovo Innovation Strategy 2016-2020 has recently been drafted, setting the objectives and activities for creating the necessary infrastructure to connect the scientific community with industry and economy. Moreover, in the past four years, within the Science Fund, MEST has supported research and science work through several grants schemes. The challenge remains to use these grants effectively.

## 3.5. Financing of Education in Kosovo

Public spending in the Education Sector in Kosovo grew steadily from 3.3% of GDP in 2007[32] to 4.7% of GDP in 2014[33], which makes Kosovo comparable to other countries in the Region. However, due to a low GDP and young population, Kosovo lags behind other countries in terms of student per-capita spending. Per capita spending in the Pre-University Education 2014 was 477 EUR[34] (or 16.1 % of per-capita GDP), whereas in Higher Education – 703 EUR[35] (or 23.8 % of per-capita GDP). In OECD countries, expenditure per student by educational institutions averages 21% of GDP per capita at the primary level, 26% at the secondary level and 41% at the tertiary level[36]. Table 1 provides an overview of expenses by standard indicators and sub-sectors for the period 2011-2014.

Table 1. Overview of expenses in the Education Sector 2011-2014

| | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| GDP | 4,773 | 4,916 | 5,327 | 5,581 |
| Expenditures in education sector | 218.9 | 230.4 | 230.5 | 262.3 |
| % GDP in education | 4.60% | 4.70% | 4.30% | 4.70% |
| Total Government Budget | 1,415 | 1,441 | 1,469 | 1,589 |
| Budget (%) for education | 15.50% | 16.00% | 15.70% | 16.50% |
| Central financing | 65.4 | 71.4 | 69.9 | 81 |
| Local financing (municipality) | 153.5 | 159 | 160.5 | 181.3 |
| Financing of pre-university education | 183.95 | 192.57 | 188.80 | 210.99 |
| Financing of higher education | 34.63 | 37.62 | 41.02 | 50.76 |

Source: **Ministry of Finance /MEST**
**Note (1): Local financing includes not only the specific grant for education but also own revenues (self-financing), the general grant. Expenditures in pre-university level include local financing and MEST expenditures dedicated for pre-university level. Expenditures in higher education includeexpenditures of public educational institutions, expenditures of MEST for higher education, UP, ASAK, KAPS, NL.**

Source: MEST: KESP 2011-2016 Evaluation Report, November 2015

Increases in teacher wages in 2011 and 2014, as well as introduction of new fringe benefits have crowded out other spending for Education. The size of the Specific Education Grant for 2016 is 161.3 million EUR and covers salaries only[37], whereas no Government contribution to non-wage operating expenses is anticipated. On the other hand, municipal budgets for education total 172 million EUR (excluding municipal capital expenditures for education). Therefore, there is a gap of 11 million EUR or 7% of under-funding[38]. MEST is in the process of addressing this issue through a new policy to be included in the MTEF 2017-2019.

[31] Lampert D. et al.: Co-publication and co-patenting analysis among countries in the Danube Region, Danube-INCO.NET, 2015.
[32] World Bank: Republic of Kosovo Kosovo Public Finance Review, Report No: ACS9351, June 2014.
[33] MEST: KESP 2011-2016 Evaluation Report, November 2015.
[34] Ibidem, p. 12.
[35] Ibidem, p. 88.
[36] OECD: Education at a glance 2011, p.212.
[37] GoK: Medium Term Expenditure Framework 2016-2018.
[38] 2016 Budget: municipal subsidy to the specific operating grant for basic education services (excluding capital).

## 3.6. Major interventions in the field of education

In last 17 years there have been numerous donor-funded programmes supporting the development of various parts of the Education Sector. Programmes which are relevant to the development of KESP 2017-2021 fall into three categories, and are exemplified below.

### 3.6.1. Programmes supporting improvement of the quality of education

This group of programmes includes:

- Implementation of the Kosovo Curriculum Framework - The new, competency-based Curriculum Framework was adopted in August 2011, but the implementation, which has been supported by UNICEF, the World Bank and the EU Education SWAp, and the Twinning project, is still in its pilot phase.
- Professional Development for Teachers - In 2010, the Government of the Republic of Kosovo introduced a training programme accreditation system effectively recognising qualifications gained through in-service training. Since then, more than 100 in-service programmes have been offered by accredited public and private providers, and the first edition of the Catalogue of Recognized Programmes was printed in 2011. MEST and development partners including USAID, GIZ, and the EU, have provided a variety of different training programmes for Kosovar teachers and administrators.
- Teacher Licensing - The Government of the Republic of Kosovo, supported by the World Bank, introduced a teacher licensing system based on participation in in-service training and performance appraisal to provide a framework which incentivises teachers to continuously enhance their professional performance.
- Quality Assurance in Education - With technical assistance from the EU, the World Bank, and USAID, the National Qualification Authority (NQA) has produced essential material and operational tools related to the legal framework of qualifications and VET QA, and introduced procedures for voluntary accreditation of VET institutions based on external assessment. MEST has developed a comprehensive QA Strategy for pre-university education, which was approved by the Government of the Republic of Kosovo in December 2015.
- Information and Communication Technology - In addition to procuring computers, MEST worked with DPs, in particular the EU and USAID, on developing e-content and maintaining ICT equipment in schools.
- Capacity Building - The GIZ-funded TalkOn Program, focused on building capacity for implementation of the MEST Communication Strategy, started in early 2014 as a pre-cursor to a larger capacity building intervention, which was funded by The Education Sector Pooled Fund (ESPF) established in May 2013 through an Arrangement of Joint Funding (AJF) between Government of Kosovo, represented by MEST, Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of European Integration (MEI), and the development partners contributing to the fund, including SIDA and ADA.

### 3.6.2. Programmes supporting more effective linkage of education with the labour market

This group of programmes includes**:**

- Centres of Competence (CoCs) - supported by Lux-Development, NORAD and GIZ are a new concept of VET institutions aimed at facilitating a major departure from content-based to competency-based curriculum, and providing excellent preparation for the labour market. Centres have superb facilities, good links with the labour market, and are supposed to serve as a model for vocational schools in Kosovo and the region.
- Business Simulation Programmes - Practice firms enable schools to create virtual businesses which are part of a larger international network of virtual firms, allowing students to practise various aspects of business administration, including marketing, accounting, and human resource management. Currently, practice firms established with support from DPs SDC, ADA, and DANIDA operate successfully in all economic and agricultural schools in Kosovo. Also, there is a Service Centre at MEST which provides virtual services to all practice firms, and organises trainings and networking for teachers, as well as annual fairs.
- Linkage of education programmes to the labour market – the Government of the Republic of Kosovo has been working for years to strengthen the quality and relevance of education programmes and the link between education and the labour market as a precondition for employability and economic development. Two new EU funded project will further develop this work, the ALLED project (Alignment of the Education and the Labour Market Needs) and KEEN project (Kosovo Education and Employment Network).

### 3.6.3. Programmes Targeting Vulnerable Groups

This group of programmes includes:

- Support to Roma, Ashkali, and Egyptian students - the interventions have been supported by various development partners including EU, SDC, Balkan Sunflowers, REF, and the German government, in various locations in Kosovo, while MEST has dealt with coordination, and recently took over part of the funding.
- Special Education - MEST has paid much attention to the inclusion of children with special needs and, with support from DPs, in particular the Government of Finland, created a better environment for them. Five special schools were transformed to resource centres with the aim of facilitating integration of children with special needs into mainstream schools instead of separating them in special schools. Special attention was also paid to training teachers in inclusive education.

## 4. Our Vision, Mission, and Values

The KESP 2017-2021 takes as its starting point legislation approved by the Government of the Republic of Kosovo, the National Development Strategy 2016-2020, and other relevant documentation. Within these parameters, and taking into account the current national and international environment, the wide group of stakeholders involved in developing the KESP have formulated an updated vision for education in Kosovo: Kosovo, a competitive knowledge society, based on European values with equal opportunities for all its citizens to contribute to sustainable economic and social development.

**VISION**

Kosovo, a competitive knowledge society, based on European values with equal opportunities for all its citizens to contribute to sustainable economic and social development.

The mandates of the main institutions responsible for education and training in Kosovo are enshrined in law or administrative instructions. However, all such institutions, in addition to having to comply with their mandate, are relatively free to initiate other activity as long as it is not expressly forbidden. It is to be hoped that all institutions will fully develop their potential in order to improve the quality of education provision at all levels in Kosovo. The mission statement formulated by the stakeholders during the KESP development provides a useful tool to help encourage this creativity: 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.

**MISSION**

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.

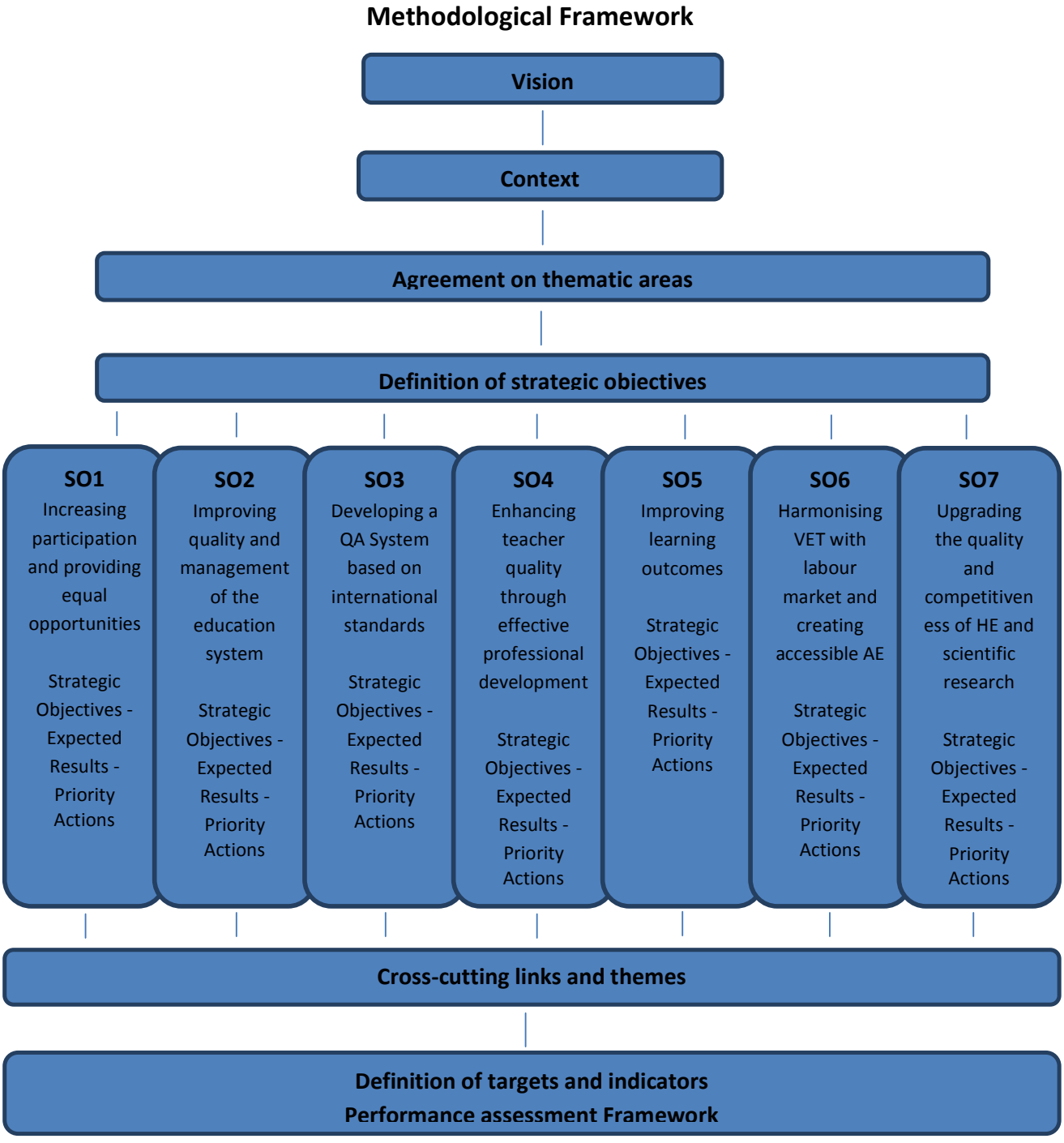
We have also taken the step of affirming our values in order to underline our strategic approach to confronting the fast -changing circumstances in which the KESP will be implemented, and to support the delivery of our objectives. Values underpin our organisational culture and behaviour. They identify what we believe in strongly and they make a firm statement about the beliefs, attitudes and behaviours that guide how we will deliver quality education and training services to the people of Kosovo. We have consulted widely to ensure that the values are shared.

**VALUES:**

- **Respect**: we approach others in a way that demonstrates that we value them and their contribution. We demonstrate respect in all our stakeholder relations, including the relationship between management and staff, and in the way we communicate with funders and deliver services to clients.
- **Integrity**: we will earn trust and respect by being ethical, honest and impartial. We are honest and frank in all of our dealings and communications. We ensure information that is timely, appropriate and honest.
- **Inclusion**: we are committed to diversity, equality of opportunity, and social justice, and we appreciate and celebrate difference. We provide culturally inclusive and responsive services.
- **Collaboration and partnership**: we acknowledge partnership and collaboration as the most effective way of improving the quality of our service.
- **Innovation**: we are open to change, adaptive, proactive and innovative as we work together in our schools and workplaces to find new approaches to meeting challenges in an ever-changing environment.
- **Excellence**: we have high expectations of ourselves, our students and our communities, and we aim for continuous improvement in the quality of our service.

## 5. Our Strategic Approach

Our Methodological Framework is illustrated at Figure 2:



The Strategic objectives of KESP 2017-2021 are predominantly thematic, with only two referring to specific sub-sectors. The decision to adopt this approach reflects the issues of overlap identified by the review of KESP 2011-2016, as well as echoing thematic priorities already identified by Government and above all, the desire to ensure that the new KESP had a clear strategic orientation. The two exceptions, VET/Adult Education and Higher Education, are inevitably wider in their remit than school focussed sub-sectors of MEST. The Strategic objective Areas are set out in Figure 5 below:

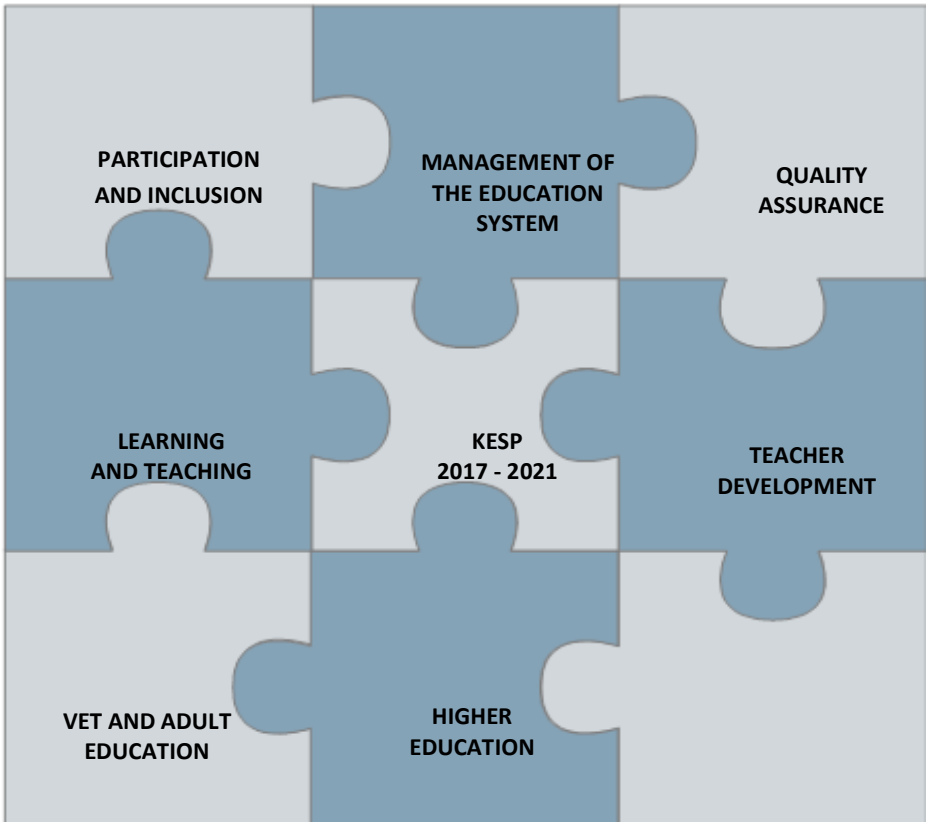



Figure 5: Strategic objectives KESP 2017-2021

This chapter provides an overview of the Strategic objectives. Full details of the rationale, expected outcomes and indicative activities for each Strategic objective, as well as attendant risks and assumptions and the links between the different priorities, are provided in the relevant chapters below.

**Strategic objective/SO 1: Participation and Inclusion**

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

This Strategic objective links directly to Government priorities, the EU 2020 Strategic framework, as well as the last evaluation of KESP 2011-2016. However, increased inclusion and dropout prevention in education takes time and cannot be achieved without full implementation of the legal framework. This is, therefore, a complex issue which requires mobilisation of schools, as well as local and central government. This Strategic objective has clear links to other aspects of the KESP, in particular in relation to the creation of an integrated system for the collection, processing and use of data which will also enable monitoring of children with special needs and dropout children, and the

improvement of the quality of teaching both through the provision of training programmes for inclusion, and the implementation of the basic ideas and goals of the KCF.

**Strategic objective/SO 2: Management of the Education System**

**Improving the quality and efficient management of the education system, based on transparency and accountability**.

This Strategic objective also derives directly from the National Development Strategy 2016-2020. In circumstances where the education system is decentralised, progress in education provision depends very largely, in addition to the availability of full financial and professional autonomy, on the development of management capacity at the central, municipal and school level. In the context of decentralisation, capacity building at local/school level must extend to bodies such as the school governing boards, which need to play a key role in the process. This Priority, therefore, underpins the whole of KESP 2017-2021, and as with SP1, it is closely interlinked to other aspects of the KESP, which should be the guiding principle of building management capacities, and the development of a quality assurance system.

**Strategic objective/SO 3: Quality Assurance**

**Developing a functioning quality assurance system, in accordance with international standards.**

This Strategic objective corresponds to a key element of the National Development Strategy 2016-2020, and links directly to the Strategy for Quality Assurance in Pre-University Education. This element is currently largely absent from the education system in Kosovo, and will be fundamental to any future progress in the quality of education provision. In addition to creating a quality management system and developing the relevant processes and tools, capacity building at all levels will be necessary for making any new quality assurance system operational. Moreover, in the current climate in Kosovo, awareness raising activities that create an environment where accountability is fostered will also be needed. Although the QA system for HE, and to some extent for VET, is separate and already established, this Strategic objective is largely dependent on legislative changes. Thereafter, it connects directly, in a two-way relationship, with improvements in education management, and has a key function in ensuring the success of the other Strategic objectives.

**Strategic objective/SO 4: Teacher development**

**Enhancing teaching quality through an effective and sustainable system for teacher professional development and preparation.**

The importance of this Strategic objective is self-evident. According to international research on education economics, teacher quality is the main determinant of student performance.[39]The principal focus in this area is therefore to build a sustainable system for teacher professional development, which would contribute to the implementation of school reform and impact directly on the improvement of student outcomes. Again, this Strategic objective links to all of the others, in a wide range of ways, from providing programs help teachers implement inclusion of students in the learning process, paying additional attention to students with special needs and those from marginalised groups (SO 1), to providing training for KCF implementation (SP5), to impacting on the pre-service teacher qualification provided by higher education institutions (SP7).

[39] "Walk On, Education for economic development", conference documentation, Pristina, 17./18.09.2013, GIZ.

**Strategic objective/SO 5: Learning and Teaching**

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

The implementation of the new curriculum in all schools is seen as central to improving the quality of learning in Kosovo. In addition to teacher training, this requires the preparation of textbooks and other teaching and learning materials, including electronic teaching materials that are in harmony with the KCF. This also pre-supposes that special attention should be paid to equipping schools with ICT equipment, as well as other teaching aids. The Priority links to SO 1 in terms of developing access and inclusion; to SO 3, particularly with regard to organisation of the work of school departments; and to SO 4 in that successful implementation of the new curriculum depends heavily on teacher development.

