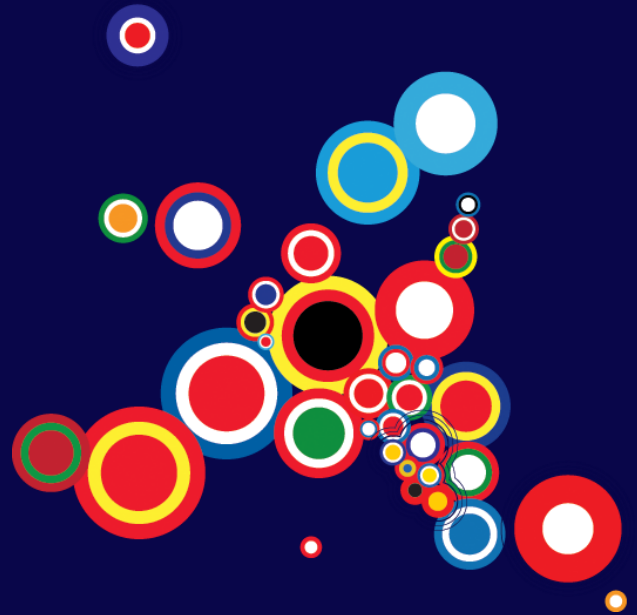




INSTRUMENT FOR PRE-ACCESSION ASSISTANCE (IPA II) 2014-2020

Kosovo*

Support to Education in Kosovo



Action summary

This action mainly aims the enrolment and inclusion of children in pre-school education and at enhancing the quality of pre-school and primary education according to the new Kosovo Education Strategic Plan 2017-2021, with a special focus on children belonging to minority and marginalised / vulnerable communities as well as on girls in rural areas.

Moreover, the proposed Action seeks to establish a new generation of civil servants who will act as initiators of the urgent reforms in Public Administration Sector and in line with the requirements stemming from the recently signed SAA

*This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244/1999 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence

Action Identification	
Action Programme Title	Action Programme for Kosovo for the Year 2016 – Part I
Action Title	Support to Education in Kosovo
Action ID	IPA 2016 /039 745/ 05 / Kosovo / Education
Sector Information	
IPA II Sector	7. Education, employment and social policies
DAC Sector	11110
Budget	
Total cost	EUR 11 million
EU contribution	EUR 9 million
Budget line(s)	22.02.01.02
Management and Implementation	
Management mode	Direct management
<i>Direct management:</i> EU Delegation	European Union Office in Kosovo for Activity 1. and 2. British Council for Activity 3.
Implementation responsibilities	European Union Office in Kosovo
Location	
Zone benefiting from the action	Kosovo
Specific implementation area(s)	Kosovo
Timeline	
Final date for concluding Financing Agreement(s) with IPA II beneficiary	31 December 2017
Final date for concluding delegation agreements under indirect management	N/A
Final date for concluding procurement and grant contracts	3 years following the date of conclusion of the Financing Agreement, with the exception of cases listed under Article 189(2) of the Financial Regulation
Final date for operational implementation	6 years following the conclusion of the Financing Agreement
Final date for implementing the Financing Agreement (date by which this programme should be de-committed and closed)	12 years following the conclusion of the Financing Agreement

Policy objectives / Markers (DAC form)			
General policy objective	Not targeted	Significant objective	Main objective
Participation development/good governance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	x
Aid to environment	x	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gender equality (including Women In Development)	<input type="checkbox"/>	x	<input type="checkbox"/>
Trade Development	x	<input type="checkbox"/>	x
Reproductive, Maternal, New born and child health	x	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
RIO Convention markers	Not targeted	Significant objective	Main objective
Biological diversity	x	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Combat desertification	x	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Climate change mitigation	x	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Climate change adaptation	x	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

1. RATIONALE

PROBLEM AND STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS

Since 2011, the Kosovo education system has been undergoing a comprehensive reform based on the Kosovo Education Strategy 2011-2016 which is currently being reviewed in view of its extension until 2021. The review shows that only limited progress has been achieved so far and shortcomings persist with regard to the quality of both learning and teaching processes.

Over the past years a new Kosovo Curriculum Framework (KCF) has been developed with EU support. It rests on the concept of inclusive education promoting modern learning and teaching methods. In the years to come, the KCF shall be implemented in schools across Kosovo. In particular, textbooks and teaching material shall be adapted and teachers trained, in close cooperation with Municipal Education Directorates (MED), to adopt the new methods.

Also, the currently low numbers of kids in pre-school institutions shall be increased by providing adequate infrastructure paying special attention to those from minority groups and/or with special needs.