**Strategic objective/SO 6: Vocational Education and Training and Adult Education**

**Harmonising vocational education and training with labour market requirements in the country and abroad, and creating an open system for adult education.**

This Priority links directly to a number of national and international initiatives, deriving in particular from the EU 2020 strategy. In terms of VET, the focus will be on improving the relevance of school programmes to labour market needs, the development of a VET specific core curriculum, aligned to the KCF, the systematic provision of high quality work experience and professional practice, and, specific to the Kosovo context, ensuring the sustainability of the Centres of Competence and their further development. In terms of Adult Education, the focus has to be nothing less than the establishment of an efficient and quality adult education system. This strategic objective intersects in particular with SO 1, given that the promotion of gender equality and inclusion needs to be continued in VET and complemented by Lifelong Learning (LLL).

**Strategic objective/SO 7: Higher Education**

**Upgrading the quality and competitiveness of higher education through the promotion of excellence in teaching, scientific research, artistic creation, innovation, and internationalisation.**

The main priority in this area is the improvement of quality in higher education institutions. This has many facets including adapting study programmes to labour market requirements, the promotion of scientific research, and the facilitating of artistic work and innovation in higher education institutions. The quality of teaching and the need to increase academic mobility of academic staff and students, as well as participation in international programmes of higher education and scientific research, will also receive attention. Although this priority is ostensibly sub-sector based, it is in reality linked in a range of ways to much of the rest of KESP 2017-2021: for example, diverse participation of students in higher education can be achieved if students from marginalised groups are included to a satisfactory extent in pre-university education (SO 1); and training of pre -university education teachers, while the task of the specialised higher education institutions, should be conducted in accordance with quality teaching requirements (SO 4).

## 5.2. Alternatives considered

The idea of KESP is to be a comprehensive strategy for the Education System in Kosovo, in line with recommendations for implementing sector-wide approach in Education[40]. The first strategy developed in line with those recommendations, which covers the period 2011-2016, is organised by

[40] MEST: Kosovo Roadmap for improved education sector performance and aid effectiveness, Reports I-III, 2008.

sub-sectors of the Education System (Pre-school Sector, Pre-University Sector, VET Sector, Teacher Training Sector, Higher Education Sector, Adult Education Sector, ICT Sector). On the other hand, the new strategic document employs a combination of the thematic and sectorial approach. As explained in chapter 2, seven thematic fields were identified: 1) Participation and Inclusion; 2) Education System Management; 3) Quality Assurance; 4) Teacher Development; 5) Teaching and Learning; 6) Vocational Education and Adult Education; and 7) Higher Education. Whereas first five fields are of thematic character, the last two are of sectorial character. It was possible to have three parallel document from this strategic document: one for pre-university education which would include fields 1-5, second one for vocational education and training and the third one for higher education. Nevertheless, such approach was deemed to contradict to orientation for sector wide approach in education, as well as to government policies for reducing the number of strategic documents.

Strategic objective 1 ("participation and inclusion") treats low participation in pre-school education as a central problem. The best way to address this problem is to build a considerable number of specialised pre-school institutions, implying increase of capital expenditures and opening of hundreds of new positions in the public sector. Because of budgetary constraints another approach was chosen – increase of participation in pre-primary education which has much lower expenses. Also, opening of private, community-based or private, pre-school institutions will be encouraged.

Strategic objective 2 ("Management of the Education System") aims at professionalising the role of school director which represents an innovation for the Kosovo Education System. It is believed that professional management will influence the achievement of all KESP objectives.

Strategic objective 3 ("Quality assurance") determines the division of responsibilities for quality of education between the central level (MEST), municipal level (MED) and the school. Another alternative was a strong Education Inspectorate which would assume responsibility for quality assurance, whereas municipalities and schools would implement the decisions of inspectors. Such alternative was deemed as not being in line with decentralised character of the Education System in Kosovo and would not yield desired results.

Strategic objective 4 ("Teacher professional development"). A major dilemma was whether it should be insisted on making teacher licensing system functional, due to limited possibilities for linking teacher career system with the salary scheme. The outcome was that teacher licensing system is a stimulating factor for improving the quality, and also, an indicator for the quality of education in schools.

Strategic objective 5 ("Teaching and learning") focuses on implementation of the new curriculum, textbooks and use of ICT in Education. For all these fields, numerous alternatives were analysed. The idea of the new Curriculum is that the Government sets competencies to be achieved and core curricula, whereas schools determine the content. In such system, textbooks should be more general and less controlled. Nevertheless, due to circumstances in the Kosovo schools it was decided that MEST is involved in developing content, whereas textbooks should be in line with that content. This was the reason to pay particular attention to the use of ICT in schools, because use of electronic resources increases possibilities.

Strategic objective 6 ("VET and Adult Education"). A dilemma raise within this objective was the role of adult education in the Strategy. This sub-sector was seen as part of vocational education and

training, instead of too to increase general education level of the population. This was due to high unemployment and the need to address this major problem through adult training.

Strategic objective 7 (“Higher Education”). The focus is on external quality assurance which is implemented through support for KAA and implementation of a system for data-collection in higher education (HEMIS). Another alternative was to pay more attention to internal quality assurance, but given developments in Kosovo Higher Education, it was not deemed to yield desired results. Also, performance-based financing oh higher education institutions was discussed, which was not applied until now. The conclusion was that such system increases accountability of higher education institutions for their output.

# 6. Strategic objective 1: Participation and Inclusion

Education, among other factors, is a means for the prevention of poverty, the protection of human rights, the empowerment of women and the integration of all people into the society. According to UNESCO, inclusive education is seen as a process that addresses and responds to the different student needs, through increased participation in learning and through the reduction of exclusion in education and from education.

Inclusive education offers a learning environment that provides access, accommodation and support to all students. This means that schools must adapt to all students, irrespective of their physical, intellectual, social, emotional, language or other conditions. The aim of inclusion is to minimise inequalities in the society, combat discrimination, avoid marginalisation and exclusion, as well as provide welfare to all members of the society. It is therefore necessary to implement educational policies and practices aiming at comprehensive processes, in particular in relation to the socially marginalised groups, such as persons with special educational needs, minority communities, the poor and some other social categories.

## Challenges

### Low rate of participation in pre-school education

This sector of education lacks investment, and therefore lack of infrastructure remains a key cause for low children's participation at this level. Awareness among families and policy-makers regarding the importance of pre-school education is an issue that needs to be addressed in the future. Analysis of the real situation of children's participation in pre-school education is obstructed by the lack of data from unlicensed private institutions and pre-school community-based centres. Children who attend pre-school education in more than 40 learning centres[41] and a considerable number of private pre-schools are not included in EMIS data; therefore the challenge still remains with the collection and processing of accurate data on children's participation in pre-school education.

### Low involvement and participation in education of children from marginalised groups

A major challenge remains the inclusion of children from marginalised groups in education, in particular children with special educational needs, as well as members from Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities. While there is no accurate data on the inclusion rate of children with special needs, children of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities have an extremely low participation rate in pre-school and upper secondary education. Furthermore, their gross enrolment rate in compulsory education (grades 1-9) is about 85%, which is still significantly below the national average.

### The school dropout and non-enrolment in education

Dropout marked a continuous decline until 2014, but in 2015 the number of children who have dropped out of school has increased significantly as a result of emigration of a large number of families to western countries. Refusal of residence permits and the return of a large number of immigrants, population movements within the country, and failure to obtain relevant documents have caused problems in enrolling children in school. This situation makes the dropout and non-enrolment phenomenon current again. Low awareness, lack of coordination between institutions, namely MEDs and Civil Registry Offices, affects the non-enrolment and also remains a challenge to be addressed.

[41] Learning Centres serve Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian children and are operated by community-based NGOs.

## Objective

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

Implementation of school policies and practices aimed at comprehensive processes is a prerequisite that enables the improvement of participation rate and prevention of school dropout by children. Equal opportunity and the opportunity to deliver the potential for all children is the key element of this objective. Increased involvement and dropout prevention in education takes time and cannot be achieved without full implementation of the legal framework. Clearly, this is a complex issue which requires mobilisation of schools, as well as local and central government.

### Expected results:

1.1. Participation in quality pre-school education reaches 20% of children aged 0-5;

1.2. All 5-year-old children are included in pre-primary quality education;

1.3. 50% of children with special needs are included in the pre-university education system;

1.4. Inclusion of children of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities in primary education has increased by 10%, while in lower and upper secondary education has increased by 20%;

1.5. All repatriated children are included in the education system and strengthen the mechanisms for organising education in Diaspora;

1.6. Effective mechanisms to prevent dropout and non-enrolment in pre-university education are established;

1.7. There are mechanisms and programmes for identification and support of children with exceptional intellectual potential and special talents in academic, creative and artistic fields;

1.8. There are effective mechanisms and policies in place to promote diversity through an integrated education system.

## Related issues

The inclusion of all children in the education system and dropout prevention depends on the quality and efficient management of the education system (Area 2). In particular, the creation of an integrated system for the collection, processing and use of data will also enable monitoring of children with special needs and dropout children. It is important that implementation of already existing legislation, national plans and instructions is monitored. With the advancement of professional teacher development system (Area 4) especially with the provision of training programmes for inclusion, schools would benefit from it and it would enable more integrated approach for all children and their families. Quality teaching through implementation of the curriculum (Area 5) enables pre-primary educators to understand and apply the basic ideas and goals of the KCF, and allows for the organisation of specific learning activities for children with learning difficulties in key learning areas at pre-school and school level.

## Possible activities

The following are possible individual activities to achieve each of the expected results, along with their brief description.

**Result 1.1: Participation in quality pre-school education reaches 20% of children aged 0-5 years**

**1.1.1. Encourage opening and accreditation of private institutions and community-based centres by the municipalities.**

Given that public pre-school institutions accommodate a very small number of pre-school children, identifying promising modalities, especially by MEDs, to support alternative ways, will enable increased inclusion of children in pre-school services.

**1.1.2. Drafting and implementing the training programme for in-service educators working with children aged 0-3 years.**

MEST, in cooperation with development partners, will organise various activities for professional development of educators working with children aged 0-3 years, which are in-service and have completed only three/four years secondary education.

**1.1.3. Development of parent awareness programmes regarding early childhood.**

In many cases parents need to be educated regarding early childhood development. These programmes will therefore help parents understand and implement activities that promote child's development even at home conditions, especially in areas where there is no pre-school service.

**1.1.4. Organisation of awareness activities for the society on the importance of pre-school education.**

Society must be informed about the impact of pre-primary and pre-school education in terms of children's academic development in the future. Many parents still believe that the education of children in family environment is enough for their development, therefore debates and other forms of awareness raising need to be facilitated, so that parents and the society at large understands the importance of pre-school education.

**1.1.5. Piloting of the new pre-school curriculum.**

The new pre-school curriculum must be monitored and assessed. Also, teaching and learning materials suitable for different age groups need to be developed.

**1.1.6. Implementation and monitoring of competencies for educators 3-5.**

Since there is a proper system in place for monitoring educators against the competencies, which makes possible assurance and development of the quality, educators should be monitored through this system.

**Result 1.2: All 5-year-old children are included in pre-primary quality education**

**1.2.1. Opening of new pre-primary grades.**

Opening new grades and organising the work in pre-primary classrooms that operate in primary schools, pre-school institutions and community centres (based on defined criteria and a transparent licensing process) as well as work, in two and more shifts, will also enable them to increase the number of pre-primary children.

**1.2.2. Educator training in curriculum implementation.**

Training for curriculum implementation would enable the unification of the work plans with pre-primary children, both in pre-primary education as well as in kindergartens, as a preparatory phase for the first grade.

**1.2.3. Developing special teaching and didactic materials for pre-primary grade.**

To ensure the quality of pre-primary education and to unify educational work in pre-primary grades and kindergartens, drafting of teaching and didactic materials for this age is necessary. These materials need to help children prepare for the future challenges they are expected to face with in the primary school.

**1.2.4. Establishment of quality monitoring mechanism for pre-primary education according to educators' competencies.**

To ensure quality development in all pre-school institutions and pre-primary grades, monitoring should be introduced in order to assess their performance. This will be enabled by the implementation of the competency-based educator monitoring system, which supports the quality assurance.

**Results 1.3: 50% of children with special needs are included in pre-university education system**

**1.3.1. Definition of gender-sensitive EMIS indicators for children with special needs.**

The working group shall define gender sensitive indicators for identification of special needs children.

**1.3.2. Making the assessment/pedagogic teams operational.**

Assessment teams consisting of pedagogues, psychologists, specialists and teachers assess the pedagogical needs of children with special needs and determine the orientation and services which will be provided for them in the educational institution. Training of the assessment/pedagogic teams for the assessment of children with special needs must be undertaken, as does the development of assessment instruments.

**1.3.3. Training of the teaching staff on inclusive education.**

Although a considerable number of teachers have gone through various training programmes for inclusion, social justice, ethnic, cultural, religious, language diversity etc., it is still not enough for schools to demonstrate an inclusive approach. Therefore, in order for schools to be open and treat every student equally, every teacher should have knowledge and skills to provide inclusive education. This activity is addressed in the activity 4.1.10 of the teacher professional development objective. Training programmes should include the promotion of gender equality in educational settings for all levels of education.

**1.3.4. Transforming the attached classrooms into resource rooms.**

Student integration from attached classrooms to regular classrooms affects their socialisation and the benefits they gain from education. Resource rooms help schools in the implementation of social activities within the school, and with the community outside of it.

**1.3.5. Enforcement of school support mechanisms.**

Increasing the number of support teachers in schools provides an opportunity to support a larger number of children with special needs and learning difficulties.

**Result 1.4: Inclusion of children of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities in primary education has increased by 10%, while in lower and upper secondary education has increased by 20%**

**1.4.1. Harmonising Learning Centre programmes**

Although there are a considerable number of learning centres, around 40 of them, they follow different programmes. By establishing contacts among centres, those programmes should be harmonised, by being adapted to the needs of targeted communities.

**1.4.2. Drafting regulations by municipalities to facilitate the enrolment and attendance conditions of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian children in pre-school and secondary education level.**

Considering that Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian children's inclusion in pre-school level is extremely low, measures must be taken to facilitate their enrolment at this level, and to provide more favourable financial conditions to ensure their regular attendance, which implies a subsidy of attendance fees. Meanwhile, in upper secondary education, where the participation of these communities is also very low, in addition to facilitating enrolment, the possibility of providing education scholarships must be considered. In addition, gendered differences should be considered and integrated into the municipal regulations to support the enrolment and attendance of both boys and girls at both the pre-school and secondary education levels.

**1.4.3. Monitoring the implementation of mitigation measures for enrolment of children in pre-school and upper secondary level.**

MEST will monitor and inspect the implementation of facilitation measures for student enrolment and enforce them.

**1.4.4. Training of teachers for teaching Roma language.**

In schools where Roma children attend classes and where elective teaching of Roma language is provided, Roma language teachers should be trained in order to use textbooks in Roma language provided by MEST.

**1.4.5. Organise activities to raise awareness of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities on the importance of timely enrolment and school attendance, with special focus on girls**.

MEDs in cooperation with non-government organisations should notify parents about the importance of enrolment and school attendance. Activities should accurately reflect the different needs, concerns and challenges faced by both boys and girls that impact enrolment and attendance in school, and if girls face any specific barriers to initial enrolment.

**Result 1.5: All repatriated children are included in the education system and strengthen the mechanisms for organising education in Diaspora**

**1.5.1. Monitor the implementation of repatriation legislation by MEST supervision group.**

MEST supervision group in cooperation with MEDs and MORCs[42] shall monitor the implementation of the legislation by schools regarding returnees.

**1.5.2. Drafting of individual plans for repatriated students.**

As soon as repatriated students are included in the education system, they should have individual plans to integrate as quickly and as easily as possible. These plans should be drafted by schools in cooperation with parents and other social services.

[42] Municipal Office for Returnees and Communities.

**1.5.3. Review of the repatriates' programme.**

The repatriates' programme which contains the student book and teacher guide developed by the Council of Europe should be reviewed and adapted to current circumstances. Additional material might be needed.

**1.5.4. Training of teachers and municipal officials on the repatriation programme.**

Municipalities that have the largest number of repatriated children must foresee the inclusion of teachers and officials in training programmes that will facilitate the work and will support these children.

**1.5.5. Coordination and monitoring of supplementary classes by the MEST supervisory group.**

Monitoring the process of catch-up classes ensures the provision of quality services for repatriated people.

**1.5.6. Organising activities for children's in Diaspora.**

MEST in cooperation with the Ministry of Diaspora will organise various educational and recreational activities for children's in Diaspora that visit Kosovo in an organised groups. MEST will encourage and support the establishing of twinning relationship between schools in Kosovo and schools that organise education in the Diaspora

**Result 1.6: Effective mechanisms to prevent dropout and non-enrolment in pre-university education are established**

**1.6.1. Capacity building for prevention teams at the school, municipal and central level.**

All municipalities need to establish PRTDNs[43] at the school and municipal level. The members must be trained for application of the existing documents that address the issue of abandonment and non-registration in schools.

**1.6.2. Revision of PRTDNs' role.**

Given that PRTDNs deal with compulsory schooling only, their role in the secondary education as well as the pre-school level must be reviewed and analysed, as it is this level of education where dropout is more common.

**1.6.3. Improve sex-disaggregated data collection for dropout and non-enrolment.**

Indicators must be revised and Standard Operation Procedures must be defined to ensure collection of reliable data. Early warning instruments to prevent dropout (like acting on truancy) must be developed and implemented. Data must be specified for dropout, non-enrolment and early dropout warning instruments, and ensures that any gender variances in dropout rate, and the impact of intervention to reduce drop out and non-enrolment, are highlighted.

**1.6.4. Development of action plans for prevention of dropout and non-enrolment in school in all municipalities.**

Schools in cooperation with municipalities must implement dropout prevention action plans as part of the School Development Plan/Municipal Development Plan with regular reporting to MEST. The possibility of organising an alternative learning (e.g. distance learning) should be considered for pupils that for different specific reasons cannot attend regular classes (e.g. hospitalised children, etc.).

[43] PRTAN - Prevention and Response Teams towards Abandonmentdropout and Non-Registration

**1.6.5. Awareness-raising regarding education of other vulnerable categories.**

Advocacy campaigns, debates, TV clips are some of the awareness-raising ways for education of vulnerable categories.

**1.6.6. Monitoring and assessment of progress reached in the implementation of policies that address dropout and non-enrolment and early warning for children at risk of dropout.**

MEST, in cooperation with municipalities, schools and other partners shall enforce the implementation of the respective policies, monitor the progress, assess and report the dropout and non-enrolment.

**1.6.7. Organisation of accelerated learning for pupils that have dropped out or are not enrolled in school.**

MEST in cooperation with development partners will organise accelerated learning for primary and lower secondary pupils that have dropped out or are not enrolled in school.

**Result 1.7: There are mechanisms and programmes for identification and support of children with exceptional intellectual potential and special talents in academic, creative and artistic fields**

**1.7.1. Creation and development of mechanisms and programmes to identify and support children with exceptional intellectual potential and special talents.**

Since we do very little to identify children with exceptional intellectual potential and special talents, mechanisms and programmes should be developed to identify and support these children.

**1.7.2. Training teachers and school psychologists to work with children with exceptional intellectual potential and special talents.**

In order for these children to be supported and developed based on their individual level of development and talent, teachers and school psychologists must be trained to work with them.

**1.7.3. Encourage children with exceptional intellectual potential and special talents.**

Local and central level institutions should plan for the provision of incentives for these children.

**1.7.4. Cooperation with local and international centres and organisations working in this area.**

**Result 1.8: There are effective mechanisms and policies in place to promote diversity through an integrated education system**

**1.8.1 Develop a strategy for promoting inter-ethnic dialogue and contact among communities**

This would include guidelines for curricular and extracurricular activities for schools attended by different communities, or between different schools.

**1.8.2 Review language teaching provisions**

Currently language learning opportunities are limited and there are no opportunities for pupils to learn the languages of the numerically smaller communities. Further, for those communities who do not attend education in their mother-tongue, there are no opportunities to study their mother tongue as a subject (this option is currently only provided for members of the Roma community). This new activity could allow for the development of language learning on an extra-curricular basis.

#### 1.8.3 Measures to improve teaching of Albanian as a second language

Albanian as a second language is taught as an elective subject in schools with Bosnian or Turkish language instruction. However, there is no teacher training available on the specificities of teaching Albanian as a second language, nor are there sufficient textbooks. It is therefore proposed that the measures include the development of specialised teacher training programs for teaching Albanian as a second language, as well as tailored textbooks.

#### 1.8.4 Development of community-specific educational modules

Article 8(7) of the Law on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Communities and their Members in Kosovo states that communities have the right to community-specific educational modules concerning their history and traditions to enable the preservation of their culture, identity and/or language. So far, these modules have been developed for Bosnian, Turkish and Roma communities. It is planned to include a needs assessment for the development of such modules for the numerically smaller Kosovo communities.

#### 1.8.5 Development of a policy on how to teach about diversity and human and communities' rights to all pupils

Teaching all pupils about communities living in Kosovo, their identities, as well as the importance of respect for diversity and pluralism, should be mainstreamed into all subject areas covered by the curriculum.

## Assumptions and risks

Key assumptions to ensure the achievement of the aforementioned objective are:

- Schools develop and provide programs to support students with learning difficulties.
- Schools develop plans for inclusion of repatriated students.
- Readiness of central and local institutions to support children/students with exceptional intellectual potential and special talents in academic, creative, and artistic fields.

However, factors that remain a challenge for the successful implementation of what is planned are:

- Lack of willingness from municipalities to incentivise and support private institutions and community-based centres.
- Lack of programmes from the Faculty of Education for requalification of in-service educators working with age group 0-3.
- Failure from MEDs to setup assessment teams for children with special needs.
- Learning centres are in danger of being closed because of the lack of sustainability.
- Lack of municipal readiness to facilitate enrolment and attendance conditions of children from Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities in pre-school and secondary education level.
- Failure to engage teams at school and municipal level for dropout prevention.
- Lack of incentives with special scholarships from municipalities for children with exceptional intelligence.
- Failures to systematically collect sex disaggregated data and support its utilisation in the achievement of the objectives established.

# 7. Strategic objective 2: The Education System Management

Education system management, under any circumstances, represents the main instrument that ensures the planning and implementation of specific policies, and determining processes that lead to ensuring the functioning of all links in the education system.

Often, the education system management is limited to an administrative approach, ensuring that the roles and responsibilities of each party are clearly defined. Such an approach ensures continuity and retention of the current situation, whilst education systems that aim at deeper reforms commit to a more proactive management approach, aiming at achieving the desired changes. Modern literature and best practices suggest that school-level empowerment and its commitment to defining and implementing educational reform is a prerequisite for the success of the reform itself: this means that school directors are not only managers of human and material resources, but must be the driving force for the quality of education in their schools. These demands define the profile of school directors as professionals with management skills and an educational background.

In circumstances where the education system is decentralised, a precondition for making changes in education, in addition to providing financial and professional autonomy within the mandate, is the development of management capacity either at the local or school level, and the transformation of the school into a learning organisation, with the school director being responsible and accountable for this process. In every education system, especially those aimed at strengthening the school level, the main challenge remaining is the setup of accountability mechanisms, and effectiveness in the implementation of education policies defined by the policymaking level. Decentralisation without transparency and accountability cannot work. Therefore, the instruments of education system management should be established for the support, monitoring and redefining of the processes and policies that serve for this purpose.

## Challenges

### Insufficient capacity at central, municipal and school level

The education system in Kosovo has made progress in the decentralisation of powers from central to municipal and school level, aiming to mobilise and commit all parties to an effective process in carrying out the education system's mission. In the context of changing roles, responsibilities and expectations, paired with a high turn-over of staff, the need for enhanced managerial skills at all levels is emphasised even more, whilst the coordinated and coherent approach of actions at all levels becomes a prerequisite for success.

### Incoherence in the legislation and policy area

Legislation remains the main mechanism in defining and determining the modalities of the functioning of education system and key policies in the system. The need for development and modification of the educational process necessitates the need to modify the existing legislation or develop new parts of it. The challenge remains to ensure a coherent approach to different parts of the primary and secondary legislation, and to ensure a coherent approach in the implementation of educational policies. At present, the enforcement and monitoring of the implementation of legislation by the executive and legislative level in Kosovo leaves a lot to be desired.

### Lack of professional management and school autonomy

The functioning of educational and training institutions (schools) in Kosovo occurred in the context of a centralised education system for almost a decade after the war in Kosovo. The idea of

transferring powers to the school level is closely related to the aim of strengthening the school level. Pushing the school towards its development as a learning organisation represents a major step forward in mobilising the school community towards the advancement of school service quality. Recruitment of school managers who have a professional background in the field of education, management and leadership is an important step forward towards achieving the goal of making the schools responsible for their own development. Development of the legislative framework or amendment of the existing legislation to enable the transformation of schools into learning organisations by allowing enhanced financial and professional autonomy will be essential to the success of this approach. So, the challenge remains to ensure the conditions and capacities for strengthening the school autonomy, and the establishment of professional school management that leads towards the achievement of this goal.

### Non evidence-based decision-making

Often it is not clear what the source of certain educational policies is. Or, even more concerning are the situations where educational policies are developed by not relying on proper information, which includes practices of defining policies based on the intuition of certain individuals or groups that are in charge. Data (statistics) from the field and the findings of national and international educational research can be one of the sources which inform the process of certain educational policy development. Or to put it in a different way, the reality on the ground presented through the statistics as a source of information should influence the nature and type of educational policies. Therefore, the challenge of building an information management system in education should not be limited to the level of data collection; instead it should include the analysis and interpretation of data for their use in decision and policymaking.

### Poor conditions and inappropriate environment for learning

The environment should be perceived from the perspective of providing the right infrastructures for learning, including sufficient and adequate space, adequate teaching and learning materials as well as provision of a safe, healthy, and above all friendly environment. As the focus in recent years has been placed on increasing the physical space for learning, in subsequent years the challenge will be to also work - in addition to continued growth of school space - towards the adequate infrastructure management and maintenance and making safer, healthier, and more friendly environments.

## Objective

Improving the quality and efficient management of the education system, based on transparency and accountability.

The main priority in this area remains the managerial capacity building at the central, municipal and school level. At the school level, structures like the School Governing Board, Parents Council, etc. are also to be included. The professionalization of the role of educational institution managers is a priority of a major importance that needs to build on the work done so far to establish professional practice standards for school directors, and to raise the standards for recruitment of school directors.

Another priority remains the advancement of a funding mechanism for pre-university education in order to address the specific needs of the various educational and training institutions to enable development activities. Advancing the current data management system in the education system and its use in policymaking will remain another priority in the forthcoming period. In relation to infrastructure, provision and maintenance of sufficient functional space and safe and healthy

environments are considered a priority for the coming period. Strengthening the role of parents and the community in the decision-making process in school, and strengthening mechanisms of accountability in the system of education will be the main link of developing the education system in Kosovo for the following period.

### Expected results:

2.1. Build capacity for an accountable and effective system management at central and municipal level, as well as effective management at school level.

2.2. Define professional standards for recruitment and management mechanisms for leaders of educational institutions.

2.3. Implement a functional mechanism for pre-university education funding that contributes to the school development.

2.4. Produce regular reports based on the analysis and interpretation of EMIS-data and use these analyses for policymaking.

2.5. The legislation is harmonised and completed for the entire pre-university education sector to reflect changes in the legislation and other policies.

2.6. Schools have established safe, friendly and healthy environments for all.

2.7. Build an effective system of education building management that contributes to the creation of suitable learning environments.

2.8. Improve educational infrastructure through construction, renovation, expansion and equipping of educational institutions with adequate teaching resources.

## Related issues

Effective management of the education system relates primarily to the awareness of the parties in the system regarding the on-going education reforms. Building accountability and control mechanisms should be the guiding principle of building management capacities in the system. Moreover, the decentralisation of the education system authority depends on the commitment and capacities of the governing bodies at the school level, such as the school governing board, parents' council, students' council and the academic community of the school. An important topic in the development of an effective education management system is also equal opportunities and encouragement of women's involvement in managerial positions. The education system management should also address other aspects such as inclusion and quality, as basic principles in establishing mechanisms for education system management. School empowerment as an organisation must be related with quality assurance activities (Area 3) in order to make a connection and ensure coherence between these initiatives.

## Possible activities

The following are possible activities to achieve each of the expected results separately, along with their brief description.

**Result 2.1: Build capacities for an accountable and effective system management at the central and municipal level, as well as effective management at school level**

**2.1.1 Restructuring the organisation of MEDs in accordance with the decentralised structure of the education system.**

Due to the various different sizes of municipalities, their resources for education differ substantially. The idea is to use current personnel in the most efficient way to adapt to new responsibilities in the field of education development at the municipal level. Therefore various models for organisational structures of MEDs could guide the municipalities, strengthening mutual cooperation between smaller municipalities. Implementation will be done in coordination with relevant ministries.

**2.1.2 Train MED staff based on identified needs and in accordance with the decentralised structure of the education system.**

Activities should build on the work done so far and should be oriented towards specific areas of MED's professional responsibilities, curricular reform as well as other policies such as quality assurance activities. This will be based on a needs assessment for MED's capacity building.

**2.1.3 Draft regulations and supporting guidelines for education management at the municipal level.**

Given the current context of dynamic transfer of responsibilities to the municipal level, a standard handbook should document all existing and new regulations and Laws that define the scope of work of MED. This handbook needs to be updated at least once a year. It should contain a number of guidelines to address specific areas of education system management, but also serve to facilitate better coordination.

**2.1.4 Training of MEST staff for planning, policy-making and monitoring.**

Activities that were conducted in the past in this field will be taken into account here, aiming at a more emphasised focus on policymaking, planning, enforcing and monitoring, by relating to various sub-sectors of the system.

**2.1.5 Develop mechanisms for effective communication between various parties in the system through reporting and other regular coordination processes.**

Such activities will be directed towards expanding the coordination activities that are currently in place, to a more substantive coordination and reporting. Meetings between MEST and MEDs could be transformed into regular forums with specific sub-topics as well as meetings with other parties in the process. Reporting could go beyond formal and statistical reports, i.e. towards more substantial analysis. MEST annual reports will be prepared in the form of analysis of system operation and will be based on empirical and statistical data as well as findings of national and international research, which will be published as required for internal audiences and the wider public.

**2.1.6 Putting in place and empowering parent councils at school, municipal and state level, through the provision of support for their work and by monitoring their work.**

Parents´ participation is often limited to some voluntary contributions to the functioning of the school. Education actually needs the partnership between parents, teachers and students. Parents need to be involved in the educational process: to support regular

attendance, to help in problem-solving, to voice their expectations in relation to management. Parents need to be informed about their rights and motivated to actively contribute to the full development of their child(ren) and the improved results of the school. Specific attention should be paid to representation and engagement of parents from non-majority communities.

**2.1.7 Training of administrative staff and members of the school governing boards on governance and leadership.**

Training of the Governing Board will be guided towards the strengthening of their role in decision-making and oversight, and increased accountability in school.

**2.1.8 Create cooperation and communication network between schools in the field of leadership and teacher professional development (learning community).**

School Networks are a modern and an effective and (almost) cost-neutral approach to mutual exchange and learning between schools. First experiences are very promising and show significant positive change. This approach should be scaled up nationwide.

**2.1.9 Empowerment of an integrated approach in planning between MEST-MED-School.**

The KESP is the fundamental strategy, offering a concrete basis for planning at all levels. The successful implementation of the KESP will depend a lot on the good coordination and cooperation between the central, municipal and school level. That is why the implementation of KESP needs to be integral part of the normal work plans in MEST, in MED and in schools. The Integrated Planning Approach of the Kosovo government offers a suitable way to establish links between different levels: the planning of MEST, MED and school level need to be interlinked both bottom-up and top-down. The School Development Plan and the Municipal Education Development Plan should indicate the reference to the KESP. Regular reports on progress and problems should inform the MEST about the status of the implementation of KESP: in this way MEST can act on the progress and ensure full implementation.

**2.1.10. Management of the schools network.**

MEST organises the planning process of the schools network, taking into consideration data on the infrastructure, demographic trends in the country and works in consultation with all municipal education departments to determine the most effective model of the schools network.

**2.1.11. Strengthening of the school autonomy.**

This includes revision of the applicable laws, including the Law on Education in Municipalities of the Republic of Kosovo and the relevant bylaws to strengthen decision-making at the school level in terms of recruitment of teachers and school managers. This further decentralisation will be in harmony with the idea of devolution of curriculum competencies at the school level as well as planning for the assessment of the school as part of the initiative for quality assurance in the pre-university education.

**Result 2.2: Define professional standards for recruitment and management mechanisms for leaders of educational institutions**

**2.2.1 Define the status of director and deputy director of educational institutions.**

On the basis of the relevant legislation, there is a need to clarify the position of the manager of educational and training institutions, and, if necessary, develop and revise the legislation to make directors' position a professional career position.

**2.2.2 Establish mechanisms for monitoring and performance assessment of directors and deputy directors.**

Directors' contract extension will be based on the performance assessment carried out by the School Governing Board and MED under the framework defined by MEST.

**2.2.3 Setting up selection mechanisms for directors and deputy directors, including the training of selection committees.**

Mechanisms developed in the past should be made operational country-wide to ensure that the selection of school directors is oriented towards the relevant performance standards for this profession.

**2.2.4 Development of a career management system for directors and deputy directors based on the relevant standards.**

Legal basis for school director's career management should be established, including performance standards at different stages, performance monitoring instruments and career promotion modalities.

**2.2.5 Providing equal access to both men and women to professional development programmes for directors, deputy directors and teachers who aim at management career, by providing a comprehensive offer and sustainable funding.**

Program accreditation mechanism must be established for school directors and managers, and program funding mechanisms must be defined for managers and those aiming for the management career, including for personnel operating in communities' languages. This implies expanding the current offer of professional development programmes with the purpose of developing local capacities.

**Result 2.3: Implement a functional mechanism for pre-university education funding that contributes to the school development**

**2.3.1 Review of the pre-university education funding formula to provide opportunity for addressing the specific needs of different schools in order to improve quality.**

In general, the actual funding levels of education do not meet the needs of the necessary improvements of education quality in schools. Vocational schools have some specific needs for materials that enable them do the practical work. The funding formula must therefore address these specifics. The funding formula must also deal with the reality of schools which provide services for children with special educational needs. The target should be to make the link between the infrastructural situation of the school and the maintenance budget. The funding formula must also continue to take into account the higher financing need for schools attended by certain communities, and in particular, schools operating in community languages.

**2.3.2 Increase efficiency of education budget planning processes at the local level.**

MEST annually initiates procedures in cooperation with other relevant stakeholders to review the effectiveness of the planning processes at local and school level in order to increase the effectiveness of the budget planning.

**2.3.3 Capacity development at school and MEDs for financial management.**

These activities will be based on the work done so far, preceded by a detailed needs analysis related to the new funding formula for pre-university education and difficulties identified so far in the implementation of the financial reform.

**2.3.4 Define indicators for expenditures incurred in education with the purpose of assessing the efficiency of spending in education.**

**Result 2.4: Produce regular reports based on the analysis and interpretation of EMIS-data and use these analyses for policymaking**

**2.4.1 Restructuring of the Policy Coordination, Statistics Division to clarify roles associated with EMIS.**

The question is not about a fundamental restructuring but a re-organisation of current resources towards ensuring the processes that lead to greater use of EMIS reports in decision-making.

**2.4.2 Capacity development for advanced data collection, analysis and interpretation.**

Activities should be based on the training carried out in past years, and on a needs analysis for data collection, processing and reporting. Review of the existing Administrative Instruction for data collection is covered in this area, as well as the development of guidance on the collection of sensitive ethnic/community data.

**2.4.3 Development of data management procedures and their use.**

These procedures will be formulated in two new policies. One would be oriented towards internal processes after the finalisation of reports and analysis, including the modalities of initiating additional analysis that may be required for certain sub-sectors. The other policy would be oriented towards communication with stakeholders and the general public.

**2.4.4 Develop a platform for integration of the existing information and database systems for all levels.**

This platform is developed for integration and data exchange, - comprised of four databases on teacher licensing, student assessment, school maps and expenditures - of the existing systems by enabling data exchange and their integration for specific purposes and needs by avoiding double data collection processes.

**2.4.5 Capacity building for data users from schools, MEDs, central level and universities.**

Capacity Building for MEST level will be planned in the context of changes being made on the EMIS platform, additional data to be collected and the need to use the data and analysis in the decision-making. Capacity building for MEDs, schools and universities shall be related to data collection procedures and data entry into the system, but also emphasise their use in their own decision-making.

**2.4.6 Filling in indicators framework according to UNESCO, EUROSTAT and OECD.**

Work done so far on the development of indicators in the field of education according to UNESCO indicators will be taken into account aiming to update it further.

**Result 2.5: The legislation is harmonised and completed for the entire pre-university education sector to reflect changes in the legislation and other policies**

**2.5.1 Analysis of the coherence of primary and secondary legislation in relation to draft laws that are in the approval process and other policies and laws outside the education sector.**

Analysis of the legislation is carried out to identify conflicts within legislation and to ensure coherence of the education legislation with other relevant national policies and laws. Special attention shall be given to the possibility for development and increased professional school autonomy and accountability, and powers of the School Governing Board.

**2.5.2 Drafting a dynamic plan for the revision of legislation.**

The dynamic plan may change annually depending on the developments and priorities arising in the meantime.

**2.5.3 Drafting and amendment of laws and bylaws.**

The most effective modalities will be identified for drafting policies and bylaws applying the government rules for such revisions, ensuring public participation and coordination of dimensions of new policies.

**2.5.4. Monitoring the implementation of laws and bylaws.**

While everything needs to be done to enforce the Laws and By-laws, monitoring shows not only the level of actual implementation, but also successes and weaknesses. Based on these results MEST can act and steer the process of full implementation. So the MEST-monitoring is not an end in itself, but the basis for discussion, management decisions and resource allocation. MEST needs to develop a monitoring framework to follow-up the implementation of legislation.

**Result 2.6: Schools have established safe, friendly and healthy environments for all**

**2.6.1 Awareness activities on the environment and health.**

The intention is to develop different awareness materials and organise different activities in schools and in the media, reaching out both to parents and to the community. These activities should acknowledge the different health and safety needs and concerns of both boys and girls.

**2.6.2 Establish mechanisms for health promotion at municipal and school level.**

The School Governing Board has to take over the responsibility to address issues of healthy environments. The activities at school level will be coordinated by municipal level.

**2.6.3 Develop materials for health and school environment.**

Drafting Guidebook for healthy schools, publishing and organising promotion activities in all schools.

**2.6.4 Investigate needs related to drinking water and sanitation facilities, and development of mechanisms for their maintenance.**

**2.6.5 Draft guidelines on security in educational institutions**

Promotion activities will be organised in every school after publication of the Guidebook.

**2.6.6 Establish emergency response mechanisms.**

Emergency situations should include dangers of all natures, including natural disasters.

**2.6.7 Placing fire extinguishing equipment in schools.**

**2.6.8 Providing schools with first aid kits.**

This will be followed by the training of at least three teachers/staff in each school and a general Guideline on First Aid.

**2.6.9 Capacity building activities for schools and MEDs on violence prevention.**

Activities that contribute to the implementation of the current legal framework for prevention and reporting of violence in educational and training institutions, and also activities related to the obligations of education institutions to identify, refer and support children who are potentially direct victims of violence in their homes, or witnesses of domestic violence in their homes. A focus should also be given to gender based violence within schools in capacity building activities.

**2.6.10 Training school staff for Health and Safety in the school.**

50% of the managerial staff and teachers will be trained for Health and Safety in school.

**Result 2.7: Build an effective system of education building management that contributes to the creation of suitable learning environments**

**2.7.1 Develop norms and standards for the design of educational facilities for all levels.**

Norms and standards exist for level 1-9 and shall be developed for pre-school, vocational and higher education.

**2.7.2 Promote norms and standards of building construction for all levels and stakeholders.**

Organise meetings in all regions including MEDs, Directorates of Urbanism, Design Offices, school directors, etc.

**2.7.3 Monitor the implementation of construction norms and standards.**

Regular reports are drafted regarding compliance with construction standards depending on specific projects and as needed.

**2.7.4 Assessment of physical state of educational facilities.**

This assessment shall be done through school buildings database. This assessment is required for investment planning in construction, refurbishment and extension of learning premises. Based on the above, MEST shall provide technical assistance in the implementation of standards for construction of learning premises.

**2.7.5 Draft guidelines for maintenance of school facilities of all profiles and levels.**

**2.7.6 Advancing education buildings database.**

Databases will be updated for level 1-12 and the expansion of pre-school and higher education programmes will take place. Connection will be made with EMIS central system.

**2.7.7 Draft a Guide for investment planning in new school buildings.**

The Guide shall include application procedures of municipalities for the approval of construction of school buildings.

**2.7.8 Develop investment plans for school premises for 3 and 5 years time periods.**

Based on municipal requests, according to existing criteria, MEST drafts mid-term and long-term investment plans. Investment criteria shall be reviewed on an on-going basis depending on the developments and achievements in the field of infrastructure.

**Result 2.8: Improve educational infrastructure through construction, renovation, expansion and equipping of educational institutions with adequate teaching tools**

**2.8.1 Build new schools with the intention that 1/3 of pupils are to learn in one shift.**

Identification of locations for the construction of new schools will be based on the analysis of the school map (investment plan), according to the applicable norms and standards and the expected demographic changes. 25 new school buildings are expected to be built during the next 5 years.

**2.8.2 Construction of pre-school/pre-primary facilities.**

Construction of 18 pre-school/pre-primary facilities is planned to take place in accordance with norms and standards.

**2.8.3 Renovation of school premises.**

Renovation is made on the basis of the evaluation of the physical condition of buildings and according to the applicable norms and standards so that buildings can become more functional for the educational system and curricular reform. 250 buildings will be refurbished during the next 5 years.

**2.8.4 Equipping schools with sports hall packages.**

Provision of this equipment will be made according to the specifications already defined by MEST, which are in line with international standards. A total of 40 schools will be provided with sports hall packages during the five-year period.

**2.8.5 Equipping classrooms with adequate teaching materials.**

Provision of teaching materials will be based on the principle of providing a friendly and appropriate environment for learning. Applicable standards and norms for school infrastructure will be taken into consideration. A total of 60 buildings will be provided with adequate inventory for learning.

**2.8.6 Providing schools with individual student lockers.**

Drawers will be provided in accordance with specifications already drafted by MEST taking into account the existing reality in the school premises. 50% of schools will be provided with individual student drawers during the 5 five-year period.

**2.8.7. Expand and improve learning environments in HEIs.**

New premises will be constructed and improve existing buildings based on the programmes that are offered in the HEIs. Three new buildings will be constructed for HEIs.

## Assumptions and risks

Key assumptions to ensure the achievement of the aforementioned objectives are:

- The Municipal level fully exercises their responsibilities and powers defined by law.
- Preparation of a phased process and framework for schools taking over more responsibility and hold them accountable for this.
- Increase of education specific grant to enable addressing of sustainable funding for all schools and to encourage development activities.
- Directors and governing boards take on an increasing role in the school development.

However, factors that remain challenges for the successful implementation of what is planned are:

- Limited professional management capacities at school and municipal level.
- Lack of financial resources for capital investment.

# 8. Strategic objective 3: Quality Assurance

Quality assurance in education is any systematic process that serves to prove whether the service provided to the student meets certain requirements. The primary goal of a proper quality assurance system is to secure a high quality education for all, it must provide an opportunity for detection of possible defects in the education process, and undertake concrete steps for possible improvements. In doing so the trust of citizens in the education system will increase.

Quality assurance requires mechanisms at different levels depending on how the education system is organised. These mechanisms should be able to support the assessment of the school[44] situation, but also support the improvement of the situation on the basis of the assessment recommendations. In principle, schools need an independent assessment, but also professional support to achieve the defined standards.

School development planning is seen as a process by which schools take responsibility for their own development, i.e. improving their performance and contributing to the implementing national policies. In the context of the decentralisation policy, development planning aims to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of school management. Development planning starts with an analysis of the needs; based on this development, priorities are set in the context of a three years perspective.

New approaches require capacity building for their implementation. This type of capacity building goes beyond training, expanding towards empowering new structures to carry out their work. An important element in quality assurance derives from the "bottom up" pressure that should be exerted by citizens, primarily students and their parents, requesting schools to provide quality. This implies their awareness and empowerment to make claims of this nature, which obliges schools and decision-makers of central and local level to work on quality assurance.

International and national student assessment tests, such as the Achievement Test after compulsory school, State Matura Exam or PISA, are seen as important tools for quality assurance, since they provide systematic information on the weaknesses of the system and the curriculum, and as such they can be used for taking steps towards their elimination.

## Challenges

### Non-functioning Quality Assurance Mechanisms

Quality assurance is one of the weakest points of the pre-university education in Kosovo. Mechanisms that existed previously like the Pedagogical Body of Kosovo, the State Exam for Teachers, pedagogical bodies in several municipalities and school pedagogues were dissolved in 2000 by UNMIK decision, without replacing them with new functioning mechanisms. Meanwhile, institutions like Kosovo Pedagogical Institute and Education Inspectorate were established, but their duties were covering only parts of quality assurance, and their reports did not systematically influence decision making. Also, in the past seven years there has been a trend of re-employing pedagogues and psychologists in schools, but their activity remains uncoordinated and unsupervised from outside. After Kosovo's declaration of independence, the Law on Education in Municipalities brought new dynamics in the field of quality assurance, transferring some responsibilities and powers in this area from central to local level. However, promulgation of this law caught municipalities unprepared in terms of personnel and logistics for such a challenge, such as quality

[44] In this chapter, the word “school” is used to describe pre-university education institutions of ISCED level 0-3.

assurance, especially when there is no unified quality assurance system in place: defined criteria, standards and transparent processes were lacking.

While so far the Education Inspectorate is entitled to deal with administrative matters and municipalities are formally responsible for quality provision; in reality there is confusion about the division of responsibilities between central and local authorities. On the other hand, the mechanisms at school level are non-existent, or at best non-functional.

### School Development Planning/SDP Challenges

With the continuous transfer of responsibilities from the central level to municipalities, and from municipalities to schools, school development planning is a task for every school level - which is a huge challenge, but also represents an opportunity. Not all Kosovo schools are required to have development plans, with the exception of Centres of Competence. Based on the official education management training for school directors MEST approved an official format for SDPs and makes this available on its website. In a number of municipalities the format is in good use, MEDs have established mechanisms to evaluate and discuss the SDPs, and by doing so, coordinate their plans. These experiences can be seen as “best practise”.

Nevertheless, the quality of most school development plans is not at a satisfactory level. It seems that often schools have copied their plans from other schools. Although the official SDP format guides the planning towards defined quality areas, the main focus of school development plans so far is on the improvement of school infrastructure, i.e. on aspects that depend on external funding (municipalities, donors, community). Focus is not put on what schools can do in the given situation to improve the quality of their primary function, thus improving the process of teaching and learning. Legally, schools are not obligated to follow the plan they have developed, and monitoring arrangements generally are weak. A big problem is that the school development planning is not coordinated with central and local education policies.

Such formalism in school development planning constitutes a risk that school development plans may be considered as applications for additional resources, instead of a school instrument based on quality assurance with a focus on actions that schools can/must undertake to improve the quality of services they provide. On the other hand, school development planning is seen as an important tool of quality assurance, since the "culture of quality" at the school level is a prerequisite for the effective quality development, especially in the context of school’s greater autonomy and stronger focusing on results.

### Lack of Quality Assurance Capacities

Establishing a comprehensive quality assurance system requires changes in the legislation, and a new division of responsibilities between the central, local and school levels. This must be accompanied by capacity building measures which include the development of professional and education staff, Inspectorate and MEDs, as well as considerable effort for capacity development at all levels.

With 57 inspectors covering the territory of Kosovo and specialising in different areas, the Education Inspectorate is in need of capacity development to perform its role in ensuring the quality of education, both in terms of staff structure and the number of staff, as well as their readiness for the new role. On the other hand, the influence of municipalities in the quality of education is, in most cases, minimised to covering the school's daily expenses, regardless of their mandatory presence in school boards and their role in the drafting of one part of the curriculum. They need to strengthen

their professional capacities to address education issues. Likewise, schools as direct educational service providers must improve their capacity to provide good teaching, to support teacher professional development, and to monitor the quality of the teaching/learning process.

### Low awareness of Quality Assurance

In general, there is low awareness about the need to ensure quality in education, since there is little evidence of the poor quality of education and its results. The quality of teaching in schools cannot be judged as long as there are no quality assurance mechanisms in place that focus on this aspect, such as, for example, teacher performance assessment and credible assessment of learning results which are reported to the public. Parental participation is a prerequisite for increased accountability and importance of educational processes. Parents in Kosovo have neither the mind-set nor the appropriate mechanisms to influence broader educational processes; their concerns remain on the achievement of their own child(ren), and when they are dissatisfied with the education results they rely on individual defence mechanisms (for example by pressuring the teacher or transferring the child to another school). It is common for parents to receive information about their child's progress in the form of marks achieved. The analysis of the external student assessment at the end of the compulsory cycle showed that the average discrepancy between internal assessment of the teacher and the student achievement in the external test can mount up to two marks. While the information on the progress of a child may not be as reliable as necessary, there is no information on school performance at all. Parents in Kosovo have very little information about the new competency-based curriculum. Students are also not showing any persistence for quality, although student bodies have the potential to request quality teaching. Legally, schools are accountable to municipalities. But as they are not legally required to have the school development plans, nor mechanisms for the entire school performance assessment, the accountability lines are quite poor. On the whole, the general public does not hold municipalities accountable for poor performance of local schools.

### Weaknesses in External Assessment

Using the national test results for quality improvement is seen as an area that needs to be developed in the future. Mechanisms need to be developed which would serve to report detailed national test results' analysis at the national, municipal and school level in such a way and format that would effect the elimination of weaknesses in teaching and learning, and school functioning. In particular, MED's requests for exam results should be encouraged, in order to make analyses at the local level. Meanwhile, low credibility of results adversely affects the motivation of educational staff in addressing the unsatisfactory results of their students, because it does not constitute a good basis for comparison of external assessment results with the internal assessment ones. An exemption can be made for grade five tests, which are considered more credible. Also, such a phenomenon effects the weakening of the accountability links, because it does not create space for an objective assessment of teachers' and schools' work. Further participation in PISA and proper analysis and interpretation of test results in conjunction with other social, economic and educational factors will no doubt be an incentive to educational policy-makers to take all necessary steps to improve quality in pre-university education system.

## Objective

Developing a functioning quality assurance system, in accordance with international standards.

A Quality assurance system depends on the functionality of mechanisms that operate within the system, as well as human and logistical capacities for putting this system in place. Therefore, a division of powers is envisaged between the central, local, and school level. The school level is of particular importance in the quality assurance chain, therefore it is foreseen that the school development planning should be the main instrument that promotes quality assurance at this level. Capacity building at all levels is a key step for making the new quality assurance system operational. In Kosovo's conditions, awareness raising activities, combined with a framework of incentives and penalties that create an environment where the accountability is fostered at all levels, are also needed. In order to promote accountability there must be an enhancement of national quality assessment instruments, which means intervention in their format and content.

### Expected results:

3.1. Effective quality assurance mechanisms in pre-university education in Kosovo based on the division of powers between MEST, MEDs and schools are in place by 2020;

3.2. All schools and municipalities draft and align their development plans in accordance with the applicable legislation and education development strategy;

3.3. There are quality assurance capacities at the central, municipal, and school level by 2020;

3.4. Professionals, policy-makers, parents and the general public have sufficient information on quality assurance in pre-university education;

3.5. Increased reliability of the national test results and their use for policy-making, alongside international test results.

## Related issues

A quality assurance system depends on legislative changes, but also on the improvement of the education management system (Area 2). This system also provides the organisational basis and the quality framework that helps the implementation of the new curriculum (Area 5), both in terms of organising the teaching process and the assessment. Since the education quality is linked to a large extent with the teaching quality, it is impossible not to have the existence of an organic link between the quality assurance system and teacher professional development (Area 4). Even with quality assurance, there are some specifics of vocational education and training sub-sector (Area 6). In particular, this is related to the legislation which defines specific procedures for the external assessment of vocational education and training institutions.

## Possible activities

Below are possible activities to achieve each of the expected results separately, along with their brief description.

**Result 3.1: Effective quality assurance mechanisms in pre-university education in Kosovo based on the division of powers between MEST, MEDs and schools are in place by 2020**

**3.1.1. Establishment of an efficient school performance assessment system.**

School performance assessment is carried out every 3-5 years by the Education Inspectorate based on the internal school assessment . For VET schools, assessment is part of the accreditation process led by NQA, based in the Law on Vocational Education and Training, and the Law on National Qualifications.

**3.1.2. Application of education quality management cycle.**

The quality management cycle consists of well-defined steps that are described in the European Quality Assurance Reference Framework (EQARF) and in the National Framework for Quality Assurance for VET (NFQAVET). Criteria of the quality of teaching in general education should be defined according to the EQARF , based on best international practice.

**3.1.3. Empowerment of school bodies (departments and boards) to perform their function in quality assurance.**

Quality coordinators will be appointed in schools, and the work of departments and boards will be reorganised to strengthen quality assurance. An Administrative Instruction for determining responsibilities of coordinators for quality in school and municipal level is in the preparation phase.

**3.1.4. Definition of MEDs role in QA and setting up relevant QA structures in MEDs.**

In line with the restructuring as suggested under activity 2.1.1, each MED will appoint a quality coordinator at the municipal level, as well as professional subject area groups to support schools in the process of curriculum development, teacher training, etc.

**3.1.5. Inspectorate's functioning in legal-administrative and pedagogical-professional aspects.**

The new approach requires that the Education Inspectorate deal with more specific issues related to education, such as making institutional periodic external assessments. Such an approach requires changes in the legislation, and also a new staff structure in the Education Inspectorate. Professional Pedagogical Inspectors should specialise in certain levels of pre-university education, starting from pre-school level, primary and lower secondary and upper secondary. Also, legislative changes should allow the possibility that education inspectors have a role in the process of teacher performance assessment, if this process will take place as required by the current applicable administrative instructions. The new staffing structure of the Education Inspectorate should reflect the diversity of languages of instruction offered by the Kosovo education system.

**3.1.6. Effective use of data from education monitoring on quality assurance on all levels and in all languages of instruction.**

MED and school directors use data from education monitoring, including data from EMIS, as well as data on external student assessment to improve education quality.

**Result 3.2: All schools and municipalities draft and align their development plans in accordance with the applicable legislation and education development strategy**

**3.2.1. Review of the procedures and instruments for development planning.**

Current school development planning guidelines will be reviewed and summarised in a form of an Administrative Instruction that will make the development plan mandatory for all

public pre-university education institutions in Kosovo. Procedures determined by the NQA should be followed in VET schools.

**3.2.2. Monitoring the implementation of school development plans.**

Based on experiences and best practice MEDs and school directors develop a systematic approach for monitoring and coordination.

**3.2.3. Harmonisation of municipal plans with school plans according to quality areas, through integrated planning.**

Municipal Education Development Plans must be aligned with school plans in accordance with quality areas. In addition, each municipal education plan must reflect development priorities of the schools and within the municipality.

**3.2.4. Encouragement of best practice exchange.**

Best practice in school development planning and school-based quality development will be shared at the municipal level, and through MEST's quality assurance web portal. The national scaling-up of school-networks can offer a suitable format for exchange and mutual learning (see above).

**Result 3.3: There are quality assurance capacities at the central, municipal, and school level by 2020**

**3.3.1. Inspectorate's capacity building for new responsibilities.**

Education Inspectorate should develop internal regulations and guides for performance of new tasks. The next step in capacity building for the Education Inspectorate's new responsibilities is to review the staffing structure of the body, both in terms of numbers, language skills knowledge and qualification of school inspectors, proceeding afterwards with the training.

**3.3.2. Development of School Departments Guide with clear focus on quality development.**

The Guide will put special focus on the role of school departments for school-based quality assurance as joint planning, coordination of cross-subject teaching, but also peer-to-peer support (classroom observations).

**3.3.3. Training of MED staff, school directors and school responsible staff for quality management.**

A specific training module will be developed for MED staff, school directors and school quality coordinators. This module will also be incorporated into the existing training programme for school directors.

**3.3.4. Provision of assistance to professional groups at the municipal level.**

MEST will develop a school-based quality assurance guide as well as the relevant instruments for the operation of professional groups. As for VET schools this is part of the role of NQA.

**3.3.5. Training of school and municipal representatives on development planning.**

At national level respective training providers will be encouraged to develop training capacity that can meet the demand of municipalities and schools for training. Municipalities, and where appropriate the central level, will bear responsibility for implementation of training programmes, whereas MEST will oversee the training process.

**3.3.6. Establishment of the Curriculum, Assessment and Standards Agency (CASA) in accordance with the Law on Pre-University Education.**

The idea is to transfer relevant organisational units of the MEST to the Agency, either completely or partially.

**Result 3.4: Professionals, policy-makers, parents and the general public have sufficient information on quality assurance in pre-university education**

**3.4.1. National test results reporting system is developed.**

Such a move would make professionals, parents, students and the general public aware of the education system and educational institutions' performance. This activity will be supported by the World Bank.

**3.4.2. Promotion of success and reward of achievement.**

Examples of good practice related to education quality will be promoted widely, through the quality assurance web portal.

**3.4.3. Informing parents on different aspects of the curriculum and quality assurance.**

MEST has designed an information campaign which informs parents and students about the central aspects of the new curriculum before nationwide implementation. Information campaigns should be also organised in all communities' languages and outreach to all communities.

**3.4.4. Promotion of public debate regarding education quality.**

MEST will organise an annual conference on education quality in cooperation with the Association of Kosovo Municipalities.

**3.4.5. Create the quality assurance web portal.**

The portal will be created by MEST with the aim to inform teachers, parents, students and the general public about the quality assurance arrangements, and provide resources and tools to support quality assurance mechanisms at the national, local and school level.

**Result 3.5: Increased reliability of the national test results and their use for policy-making, alongside international test results**

**3.5.1. Review of the Test Administration and Monitoring Guide.**

Specify the general rules and the modalities for the selection of administrators and monitoring staff for national test implementation.

**3.5.2. Test administrator and test monitoring training.**

Regular training for test administration and monitoring will improve the quality and credibility of national tests.

**3.5.3. Proper test management and transparency.**

Adequate measures are to be taken to ensure proper test management including provision of security and transparency of all procedures.

**3.5.4. Creation of an item bank with full question characteristics.**

The Bank must contain a sufficient number of questions with high quality that can be used for national tests.

**3.5.5. Test results analysis.**

National test results are analysed and interpreted with the purpose of drawing conclusions on the quality of items and the achievement of learning outcomes.

## Assumptions and risks

Key assumptions in ensuring the achievement of the above-given objective are:

- Finalisation of legislation for reorganisation of the Education Inspectorate.
- Municipal agreement and commitment to support the implementation of quality assurance processes.
- MEST, Municipalities and schools will jointly ensure that cooperation of teachers in school-bodies (such as QA-functions, PRTDNs, etc.) will be covered within the existing contracts.
- Changes in the funding formula to take into account the actual funding needs of schools, including possible costs for quality assurance costs incurred by schools.
- Willingness of teachers to engage in the mid-level management tasks as quality coordinators or heads of school departments.

However, factors that remain challenges for the successful implementation of what is planned are:

- Lack of capacity at municipal and school level to perform tasks related to quality assurance set in this Strategy.
- Insufficient budget to support middle management (quality coordinators, heads of departments) in schools, and building relevant structures at the municipal level.
- Formalism in drafting school and municipal development plans.

# 9. Strategic objective 4: Teacher Development

One of the key factors directly affecting the enhancement of teaching and learning quality is teacher professional development. The more prepared teachers are, the easier it will be for them to overcome many challenges that they may face during their work, and to implement reforms regarding the improvement of teaching and learning quality. Teachers are the leaders of change in every education system, it is therefore important to provide them with professional training.

Developments in the field of education require teachers to possess distinguished professional and pedagogical skills, and increased authority in school and classroom decision-making. The need to prepare young people in an optimal way for a globalised world with ever-changing demands and opportunities, calls for a teacher who can create a stimulating learning environment, who supports learning and competence development, and who functions as a model in his/her own actions: this implies a need to strengthen teachers' role relative to lesson planning, implementation of modern teaching and learning methodologies, student assessment, preparation and use of online materials, as well as different teaching tools. All these have raised the need for continuous teacher professional development.

## Challenges

### Lack of effective and sustainable teacher professional development (TPD) system

The current model of teacher professional development model is based on programs offered to teachers, therefore, to fill the practical needs there should be a priority setting of the training programmes, to complement the practical needs of teachers for professional development and for the implementation of curriculum reform. To align professional development with the needs of teachers, MEST has implemented various efforts to structure TPD, such as: drafting administrative instructions, accreditation of providers/institutions and their training programs, drafting the training catalogue[45], etc. Analysis of this catalogue shows that there are very few specific training programmes accredited, e.g. on subject-didactics, based on needs-analysis, as well as for the implementation of the curriculum framework.

The growing need for professional development for specific teaching areas is a challenge for the TPD-framework, as this emphasises the need for implementation of the demand driven professional development model. There are at least two challenges, for the successful implementation of this model: the first is the identification of the needs for professional qualification on a regular basis on three levels, on national level for the implementation of the curriculum reform, on municipality level representing the school's needs, and then on individual level to meet the needs of teachers for professional development. All those needs for professional development should be gathered and assessed, and based on their results and strategic objectives to organise the provision of teacher professional development. The second challenge is coordination of TPD activities between different stakeholders, such as, the Kosovo Pedagogical Institute and Faculties of Education (FE), as well as the harmonisation of their activities with contributions of development partners and other different organisation in education sector.

Until a few years ago, teachers' professional development was organised mainly in the form of classical training. Such an approach has proven to be insufficient, because teachers often needed

[45] Catalogue of Accredited Programmes for Teacher Professional Development and Educational Leadership, MEST, 2011. http://edukimi.webs.com/dokumente%20shkollore/katalogu_i_programeve_per_zhvillim_1.pdf

continuous professional support for putting the acquired knowledge into practice. Experiences from Kosovo show that other professional development forms, such as on-the-job counselling, mentoring, reflective (feedback) practices, etc., enable the transfer of knowledge and skills into the classroom. Such practices have been part of several teachers' professional development programmes; however, it remains a challenge to make this comprehensive approach part of a continuous teacher professional development culture. This broad approach could be supported by the active in each school and by school-networking.

Municipal level and schools have more direct information about the needs for teacher professional development. MEST has therefore delegated this responsibility to a large extent to these levels. MEST has also drafted the legal framework for the allocation of funds for this purpose, and defined responsibilities of each stakeholder in the process. It remains a challenge for the MEST to build a sustainable funding mechanism for teacher professional development, which, among other things, would consider co-financing alternatives of TPD, from the central and municipal level.

### Non-functioning of Teacher Performance Assessment

The Pre-University Law, Art. 33[46], defines the basic rules for licensing of teachers, part of which is performance assessment. Kosovo conducted piloting of the teacher performance assessment process. Piloting indicated a need to improvement performance assessment instruments and processes, as these proved to require more resource than available.

### Setbacks in the teacher licensing process

The teacher licensing process is based on the promotion system consisting of four levels, each of them subject to the fulfilment of certain criteria, mainly attending accredited programmes for professional development, and achieving at least a satisfactory level in the performance assessment. So the success in the licensing process implementation depends on two prerequisites: the completion of professional development and teacher performance assessment. In terms of professional development, the licensing process requires that each teacher attends at least 20 hours or 2.5 days of training within a year. It remains a challenge for MEST to cooperate with MEDs and donors to provide this opportunity to all teachers. The second requirement is to achieve at least a satisfactory level of performance assessment for the purpose of renewal or promotion to higher levels of license. International research shows that teachers react positively if their professional accomplishments are officially recognised. MEST must ensure that the licensing process is based on the principle of meritocracy as an incentive to motivate teachers towards better performance. Any decisions in this regard need to take budgetary limitations into account, because teacher salaries should be linked to their licenses.

Results from the licensing process are a valuable source of information regarding what teachers need for professional development. Building mechanisms for their use in policy-making and for prioritisation of teacher professional development remains a challenge.

### Low quality pre-service teacher education

Teacher qualification for all levels of pre-university education is implemented by the Faculties of Education . Despite the efforts of MEST and FEs to organise study programmes that are in harmony with the needs and requirements of a teaching profession, this has not yet been achieved. FEs do not currently prepare teachers sufficiently in line with MEST policies to enable them to implement

[46] https://masht.rks-gov.net/uploads/2015/06/03-ligji-per-arsimin-parauniversitar-anglisht.pdf

the new Kosovo Curriculum Framework. In order to ensure an effective solution to this problem, MEST must raise the level of cooperation with Faculties of Education.

To ensure higher quality teacher qualification, FEs should pay attention to the admission of students,. ensuring that students with a solid knowledge base enrol in the faculties of education which would enable their professional development during their studies. Selection of students for enrolment in teaching profession would enable Faculties of Education, through their study programmes, to produce teachers willing to be challenged by the requirements of their profession.

## Objective

Enhancing teaching quality through an effective and sustainable system for teacher professional development and preparation.

The main priority in this area is to build a sustainable system for teacher professional development, which would contribute to the implementation of school reform. Professional development based on teacher needs would affect the improvement of their performance, which would then result in license renewal or promotion at different levels of the teacher licensing process. Teacher professional development enables better organisation of the teaching process.

### Expected results:

4.1. Sustainable teacher professional development system for the implementation of the education reform is built;

4.2. Teacher performance assessment process is implemented;

4.3. Teacher licensing system becomes fully functional;

4.4. Quality preparation ensured for pre-service teachers.

## Related issues

Participation in professional development programs helps teachers to be more creative in preparing lesson contents for students, and more efficient in their implementation. This would help students to acquire lessons in the most quality way (Area 3). Professional development programmes help teachers to become more flexible in selecting content for their students, and to use various ICT or other teaching tools. The participation in the training for KCF implementation programme provides information on how teachers should develop specific competencies in students through the implementation of various lesson contents (Area 5).

Teacher selection for participation in various professional development programmes depends on school management (Area 2). A selection based on teacher needs would help them to be trained for quality teaching and learning (Area 3). Participating in various programmes would also help teachers implement inclusion of students in the learning process, paying additional attention to students with special needs and those from marginalised groups (Area 1). Vocational school teachers must also have pre-service pedagogical training and participate in professional development programmes so that they can be trained to implement the curriculum in their fields, and organise lectures by respective modules (Area 6). Pre-service teacher qualification is provided by higher education institutions, so this process is necessarily related to higher education sub-sector (Area 7).

## Possible activities

The following are possible activities to achieve each of the expected results individually, along with their brief description.

**Result 4.1: Sustainable teacher professional development system for the implementation of the education reform is built**

**4.1.1 Review, drafting and approval of TPD documents**.

MEST should review all TPD-related documents and harmonise their contents. Additional AIs need to be developed in order to complete the legal framework for implementation of TPD. MEST should develop "pre service" and "in service" teacher standards and harmonise them.

**4.1.2 Establishment of school-level mechanisms to identify the needs for TPD.**

Wherever pedagogical services are available in schools, they will review individual plans for teacher professional development and advise the school director and the School Governing Board on priorities for TPD. These priorities will be integrated into the School Development Plan and sent to the MEDs to explore the possibility of organising training according to teachers' needs and requirements on municipal level.

**4.1.3 The development of a national framework for TPD based on the identified needs and priorities.**

MEST will develop a long term TPD framework (2017-2021, as well as subsequent annual plans), which will contain the needs and requirements of teachers for professional development, identified at the national and municipal level by languages of instruction, requirements for the implementation of the priorities established at the central level as well as results deriving from the teacher performance assessment processes. Based on this framework MEST will inform and coordinate contributions from their own resources (PIK, FE) and development partners and civil society. The Framework will also be used as an important reference point in the accreditation of new programmes and re-accreditation of existing ones.

**4.1.4 Drafting of annual plans and MTEF plan for TPD funding.**

MEST and MEDs should prepare their annual plans regarding TPD expenditures. These plans must be budgeted and reflected in the MTEF.

**4.1.5 Engaging professional teams of experts at the municipal level.**

Municipalities that are able to afford it will engage professional expert teams to support schools on developing annual and monthly school plans, as well the implementation of various counselling and monitoring activities for teachers.

**4.1.6 Encouraging the development of training programs according to priorities (for KCF, methodology, subject, inclusive education, ICT, integrated teaching, etc.).**

MEST will encourage the development of training programs according to priorities it has determined or needs that arise meanwhile.

**4.1.7 Promote the development of TPD programs for non-educational profiles.**

MEST will encourage the development of TPD programmes according to the specific needs of different vocational school teacher profiles.

**4.1.8 Develop a mechanism for sustainable TPD funding.**

MEST in cooperation with MEDs should establish a TPD funding mechanism, which would ensure that every teacher can attend a minimum of 100 training hours within a period of 5 years. This should include all kinds of co-funding models, including a fee-for-training model e.g. for advanced trainings.

**4.1.9 Monitoring and assessment of the TPD programmes' implementation.**

MEST Division for Teacher Professional Development will prepare a framework to determine the monitoring and assessment terms and modalities for the implementation of TPD program. This framework will be distributed to all relevant parties that are willing to support the TPD program. Monitoring and assessment of the implementation of TPD programme will be carried out based on this framework.

**4.1.10 Organising teacher training at the central and municipal level (KCF implementation, inclusion, ICT, teaching methods, programmes according to the subject fields, for vulnerable groups, performance assessment, mentoring, development of a register, drafting of IEP, etc.).**

MEST, in cooperation with MEDs and development partners, will provide a minimum of hours for professional development for all teachers, including for teachers teaching in communities' languages, to enable license renewal or promotion to a higher level in the grading system.

**4.1.11 Organising TPD activities in school according to school needs and in line with the teacher development framework.**

Schools will organise training, mentoring, different aspects of professional support according to the needs of teachers.

**4.1.12 Organising training for implementation of sectorial core curriculum and VET profiles frameworks.**

Given that the profiles of VET schools can differ substantially from general education and within the VET-sector sector, subject-specific trainings will be offered to the teachers. This will be implemented under the supervision of the Division of Vocational Education and based on the specific VET requirements.

**4.1.13 Support Professional Development Centres at the municipal level.**

MEST, in cooperation with MEDS, will support different aspects of the work undertaken by centres for professional development at the municipal level.

**4.1.14 Provision of TPD materials/literature**.

MEST will provide guidance, materials and handbooks for the implementation of KCF at different schooling levels and in all languages of instruction in Kosovo.

**4.1.15 Support cooperation at the regional level and wider.**

Participation of experts in meetings, training events and conferences in the region and wider will be provided as required.

**Result 4.2: Teacher performance assessment process is implemented**

**4.2.1 Finalising documents for teacher performance assessment.**

Piloted instruments must be adjusted in order to include findings from the piloting process. Performance assessment tools packages should be supplemented with additional documents, which must be approved by the State Council for Teacher Licensing.

**4.2.2 Development of a competency-based teacher licensing and promotion scheme that defines key competencies for each type of license in the existing scheme and their linkage with the payroll system.**

MEST should prepare the scheme for promotion of teachers that clearly defines the key competencies for each type of license. Also, MEST will make linkage of licenses with the payroll system.

**4.2.3 Capacity building of inspectors and assessors for performance assessment.**

MEST should increase the number of professional inspectors and assessors to enable the implementation of performance assessment in all languages of instruction in Kosovo. Performance assessment capacity building workshops and other forms of support should be organised for existing and new inspectors and assessors to be engaged.

**4.2.4 School capacity building (director, professional associates, teachers) for performance assessment.**

Some aspects of teacher performance assessment will be carried out by the school director and teachers. To carry out these tasks, capacity building needs to be provided for school directors and teachers for using the performance assessment tools. Capacity building should also be provided for professional school services, so that they can help directors and teachers in using the performance assessment tools.

**4.2.5 Setting up of an induction programme for new teachers, and other activities aimed at improving and institutionalising teacher performance assessment and professional development.**

MEST should establish mechanisms to enable an induction programme for new teachers, which would enable the development of their competencies for planning and organisation of the learning process.

**4.2.6 Development of a performance assessment action plan.**

Performance assessment is being implemented for the first time in Kosovo so that all teachers have the chance of undergoing the process. The Inspection Office will develop a plan to determine the dynamics of organising the performance assessment process. This plan will be prepared in cooperation with MEDs to ensure coordination of activities for its implementation, as well as consulted on with teachers, including those providing instruction in community languages, so as to make sure that any specific needs or additional challenges are taken into account.

**4.2.7 Organising the performance assessment process.**

Teacher performance assessment process will be organised for all teachers according to the Action Plan developed by the Office of the Inspectorate.

**4.2.8 Monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of performance assessment action plan.**

Special commitment of the expert team should be provided on this issue. The team will develop a monitoring framework and summarise information from reports, then prepare recommendations arising from this process.

**4.2.9 Using the data from the performance assessment process for policy-making and prioritisation of TPD on national level.**

Attention should be paid by MEST to data analysis deriving from the assessment process. This would help MEST in policy-making and determining priority programmes for TPD.

**Result 4.3: Teacher licensing system becomes fully functional**

**4.3.1 Drafting the action plan for implementation of the licensing process.**

A plan should be developed to determine the implementation modalities of the licensing process. This plan should be aligned with the Action Plan for Teacher Performance Assessment.

**4.3.2 Cooperation with institutions responsible for provision of financial resources for teacher licensing process (MF, MPA, Kosovo Assembly).**

Teacher licensing is associated with the grading system, which should reflect in the payroll system. The additional costs need to be reflected in the MTEF.

**4.3.3 Informing teachers about the licensing system.**

Teachers need to be informed regarding their licensing process. Therefore various activities should be organised to inform teachers about this process, such as information campaigns, debates, meetings, roundtables, TV spots, etc., in order to ensure effective dissemination of information materials.

**4.3.4 Implementation of the grading process and harmonisation with payroll system.**

Re-licensing process or promotion of teachers at different licensing levels should be organised on the basis of the action plan. After 5 years at least 35% of teachers will be licensed as advanced teachers. Teacher promotion to other levels will be followed by increased level in the payroll system.

**4.3.5 Organising the licensing process for beginner teachers.**

According to the Draft Law on Regulated Professions, starting teachers must complete their state exam and obtain a license in order to exercise their profession. This will enable those who have chosen the teaching profession as their career to apply to the teacher recruitment announcements. This would also facilitate the process of teacher licensing, because it would ensure that licensed teachers would get into the system, and that the system would not deal with them retroactively. This will also be linked to the establishment of an induction process in schools (linking with probationary license) and the provision of mentoring processes for the beginner teachers. Specific consideration should be given to address the needs of beginner teachers providing teaching in community languages.

**4.3.6 Monitoring and evaluation of the action plan implementation for teacher licensing.**

There should be a special commitment of the expert teams for this purpose, which will develop a monitoring framework, summary of information and preparation of recommendations arising from the assessment process. Attention should be paid to data

analysis stemming from the assessment process. This would help MEST in policy-making and determining priority programmes for TPD on national level.

**Result 4.4: Quality preparation ensured for pre-service teachers**

**4.4.1 Defining standards for student enrolment in Faculties of Education that produce teachers.**
FE's shall develop a criteria for student admission. After approval by MEST, FEs have to adjust their selection processes accordingly.

**4.4.2 Harmonisation of FEs' programmes with MEST Policies.**
FE's will develop programmes for preparation of Pre-Service Teachers that are in line with the new curriculum. These programmes must be accredited by the Kosovo Accreditation Agency.

**4.4.3 Increasing FE capacities for the development and implementation of programmes according to the KCF.**
FEs should support teachers to develop training programmes that enable their students to successfully implement the KCF in specific teaching areas and different levels of education. FEs should increase cooperation with distinguished teachers in order to successfully implement the professional practice, as an opportunity for better preparation of their students. MEST in partnership with FEs can find various forms of incentives for teachers involved in this process.

**4.4.4 Organise research by the FE staff on the implementation of the KCF, methodologies, inclusion, etc.**
Faculty of Education staff should be encouraged to conduct research that would analyse various aspects of KCF implementation, the impact of different methodologies in the teaching process (e.g. subject teachers for some subjects in grades 4 and 5), ensuring inclusiveness in the classroom of students with special needs and marginalised students, etc.

## Assumptions and risks

Key assumptions to ensure the achievement of the aforementioned objective are:

- Establishment of a mechanism for TPD funding, which will enable each teacher to attend a minimum of 100 training hours within the 5-year period.
- Capacity of school directors, teachers and the Education Inspectorate to successfully implement teacher performance assessment process.
- Transparency and accountability of the mechanisms that implement teacher performance assessment and teacher licensing.
- Provision of the necessary budget to connect the teacher licensing process with the payroll system.

However, factors that will be challenges in the successful implementation of what is planned are:

- Failure to provide training for all teachers to ensure a minimum number of training hours within a 5 year period.
- Insufficient numbers of education inspectors and a lack in their professional capacities to carry out teacher performance assessment.

- Failure to implement procedures and criteria for the implementation of teacher performance assessment and teacher licensing process.
- Budget constraints to linking the teacher licensing system with the payroll system.

# 10. Strategic objective 5: Teaching and Learning

Research shows that students learn best when they know how to learn and dedicate themselves to learning. Teachers and schools provide the best opportunities for these students if they utilise the agreed principles of learning. In addition, such principles imply advising students, learning assessment, developing thinking skills, and activities that promote learning process. All these need to be part of the curriculum, so that students can develop a degree of autonomy in the learning process.

Teaching and teachers are the main factors that influence the improvement of learning outcomes. Preparing students to learn independently represents the core of teaching expertise. Research shows that teaching oriented towards student training to learn can significantly affect their learning outcomes, producing positive effects in certain curricular areas.

Textbooks and other teaching materials have a direct impact on teaching and learning. Therefore, mechanisms are needed to ensure that textbooks and other teaching materials are continuously of the right quality in terms of relevance, content, pedagogical approaches, and effectiveness. Promoting learning through technology requires more than just hardware and software. These are working tools only; it is the teacher who makes use of various electronic materials to affect the achievement of the learning outcomes.

## Challenges

### Difficulties in implementing the new curriculum

The Kosovo Curriculum Framework (KCF) represents a shift from objective and content-based to expected outcomes and competency-based teaching and learning. Such an approach implies greater responsibility for schools and teachers charged with the development of the teaching content, selection of teaching methods, as well as teaching materials and aids. Municipalities are also responsible for providing support in the implementation of the new curriculum, while the central level is responsible for cooperation and oversight of the new curriculum rollout process to all schools.

### Difficulties in provision of textbooks and other materials

The new curriculum promotes teacher flexibility in the selection of textbooks and teaching materials that enable the achievement of learning outcomes in certain curricular areas and certain subjects. In Kosovo, it is thought that textbooks are necessary, but work should also be done in the development of electronic materials suitable for use in the classroom, as well as encouraging teachers to develop their own materials and share them with others. Activas (or departments) have to take over some quality assurance of the material and engage teachers in a discussion about the Quality Standards for Textbooks[47], which in principle are relevant for all material. The development of textbooks that follow a competency-based curriculum presents a challenge in itself, since there is no experience in drafting such textbooks. Also, quality assurance of textbooks and other teaching materials has not always worked well.

### Insufficient use of ICT and other teaching aids in schools

The use of electronic resources for the implementation of the new curriculum is a necessity of the time, which should complement how lessons are being followed from the textbook and other

[47] MEST Administrative Instruction No. 5/2011 on Standards for Textbooks. https://gzk.rks-gov.net/ActDocumentDetail.aspx?ActID=8050

material. On the other hand, the technical conditions in schools for the use of such resources are inadequate, primarily because of the limited number of ICT equipment, but also because of poor maintenance. Furthermore, teacher skills for putting ICT in use for quality teaching are not at the right level. Schools have a significant lack of other teaching aids that cannot be replaced with appropriate hardware and software. The demonstration equipment, as well as specialised laboratories or simple charts or maps that should hanging on the wall, visible to students long-term, are also included here.

## Objective

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

Implementation of the new curriculum in all schools is the main priority in this area. In addition to teacher training, this must be prepared by the drafting of textbooks and teaching materials that are in harmony with the new curriculum, including electronic teaching materials. This means that special attention should be paid to equipping schools with ICT equipment, as well as other teaching aids.

### Expected results:

5.1. A competency-based curriculum is implemented in all schools of the pre-university education level in Kosovo;

5.2. Textbooks and other teaching materials are drafted for all grades and subjects;

5.3. All schools are equipped with ICT equipment and other necessary teaching aids for successful implementation of the new curriculum.

## Related issues

Successful implementation of the new curriculum in all schools depends to a large extent on the quality assurance arrangements (Area 3), in particular the organisation of the work of school activas (departments), as well as providing support to schools at the municipal level. Teacher professional development activities (Area 4) also help in the implementation of the new curriculum, since this process depends heavily on teacher training. Curriculum implementation in vocational education (Area 6) requires a specific approach which is explained in the following chapter. Schools are required to tailor the curriculum approach to children with special needs, and schools with significant numbers of students from marginalised groups should have a specific approach (Area 1). The new curriculum shall, by all possible means, promote gender equality, and equality in general needs to be reflected in the teaching content, textbooks and teaching materials.

## Possible activities

The following are possible activities to achieve each of the expected results separately, along with their brief description.

**Result 5.1: A Competency-based curriculum is implemented in all schools and pre-university education levels in Kosovo**

**5.1.1. Development of the curriculum and syllabi according to grades and subjects.**

To support the implementation of the new curriculum, MEST will develop curricula and syllabi for each grade and subject. In this process the integration of subjects will be considered wherever possible. Material developed by teachers in the curriculum-pilot schools are taken on board. Curricula and syllabi shall include teaching about the histories, cultures and traditions of communities living in Kosovo. This should be streamlined as part of the general compulsory curriculum, as well as through specific modules for members of communities to support the preservation of their identity, language and culture.

**5.1.2. Development of training programs and supporting training materials.**

These programmes serve for the preparation of teachers, school directors and education administrators to implement the new curriculum.

**5.1.3. Training of teachers from all schools for implementation of the new curriculum.**

This type of training should be organised through e.g. the professional development activities planned within Objective 4 (activities 4.1.13 - 4.1.15). Activas/Departments can take an important role as forum for exchange and joint planning.

**5.1.4. Training of directors, municipal education officials and inspectors for implementation of the new curriculum.**

**5.1.5. Informing parents about the process of new curriculum implementation and continuous consultation with them.**

Information campaigns can be organised at the national or municipal level, but schools should also be trained to organise such information campaigns and conduct continuous consultations with parents.

**5.1.6. Systematic monitoring of the new curriculum implementation by the school, municipal and central level.**

There should be special monitoring arrangements for this purpose, which implies developing a monitoring framework, summarising and analysis of the outcomes and feeding the results back to the policy level for decision-making.

**5.1.7. Continuous review of the new curriculum.**

The review process is associated with monitoring and assessment of the curriculum implementation and is led by MEST.

**5.1.8. Organising the assessment for curricular stages.**

This is a completely new approach to the education system in Kosovo, since the competency achievement is being assessed at the curricular stage level. Therefore, an external assessment system should be built that makes it possible to take this step. Preferably the intervals should correspond with the external assessment agreed upon by the Kosovo government in the Sustainable Development Goals, Indicators to goal 4[48].

[48] http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/

**Result 5.2: Textbooks and other teaching materials are drafted for all grades and subjects**

**5.2.1. Define the new textbook development process.**

In order to ensure quality of textbooks, their development process must be defined to set out the relevant modalities. This should be accompanied by information activities for textbooks authors. The process should foresee a mechanism for the correction of textbook errors. Drafting of all new textbooks and other teaching material should promote the values of diversity and intercultural tolerance, and should ensure promotion of gender equality.

**5.2.2. Development of textbooks for all subjects and grades in general education.**

This process should be carried out by encouraging the publication of alternative textbooks and by offering the possibility of their selection by schools. Ways to improve the provision of quality textbooks for communities will also be sought.

**5.2.3. Teacher training for the development and use of electronic materials.**

Teachers need to be trained for the development of electronic materials in their area, but also for research, adaptation and effective use of other materials that are available through electronic platforms. Teachers must be encouraged to develop electronic materials and share them with others, thus encouraging the creation and enrichment of electronic platforms.

**Result 5.3: All schools are equipped with ICT equipment and other necessary teaching aids for successful implementation of the new curriculum**

**5.3.1. Provision of access to broadband Internet for all schools.**

Each school building in Kosovo must have access to sufficient broadband Internet for effective use of Internet resources. Schools should have a local network in the area where the teaching process is taking place.

**5.3.2. Providing schools with computers and ICT infrastructure and other necessary aids.**

The idea is to provide schools with sufficient number of computers, projectors or SMART TVs that enable the use of ICT in the classroom. Such devices complement to a large extent other teaching aids, such as maps, posters and some laboratory equipment.

**5.3.3. Development of plans for ICT equipment maintenance and updating.**

Under Kosovo conditions, maintenance of ICT equipment should be conducted by schools and municipalities. Schools should be responsible for elimination of defects in software and hardware where no professional intervention is required, and municipalities for contracting the repair services.

**5.3.4. Promotion of the use of personal ICT equipment.**

Given that a significant number of students and teachers have personal devices like laptops or smart phones, their use in school should be encouraged. In order not to jeopardise the principle of inclusion, this measure needs to be accompanied by a subsidy-scheme for the purchase of low-cost, functional tablets for students from economically challenged families.

**5.3.5. Subsidising laptops for teachers.**

The state will work towards entering into agreements with computer distributors so that it becomes possible for teachers to buy laptops at prices subsidised by the state or with preferential loan conditions.

**5.3.6. Providing schools with the necessary teaching aids to implement the new curriculum.**

Each school will be equipped with standard teaching aids packages necessary for effective implementation of the curriculum in school.

## Assumptions and risks

Key assumptions to ensure the achievement of the aforementioned objective are:

- Successful completion of curriculum piloting in 92 schools and implementation of recommendations for elimination of weaknesses observed during this process.
- Willingness of municipalities to support the new curriculum implementation process in schools.
- The capacity of Kosovo publishing houses to provide quality textbooks, following the dynamics of the curriculum rollout in schools.
- Teacher motivation to contribute to the development of electronic teaching materials, by sharing them with others.
- Willingness and capacity of municipalities to take over the maintenance of ICT equipment and ensure their periodic replacement.

However, factors that remain challenges for the successful implementation of what is planned are:

- Limited capacity for teacher training in implementing the new curriculum.
- Lack of capacity to provide support to schools in implementing the new curriculum.
- Delay of new textbooks and resultant situations where they have to work with the existing textbooks that may result in a return to the old content-based approach.
- Lack of budget at municipal level for maintenance of ICT equipment.
- Poor quality of electronic materials developed by teachers and those commercially available.
- Restrictions on the use of electronic materials from international platforms due to their inability to speak English.
- Lack of textbooks and teaching materials in community languages.
- Failure to ensure sufficient gender expertise to conduct necessary review and analysis within the drafting of textbooks and other teaching materials to ensure the promotion of gender equality and the elimination of gender stereotypes and prejudice.

# 11. Strategic objective 6: Vocational Education and Training and Adult Education

The aim of vocational education and training (VET) is to provide learners with the necessary competences and skills in order to be more competitive and to position themselves in the labour market. The lack of skills in most of the relevant professional areas hinders the country's economic development. The quality of vocational education and alignment of education system requirements with the labour market influence on professional development of individuals, and the social well-being and economic development of the country, respectively, will assist in increasing self-employment and employability.

Labour market research results are the essential basis for the development and improvement of occupational standards and VET programmes. For their implementation, it is necessary to conduct continuous training and professional development of teachers and instructors. Development of teaching and learning materials, as well as the equipping of vocational school cabinets in order to enable the implementation of VET curricula and school-based practical learning, still remains a challenge. Therefore, appropriate forms and possibilities for cooperation with businesses have to be found to implement practical training in the work place.

It is important to raise the awareness of parents and society in general, regarding the guidance of young people towards their professional career. Students who show little interest for academic studies should have the support of their parents and teachers for education and training in vocational schools. With the smart combination of cognitive skills and technical skills, general and professional competences of students can be developed, thus contributing to the development of professions which are in demand in the labour market.

Vocational Education and Training is part of the pre-university education, and VET qualifications should be based on the requirements of Kosovo Curriculum Framework, the VET core curriculum and the National Qualifications Framework.

The National Qualifications Framework (NQF) is an important component in the framework of the reforms of vocational education and training in Kosovo. The NQF is a national mechanism for classification of qualifications awarded within the national qualifications system, according to types of qualifications and level descriptors. The NQF aims at improving the access to employment and further education, by ensuring that qualifications are in compliance with the labour market needs, that they fulfil candidates' requirements, and those of the economy and institutions of education and training. The basic structure of the NQF consists of eight levels, in which qualifications can be placed. Each NQF level is defined by the description learning outcomes in the form of knowledge, skills and broader competencies.

VET covers several levels of the education system. It covers the needs of youth and adults towards their continuous professional development and employment, including also social partners, such as: chambers of commerce, teachers' unions, and various ministries in the process of planning, development and implementation of VET policies. This makes the VET sub-sector very complex to manage, therefore, it is necessary to clarify and divide the tasks and responsibilities among different stakeholders and establish an efficient cooperation among them.

The National Qualifications Authority (NQA) was established by the Law No. 03/L–060 on National Qualifications in Kosovo and is an essential element of the national qualifications system in Kosovo.

NQA is responsible for developing and overseeing national qualifications, and for developing policies and strategies which aim to implement the National Qualifications System. NQA defines types and levels of certificates and diploma which will be included in the NQF as well as approving qualifications proposed to be included in the NQF. NQA carries out external quality assurance that leads to awarding qualifications in NQF, and carries out the accreditation process of institutions for the assessment of candidates, and awards certificates for qualifications in NQF. NQA is also the responsible body for verification of occupational standards.

The Agency for Vocational Education and Training and Adult Education (AVETAE) was established according to the Law No. 04/L–138 on Vocational Education and Training, and aims to oversee and develop vocational education and training and adult education in Kosovo. AVETAA is responsible for managing and leading VET institutions in terms of financial resources, human resources, building facilities and infrastructure of all public VET institutions. It is also responsible for overseeing the gradual transfer of relevant responsibilities at VET schools based on their capacities. AVETAE also monitors and coordinates the development of occupational standards. Following the evaluation of the AVETAE piloting phase, its scope of action should be clearly defined, which could result in legislative changes.

The Council for Vocational Education and Training and Adult Education (CVETAE) was established based on the Law No. 04/L–138 on Vocational Education and Training and serves as the advisory body for VET and Adult Education policies in Kosovo. CVETAE offers advice and recommends profiles for approval based on which VET study programmes should be developed, standards for every profile, the content of curricula for these profiles and professional qualifications, which should all be included within the qualifications framework. CVETAE also recommends school books and learning materials to be used in these programmes. The Council is also responsible for approving occupational standards.

## Challenges

### Non-compliance of VET programmes with labour market requirements

Approximately 140 profiles from different economic sectors are currently offered within VET, and their relevance should be continuously reviewed and adapted to the needs of the labour market, including gradual optimisation of VET network. Major challenges remain for the development of capacities for the analysis of skills needs and capacities for estimation, the limited number of occupational standards, revision and development of curricula based on occupational standards, the training of teachers and instructors, equipping the cabinets, teaching and learning, and support materials and implementation of internship. Vocational schools must meet quality requirements and prepare for the accreditation process, which is awarded by NQA, in accordance with the applicable laws.

### Difficulties in provision of teaching materials for VET

Experience shows that the materials developed by teachers in the absence of VET textbooks could be collected, edited and published on electronic platforms, which could be for teachers of all schools. However, there is a need for capacity building for teachers to develop teaching and learning and support material, according to curricula requirements, and based on the needs of economic sectors.

### Lack of VET core curriculum

Accreditation procedures for VET programmes define clearly that all curricula should be modular, competency-based, and with clear assessment criteria. All of these will be developed in the VET Core Curriculum, which will be in line with the principles of the Curriculum Framework for Pre-university Education, as well as with the requirements of the National Qualifications Framework. The VET Core Curriculum must meet the needs of economic sectors, and serve as a guide for the development of occupational standards, and the curricula frameworks of vocational profiles. The VET Core curriculum should ensure more practical training hours, as well as more occupation-specific contents. During the transition process, it is essential that the VET Core Curriculum allows sufficient flexibility for certain profiles, based on the respective capacities of schools to develop further access to workplace based learning.

### Serious flaws in internship and professional practice

The VET concept is built on professional practice in school and in an enterprise. The lack of necessary equipment in cabinets for the implementation of practical learning in schools remains a challenge. VET institutions suffer from the lack of the level of cooperation necessary with the business sector in order to allow adequate professional training, so that candidates can perform their practical work during their vocational education. High quality internships would increase the possibilities of candidates for self-employment, employment, as well as employment in those companies where they have carried out their internships.

### Lack of career guidance and counselling

Career guidance and counselling is a necessary service for a functional VET system in the country. In this service, through career counsellors will be provided to all VET schools.

### Problem of sustainability of Centres of Competence and their further development

With the support of development partners, investments have been made in the infrastructure and human resources of these institutions, but their financial and managerial sustainability remains a challenge. The VET financing formula needs to be reviewed and adapted to the needs of vocational education and training, in particular the Centres of Competence. Regulations for generating and using their own source revenues should be developed, and continuous professional development should be carried out for the Centres of Competence managers and the teaching staff.

### Lack of an efficient and quality adult education system

Although statistics show that the demographic of the population in Kosovo is young, readiness must be shown in the provision of opportunities for lifelong learning for people who have not completed their basic education, those who do not have any qualifications, or those who want to re-qualify for the purpose of employment or career change. Responsibility for education and training of adults in Kosovo is divided between several ministries; activities are also conducted by NGOs, the private sector and other organisations. MEST will contribute in making this area open to all providers, and building its human and physical capacities for management of adult education through concrete measures.

## Objective

Harmonising vocational education and training with labour market requirements in the country and abroad, and creating an open system for adult education.

The main priority of this area lies in the successful cooperation between schools and the labour market. Vocational education and training on both levels, the upper secondary and post-secondary, should be well funded and delivered effectively.

### Expected results:

6.1. All vocational profiles provided in VET schools are aligned with labor market needs;

6.2. The enrollment of students in deficient profiles has increased by 30%, while the enrollment of female students in technical profiles has increased by 20%;

6.3. Teaching and learning materials are developed for at least two specific vocational subjects for all priority profiles;

6.4. VET and adult education curricula are aligned with the requirements of the Pre-University Education Curriculum Framework and the National Qualifications Framework;

6.5. All students of vocational schools carry out practical learning in school, and a professional practice outside school in line with the curriculum;

6.6. Career guidance and counselling is functional in the education system for students and adults;

6.7. VET institutions and adult education providers have full financial and management autonomy;

6.8. Human and infrastructure capacities for the management of adult education exist;

6.9. Education offer for level 5 qualifications has increased.

## Related issues

Promotion of gender equality and inclusiveness in VET holds a special place; these issues are therefore closely related to the first objective (Area 1) of this Strategy. Financing of this area remains an important issue at all levels where it is provided; therefore, the proposal was to review the funding formula for VET schools and Centres of Competence, which is handled in more detail in the education system management (Area 2) of this document. Teacher professional development in VET has its own specifications; therefore some specific aspects remain to be dealt with here. The major part of the professional development, including methodical - didactical aspects, professional didactics and professional practice are addressed in more detail in the area of teacher professional development (Area 4).

## Possible activities

The following are possible activities in order to achieve each of the expected results separately, along with their brief description.

**Result 6.1: All vocational profiles provided in VET schools are aligned with labour market needs**

**6.1.1. Updating the labour market information system in order to analyse and improve the mechanisms for identifying and anticipating the need for skills and planning the VET and AE system.**

Here, activities linking EMIS with civil registration information system, KAS, employment services, etc., should be foreseen.

**6.1.2. Review of profiles provided in VET schools and alignment with the current market needs.**

This review is based on the labour market research results carried out by other responsible institutions. Labour market research should also consider the specific needs, concerns and priorities of communities in order to contribute to equal opportunities for members of communities in the labour market. Labour market research conducted and assessed for this activity should also include sex disaggregated data to enable analysis from a gender perspective. In order to contribute to equal representation and participation of men and women in the labour market, their respective needs, concerns and priorities should be integrated into support for certain professional profiles.

**6.1.3. Development of standards for provided vocational programs.**

Standards can be developed by different organisations responsible for VET, by the industry, or other professional groups.

**6.1.4. Needs analysis at central and local levels to meet the conditions in providing profiles from the revised list.**

These needs are related to human resources, learning resources, equipment and infrastructure.

This analysis should be based on the assessment of the condition of VET providers.

**6.1.5. Capacity building of VET schools for preparation of the self-evaluation report and accreditation procedures.**

NQA has clear requirements for quality assurance in VET, which are required during the accreditation process.

**Result 6.2: The enrolment of students in deficient profiles has increased by 30%, while the enrolment of female students in technical profiles has increased by 20%**

**6.2.1. Launching awareness campaigns and regular presentations in VET schools for students of 8th and 9th grades by the industry.**

The initiative for these activities can be taken by any party, school or employer, but the coordination is done by schools through information, counselling and guidance.

**6.2.2. Creation of an incentive mechanism (pooled fund) by the government and businesses to support education in deficit trades, and for women in technical trades.**

Scholarships or other prizes can be provided from this fund to students in certain trades, and for female students who show distinguished results in technical trades, as well as to stimulate initial enrolment in certain trades in which women are under-represented. Specific

activities should be developed to actively promote and support the inclusion of women in technical trades.

**6.2.3. Implementation of TV shows, and articles with successful stories of women in technical professions.**

Such programmes may attract women to enrol in those trades.

**Result 6.3: Teaching and learning materials are developed for at least two specific vocational subjects for all priority profiles**

**6.3.1. Collection of examples of good practice from existing teaching and learning materials prepared by teachers of different profiles.**

These are pre-selected by school departments, and then published on electronic platforms for use by other teachers in the same branch.

**6.3.2. Training of teachers to use the electronic platforms.**

**6.3.3. Building the capacities of teachers to develop teaching and learning materials covering at least two vocational subjects from each economic sector.**

Since there is a large number of profiles being provided, two subjects will be selected from priority profiles, taking into consideration the representation of all economic sectors.

**6.3.4. Development of teaching and learning materials for at least two vocational subjects selected from each economic sector provided in VET schools.**

These materials will be developed by trained teachers as described in the point above.

**6.3.5. Capacity building of teachers of general VET subjects for the development of teaching and learning materials applied in the profession.**

Subject teachers will be grouped by the respective learning areas to be trained in developing learning materials applied in professions.

**6.3.6. Development of teaching and learning materials from general teaching areas/subjects applied in profession.**

General VET subjects may be developed for each economic sector. Material drafting teams must contain relevant general subject teachers, as well as teachers from vocational subsets of the specific sector.

**Result 6.4: VET and adult education curricula are aligned with the requirements of the Pre-University Education Curriculum Framework and the National Qualifications Framework**

**6.4.1. Training of VET curriculum developers for modular curriculum.**

Teachers are selected in such a way as to cover all economic sectors provided in VET.

**6.4.2. Development of a Core Curriculum for VET.**

The core curriculum for VET must adhere to the requirements of the Pre-University Education Curriculum Framework, and the National Qualifications Framework.

**6.4.3. Development of the final exam for professions provided in VET.**

These tests can be developed by grouping them based on the economic sectors.

**6.4.4. Review of the Administrative Instructions for the final professional exam.**

**Result 6.5: All students of vocational schools carry out practical learning in school, and a professional practice outside school in line with the curriculum**

**6.5.1. Development of tools to incentivise companies to hire students for internships.**
This includes the involvement of other stakeholders.

**6.5.2. Development of a regulation for student health protection during internship.**

**6.5.3. Training of personnel from the** office for cooperation with economy**.**
Part of this training should be to draft a three-year dynamic plan for student internships in enterprise.

**6.5.4. Provision of workshops to 15 vocational schools.**
Selection of schools to be equipped will cover the priority sectors of the economy.

**6.5.5. Signing of cooperation agreements with companies for student internships and their implementation.**

**6.5.6. Drafting sub-legal acts and defining criteria to establish public-private partnerships in education sector.**
This will be implemented in close cooperation with Ministry of Finance and other relevant institutions. Guidelines for school managers on how to use PPP must also be drafted.

**Result 6.6: Career guidance and counselling is functional in the education system for students and adults**

**6.6.1. VET teacher training on curriculum development and career counselling and guidance for youth and adults.**

**6.6.2. Development of the *career counsellor* profession standard and qualification.**
Working groups on the standard will include experts and relevant stakeholders.

**6.6.3. Curriculum development for education and career counselling for vocational schools.**
This process will be based on the preliminarily approved standard. There are also other mechanisms for student assessment as an instrument for further career orientation.

**6.6.4. Development of a training programme for career guidance and counselling teachers.**

**6.6.5. Training and certification of career guidance and counselling teachers for young people and adults.**

**6.6.6. Appointing career counsellors in schools.**
Teachers will be assigned to this task within the regular working hours.

**6.6.7. Development of mechanisms for tracking the graduates of VET schools.**
Linking with existing mechanisms such as EMIS, HEMIS, Centres for Student Services and other existing databases.

**Result 6.7: VET institutions and adult education providers have full financial and management autonomy**

**6.7.1. Revision of the regulation for generating and using own resource revenues.**
This implies the revision of sub-legal acts regulating this issue, in cooperation with relevant stakeholders and in accordance with relevant laws.

**6.7.2. Training of the staff of VET institutions for designing projects that generate revenue.**

**6.7.3. Revision of VET institutions' courses which provide adult education.**
In the existing network there may be cases of duplication of profiles, such cases should be avoided. Cases of similar profiles but with different names should also be avoided.

**6.7.4. Increasing the participation of students from other municipalities in the Centres of Competence.**
Increasing the enrolment of students from other municipalities in the Centres of Competence by promoting education opportunities in these centres at the national level. Here, measures to ensure equal access for all candidates from other municipalities are included.

**6.7.5. Review of the VET financing formula.**
The new financing formula should enable financial resources from the central, local and school level and should be supported by a periodic assessment system of expenditures.

**6.7.6. Promotion of a business model in selected VET institutions to ensure their financial and management sustainability.**
This model includes the establishment of a new mechanism consisting of three management pillars: liaison with businesses and provision of career guidance services, promotion of income generating activities, and data processing, monitoring and evaluation. Particular importance should be given to an adequate monitoring and evaluation system.

**Result 6.8: Human and infrastructure capacities for the management of adult education exist**

**6.8.1. Collection, processing and maintenance of data on adult education in EMIS.**

**6.8.2. Provision of training opportunities for management staff at central, municipal and school levels.**

**6.8.3. Training of school staff for implementation of adult education.**
This includes the involvement of school management, coordinators, teachers, monitors, etc.

**Result 6.9: Education offer for level 5 qualifications has increased**

**6.9.1. Identification of the needs for level 5 qualifications.**
Analysis and identification of applicable legislation, and adaptation of level 5 qualifications in the education system and the labour market.

**6.9.2. Development of new programmes to achieve qualifications at level 5 post-secondary according to NQF.**

**6.9.3. Offering new programmes of 5 level post-secondary in VET institutions, and in particular in the Centres of Competence.**

## Assumptions and risks

Key assumptions to ensure the achievement of the aforementioned objective are:

- Enterprises are willing to organise professional practice.
- Possibility of cooperation with external donors.
- Involvement of business organisations for mediation of professional practice.

However, factors that remain a challenge for the successful implementation of what is planned are:

- Lack of sufficient budget.
- Lack of interest by businesses in facilitating cooperation.
- Inappropriate VET funding formula.
- Lack of teachers with technical skills.
- Low economic development in the country and instability of SME.
- Further worsening of the image of VET schools .
- Absence of economy representatives in the internal assessment of VET students.
- Reduction of donor funds.
- Lack of tailored programmes for adult education.
- Lack of funding for adult education.

# 12. Strategic objective 7: Higher Education

Higher education is an essential public responsibility holding special importance for the development of society. Through their creation of knowledge and skills, and promotion of innovation, critical thinking, tolerance and open mindedness, higher education institutions train people for their role in the society and the economy. In the 21st century, higher education is one of the key drivers of democratic consolidation and economic development of a country. Vocational training and knowledge acquired through higher education are important factors for job creation and social welfare. Higher education is one of the essential components of social and political transformations, especially in transition societies, which directly affects the sustainable state institutions and creates preconditions for economic development. As shown by the experiences of many other countries, higher education significantly affects the provision of quality and competitive staff for the labour market.

Quality standards in higher education are a key prerequisite for the development of modern higher education institutions. In the context of implementing these standards, teacher-student ratio is a quantitative quality indicator. Quality standards are focused on the development of quality assurance mechanisms and building adequate infrastructure conditions for academic and scientific research work. Higher education must respond, adapt and anticipate changes in the labour market and in a country's development. To this end, cooperation with representatives of the economy is essential for higher education. This cooperation is particularly important in the process of developing new standards and study programmes, and ensuring appropriate conditions for practical training.

Scientific research is among ten priorities of the Bologna Charter. An integrated link between higher education and scientific research is the distinguishing feature of modern universities.

Sustainable funding of higher education is essential for normal functioning and development of higher education institutions. Funding of higher education institutions is made on the basis on their performance through models that take into account teaching, scientific research work, and institutional development. The growth and diversification of revenue through the provision of their own source revenue is another important aspect for the development of higher education institutions.

The promotion of international cooperation through participation in international programmes of higher education for academic exchange, and the building of international cooperation partnership networks, are a good opportunity for the internationalisation of higher education and integration in the European Higher Education Area.

## Challenges

### Non-compliance with the quality standards in higher education institutions

In the last decade, higher education in Kosovo has undergone tremendous growth compared to its capacity and the possibilities it provides. Despite the importance it holds as an education policy for increased participation in higher education, this growth has nevertheless contributed to the, sometimes dramatic, decline of higher education quality. Whilst the number of students and study programmes has increased, the teacher-student ratio has deteriorated considerably. Improvement of the teacher-student ratio in public institutions requires investment in staff training, as well as additional funding. On the other hand, building of internal quality assurance mechanisms remains an

important task for higher education institutions. The existence of adequate infrastructures to support scientific research work also remains very limited. Strengthening ethics, transparency and integrity in higher education institutions also requires significant consideration.

### Non-alignment of study programs with labour market requirements

A structural weakness of higher education in Kosovo is the development of study programmes which do not reflect realistic labour market needs. At the same time these programmes lack the interdisciplinary features of practical classes; they also lack a connection to the scientific research. Inconsistency of labour market needs with the knowledge acquired in higher education was identified as a major obstacle to employment growth and economic development in the country. The business community complains that the workforce has incomplete and incompatible skills compared with their business needs. Furthermore, cooperation between higher education institutions and the business community is minimal, because higher education institutions have inefficient and underdeveloped services for student career guidance and counselling. Thus, the challenge remains to revise study programmes to reflect labour market needs, and improving student guidance to encourage study in deficit and strategic areas for country's development, with the purpose of improving their employability.

### Insufficient scientific research work in higher education institutions

Although recognised as an important aspect of higher education development, scientific research work is not fully integrated into regular activities of higher education institutions in Kosovo. The number of scientific publications in international indexed journals by higher education institutions' staff remains extremely low. Increasing the number of scientific publications by staff in international indexed journals raises the need to support researchers in the process of publishing their work and presenting research at international conferences. In addition, there is a need to improve the inadequate environment for scientific research work, given the lack of adequate physical infrastructure, laboratories and equipment, as well as lack of access to scientific resources in electronic libraries etc.

### Incomplete legal framework in higher education

With the enforcement of the new Law on Higher Education in the Republic of Kosovo, there is a need to review and amend all bylaws, in order to provide an effective environment for the implementation of higher education in Kosovo in accordance with the new legislation. The new law necessitates the amendment and harmonisation of statutes and regulations of all higher education institutions within a certain period of time.

### Performance independent higher education funding

The Law on Higher Education provides for building effective mechanisms for transparent funding that promotes accountability. This funding is carried out on the basis of three-year plans negotiated between higher education institutions and MEST, while reporting shall be done on the basis of agreed indicators. Implementation of performance-based funding formula for higher education institutions must be accompanied by building effective mechanisms for the development and monitoring of the implementation of development plans for public higher education institutions. On the other hand, the provision of their own revenue is an important aspect for the functioning of the funding formula through performance agreement. This requires the development of capacity building mechanisms for the generation of additional funds through involvement in projects and other counselling and development activities that can be profitable for higher education institutions.

### Inefficient international cooperation in higher education

International cooperation and academic mobility are important instruments in facilitating Kosovo's integration into the European Higher Education Area. The main obstacle to international mobility of the academic staff and students remains an insufficient command of English language. It is therefore necessary to provide special learning programmes for foreign languages and study skills. Furthermore, higher education institutions need to establish offices for project development and provision of professional services with the purpose of becoming informed about the application opportunities for EU framework programmes.

## Objective

Upgrading the quality and competitiveness of higher education through the promotion of excellence in teaching, scientific research, artistic creation, innovation, and internationalisation.

Enhancement of quality in higher education institutions is the main priority in this area. Besides adapting study programmes to be in line with labour market requirements, this must be also accompanied by the promotion of scientific research and artistic work and innovation in higher education institutions. Special attention should be paid to the harmonisation and promulgation of the legal framework in higher education, and performance-based higher education funding. In view of the internationalisation of higher education, the priority is to increase academic mobility of academic staff and students, as well as participation in international programmes of higher education and scientific research.

**Expected results:**

7.1. Academic staff - student ratio in HEIs is at least 1:40;

7.2. Mechanisms for professional development of academic staff in HEIs are fully functional

7.3. Mechanisms for quality assurance in higher education are fully functional;

7.4. Advance the infrastructure and technology for teaching, research and scientific as well as artistic work;

7.5. Education Management Information System in Higher Education (HEMIS) is fully functional by 2019;

7.6. Study programmes are in line with labor market requirements and services for career guidance and counselling in HEIs;

7.7. The number of scientific publications in international indexed magazines authored by the academic staff increases by 25% every year;

7.8. Legal framework for higher education is reviewed and completed by 2018;

7.9. Performance-based higher education funding formula starts its implementation by 2020;

7.10. Increased mobility of academic staff and students of HEIs;

7.11. Increased participation in international higher education and scientific research programmes.

## Related issues

Higher education is closely related to pre-university education sub-sector, both in terms of participation, and in terms of quality and content. Thus, diverse participation of students in higher education can be achieved if persons from marginalised groups are included to a satisfactory degree at lower levels of education (Area 1). On the other hand, the quality of pre-university education (Area 3) and content developed at this level (Area 5), greatly affect the success of young people as students in higher education institutions. Developments in vocational education and training (Area 6) affect the provision of adequate study programmes for graduates from these fields. And finally, training of pre-university education teachers is the task of the specialised higher education institutions and must be conducted in accordance with quality teaching requirements (Area 4).

## Possible activities

The following are possible activities to achieve each of the expected results separately, along with their brief description.

**Result 7.1: Academic staff-student ratio in HEIs is at least 1:40**

**7.1.1. Development of new programmes for doctoral studies.**

In order to provide staff for the public institutions of higher education, 10 new doctoral programs are implemented in various fields of study, including interdisciplinary doctoral programmes based on the needs assessment for staff development. To ensure that the staffing needs of public higher education institutions are met, funds will be allocated to support the participation of international professors/mentors in joint doctoral programmes.

**7.1.2. Support students in doctoral studies in international HEIs.**

To meet the staffing needs of public higher education institutions, funds will be allocated to support 100 students (20 each year) in undertaking doctoral studies in strategic fields in the best 500 international universities in these respective fields. In order to further support the equal representation of men and women in doctoral programmes, criteria should be established to ensure that scholarships benefit men and women equally.

**7.1.3. Development of mechanisms for planning student admission in HEIs.**

To ensure quality, HEIs must develop policies for admission of students who take into account their staffing capacity, and enforce mastery of the English language as a criterion for admission to doctoral studies, which should be measured through internationally standardised language tests. These mechanisms should take into account the need to ensure the equal participation of all communities in education and the implementation of related legal framework.

**Result 7.2: Mechanisms for professional development of academic staff in HEIs are fully functional**

**7.2.1. Establishment and functioning of the offices for teaching excellence.**

The intention is to establish new offices for teaching excellence in all HEIs which will provide academic staff with academic development services, and different training programs respective to the new teaching and scientific research methodologies.

**7.2.2. Assessment of the academic staff needs for professional development.**

All HEIs need to identify their professional development needs for academic staff based on the institution's development priorities. Needs assessment is to be carried out through self-assessment tools which should result with the analysis of professional development needs in each higher education institution.

**7.2.3. Development of a professional development plan for academic staff.**

Capacity building plans for the academic staff of HEIs should be based on the needs analysis for capacity building of the academic staff of each institution. The plan may include the development and implementation of various training programmes for the advancement of teaching and mentoring. Academic staff should be provided with policy guidelines on ethical principles and ethical behaviour based on relevant European recommendations.

**7.2.4. Development of monitoring and assessment mechanism for academic staff work.**

There should be special monitoring arrangements for this purpose, which necessitate the development of a monitoring and assessment framework for academic staff work in HEIs.

**Result 7.3: Mechanisms for quality assurance in higher education are fully functional**

**7.3.1. Enhancement and development of the KAA human resources and financial capacities to implement European standards and guidelines for quality assurance in the European Higher Education Area.**

**7.3.2. Enhancement and development of the human resources of Higher Education Department of MEST.**

**7.3.3. Supporting HEIs in implementing quality assurance policies.**

HEIs will be supported in the development and implementation of policies that are related to the drafting and approval of programmes with participation of students and other stakeholders; encouraging students to take an active role in the learning process; the implementation of fair and transparent process of recruitment and development of staff; encouragement of innovation in teaching methods and the use of new technologies; and in the assessment of the effectiveness of procedures for students assessment. Quality assurance mechanisms and regulatory measures should be complemented by a principles-based approach to ethics, transparency and integrity in education.

**7.3.4. Complementing the accreditation with a ranking process of programmes and institutions according to the European Multidimensional Framework.**

**7.3.5. Establishing and making operational the Agency for Standards and Assessments for Regulated Professions.**

**Result 7.4: Advance infrastructure and technology for teaching, research and scientific as well as artistic work**

**7.4.1. Infrastructure needs assessment for teaching and scientific research work.**

All HEIs identify the needs of academic units for improved infrastructure, the need for the advancement of existing laboratories, and the purchase of new equipment for other laboratories.

**7.4.2. Institutional support for the development of scientific-research infrastructure.**

Improve the infrastructure of public higher education institutions for scientific research work by supporting the opening of five new laboratories.

**7.4.3. Development of plans for maintenance and upgrading of laboratory equipment.**

Plans for maintenance of laboratory equipment in public higher education institutions will include drafting of regulations and training of academic and administrative staff for their use in laboratories.

**Result 7.5: Education Management Information System in Higher Education (HEMIS)is fully functional by 2019**

**7.5.1. EMIS development in higher education with the possibility of collecting and processing relevant information on HEI.**

Software development and provision of adequate information technology infrastructure in higher education institutions for using HEMIS.

**7.5.2. Development of guidelines and staff training for data collection and analysis.**

Development of training programs and drafting guidelines for data collection and analysis for higher education institutions' personnel.

**7.5.3. Development of national indicators of higher education.**

**Result 7.6: Study programmes are in line with labour market requirements and services for career guidance and counselling in HEIs**

**7.6.1. Establishment and functioning of industrial councils.**

Industrial councils for relevant areas are mechanisms of HEIs operating at the level of academic units, as forums for cooperation with businesses. These Councils should also be involved in the implementation of activities of the Kosovo Innovation Strategy, which are related to HEIs.

**7.6.2. Encouragement of partnerships with businesses.**

At least 50 initiatives of partnerships between HEIs and public/private enterprises in different sectors of the economy shall be supported for this purpose, including the professional practice component for students.

**7.6.3. Carry out a study on links between higher education programmes and labour market needs, which should serve as a baseline for the plan for profiling public universities based on the development potential of the country and different Kosovo regions.**

**7.6.4. Review of the existing study programs.**

Review of the existing study programmes to reflect labour market requirements. HEIs will establish specialised groups to research and assess labour market requirements according to respective areas. All new study programmes will need to prove their compliance with labour market needs through studies conducted in accordance with the standards set by the KAA, as a legal precondition for their accreditation.

**7.6.5. Support new programmes in applied sciences and professional programs, aligned with labour market requirements.**

Support the development and implementation of at least 10 new professional study programmes in relevant areas in public higher education institutions.

**7.6.6. Provision of professional services for businesses.**

HEIs must develop a catalogue of professional business services. Provision of these services must be governed by the regulations of higher education institutions.

**7.6.7. Establishment of a system for labour market analysis at national, regional and local level.**

The system must collect process and provide data for labour market analysis to forecast skills needs in the economic sectors through the development of a coherent approach. The main focus of this measure is to ensure the establishment of mechanisms for a sectorial skills forecast, based on surveys of employers and employees, to meet the current demand for higher education institutions, both for those who graduate and for participants in the labour market seeking qualifications. This will involve administrative capacity building to use sectorial forecast analyses and to develop effective policies to reduce skills gap. Labour market information collected should include mechanisms to assess women and men's access, participation and representation in the labour market, and potential measures that could be taken to mitigate any discrepancies.

**7.6.8. Establishment of Career Development Centres in HEIs.**

Career Development Centres in HEI must develop and implement programmes for career development and support for students.

**7.6.9. Development of occupational standards in higher education.**

It also includes the development of guidelines for occupational standards in higher education.

**Result 7.7: The number of scientific publications in international indexed magazines authored by the academic staff increases by 25% every year**

**7.7.1. Analysis of research activities by the academic staff.**

Implementation of a baseline study for engagement of academic staff of HEIs in scientific research work, on the basis of the existing capacities and priorities of the National Research Programme.

**7.7.2. Development of action plans for scientific research activities.**

HEIs must develop action plans for implementation of scientific research activity. These plans must be consistent with National Research Programme and must also include the development of frameworks for monitoring their implementation.

**7.7.3 Making Ethics Committees operational in HEIs.**

**7.7.4 Supporting the publication of scientific works in indexed magazines and presentation of the results in international conferences.**

Support academic staff in HEIs in the publication of scientific works in indexed scientific journals, and their participation in international conferences for presenting their scientific research.

**7.7.5 Provision of access to electronic libraries and encouragement for their use.**

Access for academic staff will be provided for this purpose to at least 5 international electronic libraries of academic and scientific resources.

**7.7.6 Establishment of a national scientific researcher registry.**

The registry would serve as a mechanism for the identification and management of scientific research work information for academic staff of HEIs and scientific research institutes.

**Result 7.8: Legal framework for higher education is reviewed and completed by 2018**

**7.8.1.Review and drafting of bylaws in accordance with the new legislation.**

**7.8.2.Harmonisation of statutes and other bylaws of HEI with the new legislation.**

**7.8.3.Development of a legal framework for EMISHE.**

**Result 7.9: Performance-based higher education funding formula starts its implementation by 2020**

**7.9.1. Drafting of bylaw on higher education funding formula.**

**7.9.2. Development of gender sensitive performance indicators in higher education.**

**7.9.3. Drafting strategic plans for HEIs development.**

**7.9.4. Development of framework for monitoring and assessment of performance agreements.**

**7.9.5. Development of special positive measures and training programmes for the enrolment and retention of students to HEI from socially vulnerable categories and under-represented communities.**

Development of special training programmes will be supported for the enrolment of students to HEIs from socially vulnerable categories. Practical examples of such measures include the provision of intensive courses for applicants from communities to prepare them for entry examinations; allowing applicants from communities to take entry exams in their mother tongue; and a policy of reserved university places until equal participation is reached. Equally, student support programmes should be developed to increase retention of students from communities and marginalised groups in higher education, such as intensive language courses to enhance knowledge of the language of instruction or tutoring or mentoring programmes, provision of transportation, and provision of dormitories.

**Result 7.10: Increased mobility of academic staff and students of HEIs**

**7.10.1.Implementation of joint study programmes with international higher education institutions.**

In order to increase the mobility of academic staff and students, development and implementation of 2 joint research programs of public higher education institutions with international higher education institutions will be supported.

**7.10.2.Participation in regional and international academic mobility programmes.**

Within the academic exchange programmes, support will be provided for at least 300 mobility months for academic staff of HEIs in international HEIs and scientific institutes. Additionally, at least 300 mobility months for students in HEIs will be supported.

**Result 7.11: Increased participation in international higher education and scientific research programmes**

**7.11.1. Establishment and continued functioning of institutional mechanisms for project development and coordination.**

Support HEIs for the establishment and continued functioning of offices for project development and coordination, and provision of professional services.

**7.11.2. Capacity building of HEI in project management based on needs assessment.**

Needs assessment is hereby carried out for the academic and administrative staff in public higher education institutions on project management capacity building. Based on the assessment reports, capacity building plans shall be developed based on staff needs for project management. Capacity building plans will include the provision of training programmes for project cycle management for 30% of academic staff of public higher education institutions.

**7.11.3. Support for application to European programmes for higher education and scientific research.**

In order to support HEIs, a fund will be established to support 50 project proposals for applications to European programmes Erasmus+ and Horizon 2020. Support may include all aspects of preparing a project proposal, including building international partnerships.

**7.11.4. Promotion of European higher education and scientific research programmes.**

There will be 50 information sessions for this purpose for academic staff and students related to information on the possibilities, conditions and financial aspects of the application to EU framework programmes.

## Assumptions and risks

Key assumptions to ensure the achievement of the aforementioned objective are:

- Public institutions of higher education are ready to provide doctoral programmes.
- The interest of candidates in doctoral studies.
- Readiness of the business community to cooperate with higher education institutions.
- Interest and commitment of the academic staff from higher education institutions for publishing their scientific work.
- Promulgation of higher education legislation.
- Interest of the academic staff from HEIs to participate in international programmes for higher education and scientific research.

However, factors that remain a challenge for the successful implementation of what is planned are:

- Rejection of accreditation of new doctoral programs at public higher education institutions.
- Lack of capacities for implementation of joint doctoral programmes.
- Lack of readiness of public higher education institutions to recruit doctoral students relying on public higher education institutions for filling in the staffing needs.
- Lack of employment among graduates because of structural economic problems in the public and private sectors in Kosovo.

- Lack of interest from academic staff to pursue capacity building training programmes.
- Lack of capacity from public higher education institutions for their own revenue generation.
- Restrictions on participation in international higher education programmes due to inability to speak English.
- The failure of integration of the University of North Mitrovica in the Kosovo higher education system.

# 13. KESP implementation

## 13.1. Mechanisms for implementation

MEST will set up the Team for KESP Implementation which is led by the Minister (or Deputy Minister on his/her behalf); coordinated by the Secretary General and consisting of directors of major departments in MEST. The main responsibilities of this body are:

- Development of annual implementation plans in accordance with KESP, NDS and European integration agenda;
- Development of annual budget for KESP implementation within the budget limits set by MTEF and relevant budget circulars;
- Analysis of progress in implementing KESP, based on information collected from MEST and other sources;
- Considering and approving additional measures to ensure KESP implementation;
- Defining the need for support from donor programs to ensure KESP implementation.

KESP Implementation Team will cooperate with other ministries, municipalities, development partners and civil society organisations to build effective mechanism for monitoring the KESP implementation. Based on the need, other officials from MEST, local and international experts will be involved in the work of KESP Implementation Team.

## 13.2. Roadmap for implementation

The roadmap which has been developed for KESP 2017-2021 combines elements of “transformation mapping” with a more conventional road mapping approach, and allows for the possibility of enhancing the resulting “map” by including “hyperlinks” in a digital version of the KESP. This approach could be fairly easily adapted to establish a website which would provide essential information on KESP, in the first instance for MEST, MED and school staff. It would also have the potential to serve as a mechanism for communication with key stakeholders (including learners and providers) and for dissemination to the wider public.

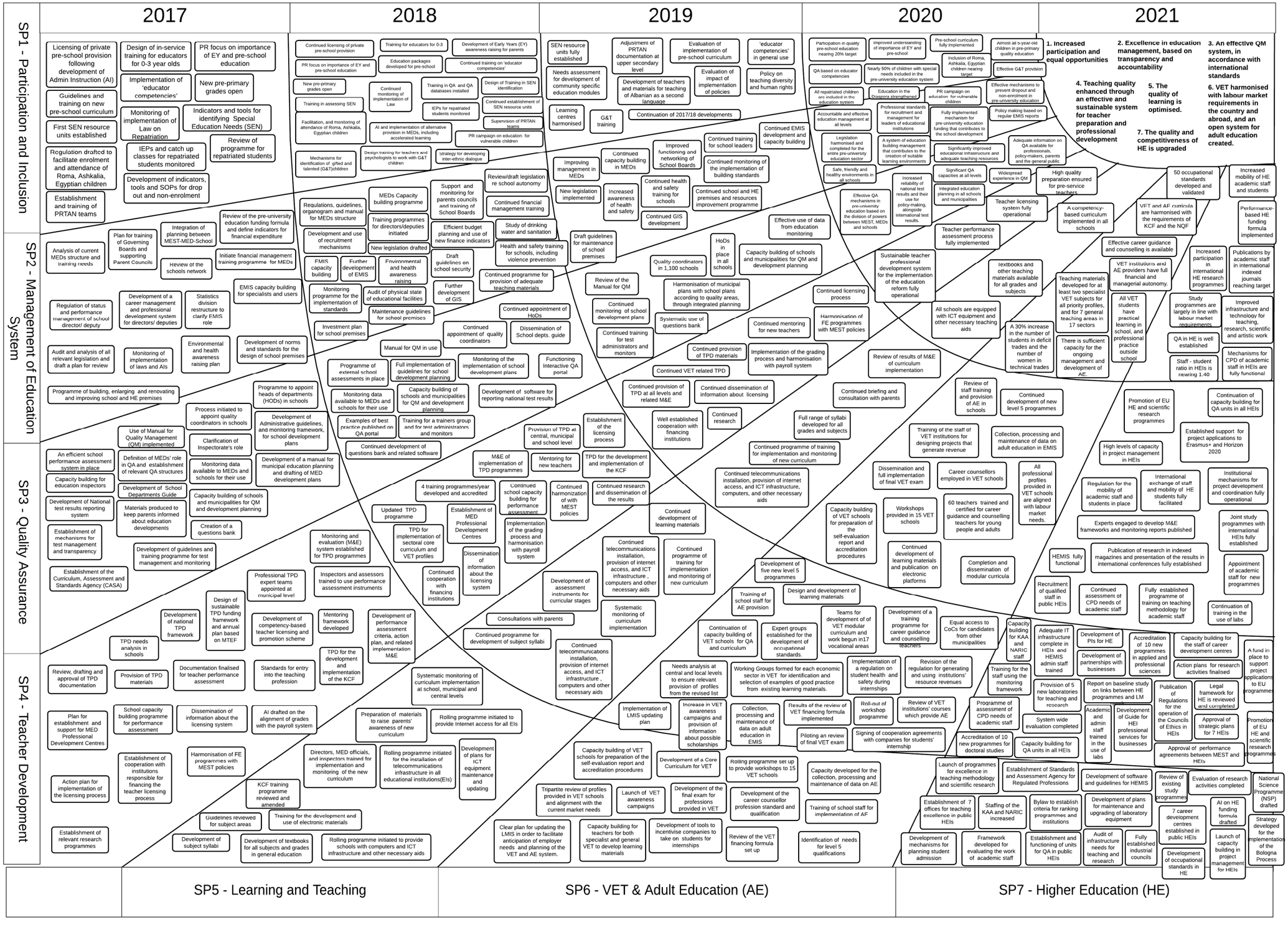
The transformation map has the advantage of allowing the user to consider simultaneously all the different components of any proposed development, in this case the entire KESP 2017-2021, with its seven Strategic objectives, and to visualise the dependencies between the different elements. In this way, it helps the user to understand the context for the development of any given component, and to align activities towards the final common objective. The more long-term elements of a transformation map are effectively an “envisioning” activity, and are often set out in a format – for example, the text is presented in a ‘cloud’ instead of a box - which reflects this.

The map which is included here is only one example. Similar maps could be produced for each Strategic objective within the KESP, with a separate section for each of the intended Results. This would enable the map to contain more detail than is possible in a map of the entire KESP.

Effective transformation mapping is not usually a one–off exercise: it is useful to repeat the exercise as initial ideas are re-thought, the implications of time-lines and connectivities are considered, and stakeholders begin to “take ownership” of the plan. It is also likely that the maps will need revisiting, as external or internal circumstances change.

**Key to abbreviations used in the map:**

- AE – Adult Education
- AI – Administrative Instruction
- EY – Early Years
- FE – Faculty of Education
- G&T – Gifted and Talented
- GIS-Geographic Information System
- HE – Higher Education
- HEI – Institute of HE
- (H)EMIS – (Higher) Education Management Information System
- HoDs- Heads of Departments
- IEP – Individual Education Plan
- KCF – Kosovo Curriculum Framework
- LMIS – Labour Market Information Service
- M&E – Monitoring and Evaluation
- MEDs – Municipal Education Departments
- Pis – Performance Indicators
- PRTDN -- Prevention and Response Teams towards dropout and Non-Registration
- QA – Quality Assurance
- QM – Quality Management
- SEN – Special Education Needs
- TPD – Teacher Professional Development
- VET – Vocational Education and Training


2017
2018
2019
2020
2021
SP1 - Participation and Inclusion
SP2 - Management of Education System
SP3 - Quality Assurance
SP4 - Teacher Development
SP5 - Learning and Teaching
SP6 - VET & Adult Education (AE)
SP7 - Higher Education (HE)
1. Increased participation and equal opportunities
2. Excellence in education management, based on transparency and accountability
3. An effective QM system, in accordance with international standards
4. Teaching quality enhanced through an effective and sustainable system for teacher preparation and professional development
5. The quality of learning is optimised.
6. VET harmonised with labour market requirements in the country and abroad, and an open system for adult education created.
7. The quality and competitiveness of HE is upgraded

# 14. KESP Implementation Budget

The budget calculation for KESP implementation was made with the following objectives:

- To determine the financial framework for KESP implementation;
    - to determine the amount of funds needed to implement the Strategy for the period of 2017-2021;
    - to identify the gap between the financial capacity to meet the needs of education and its real cost according to KESP;
- To estimate the implementation cost during the period of 2017-2021 of new investments in the area of education, as well as capital investments in this area. In addition to this, operating costs deriving from the implementation costs were also estimated, meaning the recurrent expenses incurred as a result of new investments.
- To present the allocation of funding sources and spending in the coming years:
    a. From Kosovo Budget - MEST;
    b. From Kosovo Budget – other spending agencies;
    c. From municipal budgets;
    d. From donations and financial assistance;
    e. From other sources, which includes loans from international institutions.
- To present expenditures by economic categories:
    1. Wages and Salaries
    2. Goods and Services
    3. Subsidies and Transfers
    4. Capital Expenditures

KESP cost estimate is the result of an extensive consultation process within Kosovo institutions, as well as development partners and Civil Society. The country's needs were considered for the purpose of further development of the education system, which arise from the fact that Kosovo still has the youngest population in Europe, despite its gradual demographic "aging". In addition, Kosovo has a high degree of poverty and an urgent need for accelerated economic development, which is also addressed through the development of education. Medium-Term Expenditure Framework 2017-2019 was also considered, as well as the donor plans and their willingness to support education in Kosovo. To this end, it was not possible for the budget to be within current Government financial planning, since this planning was done before KESP 2017-2021 was drafted. Therefore, provision of funds for the implementation of KESP means a review of the Government budget affordability and additional consultations with donors and municipalities, who are believed to be able to provide a part of funding.

The total cost of implementing the KESP during the period of 2017-2021 is estimated at €176.94 million, which is almost three times less than KESP 2011-16 financial estimates that reached the amount of €480.42 million. It does not mean that the needs are not greater than their financial estimates, but MEST was cautious in setting priorities, considering best interests of the country, as well as budgetary constraints. Table 2 provides a summary of the budget for KESP implementation according to priorities and years, which is based on detailed cost calculations for each planned activity available to MEST.

Table 2. KESP budget summary broken down by year

| Priority area | Total spending | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 | Total |
| 1. Participation and Inclusion | € 442,243 | € 565,705 | € 571,950 | € 561,890 | € 550,140 | **€ 2,691,927** |
| 2. Education System Management | € 15,129,350 | € 22,520,540 | € 22,052,225 | € 19,664,695 | € 18,663,950 | **€ 98,030,760** |
| 3. Quality Assurance | € 605,646 | € 526,698 | € 458,640 | € 328,400 | € 314,400 | **€ 2,233,784** |
| 4. Teacher Development | € 1,057,900 | € 1,989,950 | € 2,896,900 | € 3,822,500 | € 4,783,500 | **€ 14,550,750** |
| 5. Teaching and Learning | € 2,970,990 | € 6,240,790 | € 6,614,840 | € 6,961,690 | € 7,640,560 | **€ 30,428,870** |
| 6. Vocational and Adult Education | € 1,699,959 | € 1,567,035 | € 1,238,225 | € 1,143,707 | € 1,124,020 | **€ 6,772,946** |
| 7. Higher Education | € 2,647,960 | € 3,478,880 | € 3,648,980 | € 5,099,120 | € 7,357,560 | **€ 22,232,500** |
| | **€ 24,554,048** | **€ 36,889,598** | **€ 37,481,760** | **€ 37,582,002** | **€ 40,434,130** | **€ 176,941,537** |

The table includes the implementation cost in the amount of € 168,757,777 and the recurrent cost of € 8,193,960. The budget for 2017 is slightly lower and to a large extent based on the funds already available.

Table 3. KESP budget summary according to economic categories

| Priority area | Total spending | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Wages and Salaries | Goods and Services | Subsidies and Transfers | Capital Expenditures | Total |
| 1. Participation and Inclusion | € 864,000 | € 591,927 | € 1,236,000 | | € 2,691,927 |
| 2. Education System Management | € 100,000 | € 4,646,760 | | € 93,284,000 | € 98,030,760 |
| 3. Quality Assurance | € 556,500 | € 1,677,284 | | | € 2,233,784 |
| 4. Teacher Development | € 9,663,000 | € 4,801,350 | | € 86,400 | € 14,550,750 |
| 5. Teaching and Learning | | € 30,428,870 | | | € 30,428,870 |
| 6. Vocational and Adult Education | € 288,000 | € 6,144,146 | € 91,000 | € 260,000 | € 6,783,146 |
| 7. Higher Education | € 9,478,680 | € 5,153,820 | € 7,600,000 | | € 22,232,500 |
| | **€ 20,950,180** | **€ 53,444,157** | **€ 8,927,000** | **€ 93,630,400** | **€ 176,951,737** |

Table 3 indicates that capital investments account for about 53% of the total budget for KESP implementation, which gives priority area 2 a higher budget. Salaries and allowances are higher in the area of teacher development, which envisaged an amount of € 9.6 million for pay rise in teacher licensing process, and the amount of € 9.48 million for engaging staff in higher education. Higher education leads in the Subsidies and Transfers category which forecasts € 7.6 million to support academic mobility and scientific research work. Meanwhile, the largest part of spending in the Goods and Services category is made up of the supply of ICT equipment and teaching aids to schools, in support of the implementation of the New Curriculum Framework (Area 5).

Table 4. Largest expenditures for KESP implementation according to economic categories

**1. Salaries and Allowances**

| Activity code | Expenditure description | Amount |
|---|---|---|
| 4.3.4 | Salary expenditures regarding teacher licensing according to categories | € 9,600,000 |
| 7.1.1 | Engagement of new teachers in public universities, and engagement of professors in doctoral studies | € 7,677,000 |
| | **Subtotal 1** | **€ 17,277,000** |

**2. Goods and services**

| Activity code | Expenditure description | Amount |
|---|---|---|
| 5.3.1 | Installation of wireless infrastructure in 1000 schools | € 5,000,000 |
| 5.3.1 | Cost of providing Internet access for teaching purposes for 5 years | € 1,750,000 |
| 5.3.2 | Provision of 11,000 new computers for students | € 5,720,000 |
| 5.3.2 | Provision of Smart TVs to 9000 classrooms | € 5,175,000 |
| 5.3.6 | Supply schools with minimum package of teaching aids for 330,000 students | € 9,900,000 |
| | **Subtotal 2** | **€ 27,545,000** |

**3. Subsidies and Transfers**

| Activity code | Expenditure description | Amount |
|---|---|---|
| 7.1.2, 7.6.2, 7.7.4, 7.9.5, 7.10.2, 7.11.3 | Different subsidies for higher education | € 7,600,000 |
| | **Subtotal 3** | **€ 7,600,000** |

**4. Capital expenditures**

| Activity code | Expenditure description | Amount |
|---|---|---|
| 2.8.1 | Construction of 25 school buildings (85,000m2) | € 35,880,000 |
| 2.8.2 | Construction of 18 kindergartens | € 11,904,000 |
| 2.8.3 | Refurbish 250 school buildings (100,000m2) | € 20,000,000 |
| 2.8.4 | Provide sports packages to 40 schools | € 1,600,000 |
| 2.8.5 | Purchase of adequate inventory for age groups of selected schools (60 schools x 50,000 Euro) | € 3,000,000 |
| 2.8.6 | Purchase of individuals lockers (30% of schools = 50,000 students x 100 euro) for primary and lower secondary schools | € 5,000,000 |
| 2.8.7 | Construction of three buildings for higher education institutions (3 buildings x 5 million Euros) | € 15,900,000 |
| | **Subtotal 4** | **€ 93,284,000** |
| | **Total** | **€145,706,000** |

Table 4 provides a summary of budget items that represent the largest KESP expenditures reaching an amount of €145.7 million or 82% of the estimated cost. It is this overview specifically that may serve as a determination of the spending priorities and possible re-planning of activities. Table 5 presents the structure of expenditures by priority areas and funding source, while table 6 presents the desired cash flow over the years from different funding sources.

Table 5. Expenditure structure according to priority areas and funding sources

| Priority area | Total spending | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | KB-MEST | Municipal budget | KB-Other agencies | Donors | Other | Total |
| 1. Participation and Inclusion | € 715,896 | € 570,000 | € 6,950 | € 1,399,081 | € 0 | **€ 2,691,927** |
| 2. Education System Management | € 88,441,960 | € 1,673,600 | € 0 | € 6,746,150 | € 1,169,050 | **€ 98,030,760** |
| 3. Quality Assurance | € 881,324 | € 773,760 | € 0 | € 161,500 | € 417,200 | **€ 2,233,784** |
| 4. Teacher Development | € 11,134,000 | € 391,700 | € 26,900 | € 2,460,400 | € 537,750 | **€ 14,550,750** |
| 5. Teaching and Learning | € 6,087,870 | € 23,870,000 | € 0 | € 471,000 | € 0 | **€ 30,428,870** |
| 6. Vocational and Adult Education | € 3,967,180 | € 639,100 | € 41,250 | € 1,933,116 | € 192,300 | **€ 6,772,946** |
| 7. Higher Education | € 7,636,020 | € 0 | € 10,488,040 | € 4,108,440 | € 0 | **€ 22,232,500** |
| | **€ 118,864,250** | **€ 27,918,160** | **€ 10,563,140** | **€ 17,279,687** | **€ 2,316,300** | **€ 176,941,537** |

The table shows that about 80% of the funds needed to implement KESP derive from Kosovo or municipal budgets.

Table 6. Desired cash flow over years and funding sources

| Funding sources | Total spending | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 | Total |
| KB-MEST | € 17,095,146 | € 24,186,664 | € 25,217,210 | € 26,056,090 | € 26,309,140 | **€ 118,864,250** |
| Municipal budget | € 2,675,165 | € 5,729,645 | € 6,194,745 | € 6,442,560 | € 6,876,045 | **€ 27,918,160** |
| KB-Other agencies | € 257,570 | € 571,890 | € 888,780 | € 3,286,760 | € 5,558,140 | **€ 10,563,140** |
| Donors | € 3,544,257 | € 5,814,489 | € 4,752,665 | € 1,622,832 | € 1,545,445 | **€ 17,279,687** |
| Other | € 981,910 | € 586,910 | € 428,360 | € 173,760 | € 145,360 | **€ 2,316,300** |
| | **€ 24,554,048** | **€ 36,889,598** | **€ 37,481,760** | **€ 37,582,002** | **€ 40,434,130** | **€ 176,941,537** |

The table shows a gradual increase in expenditures starting from 2018, while expenditures for 2017 are significantly lower due to the alignment of the action plan with the budget planning cycle.

To determine the gap between the required and the available funds, we have relied on the MTEF 2017-2019, but also on information collected from other sources. Table 7 provides a projection of revenues that can be used for KESP implementation, which can be supplemented with additional information.

Table 7. Revenue assessment for KESP implementation

| Revenue category | Total spending | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 | Total |
| Capital expenditures - KB | € 10,145,000 | € 11,090,000 | € 10,690,000 | € 10,690,000 | € 10,690,000 | **€ 53,305,000** |
| Capital expenditures - EU | € 640,000 | € 2,560,000 | € 1,920,000 | € 0 | € 0 | **€ 5,120,000** |
| World Bank Loan | € 2,200,000 | € 2,000,000 | € 2,861,036 | € 0 | € 0 | **€ 7,061,036** |
| Teacher Training - KB | € 705,291 | € 705,291 | € 705,291 | € 705,291 | € 705,291 | **€ 3,526,455** |
| Curriculum development - KB | € 200,000 | € 200,000 | € 200,000 | € 200,000 | € 200,000 | **€ 1,000,000** |
| Revenue from different donors (estimate) | € 3,544,257 | € 5,814,489 | € 4,752,665 | € 1,622,832 | € 1,545,445 | **€ 17,279,687** |
| | **€ 17,434,548** | **€ 22,369,780** | **€ 21,128,992** | **€ 13,218,123** | **€ 13,140,736** | **€ 87,292,178** |

By comparing the expenditures with revenues, we can see that there is a gap of € 89.6 million for a 5-year period, funds that can be obtained from internal sources and donors if requirements are specified clearly and all implementation activities in the field of education are based on KESP.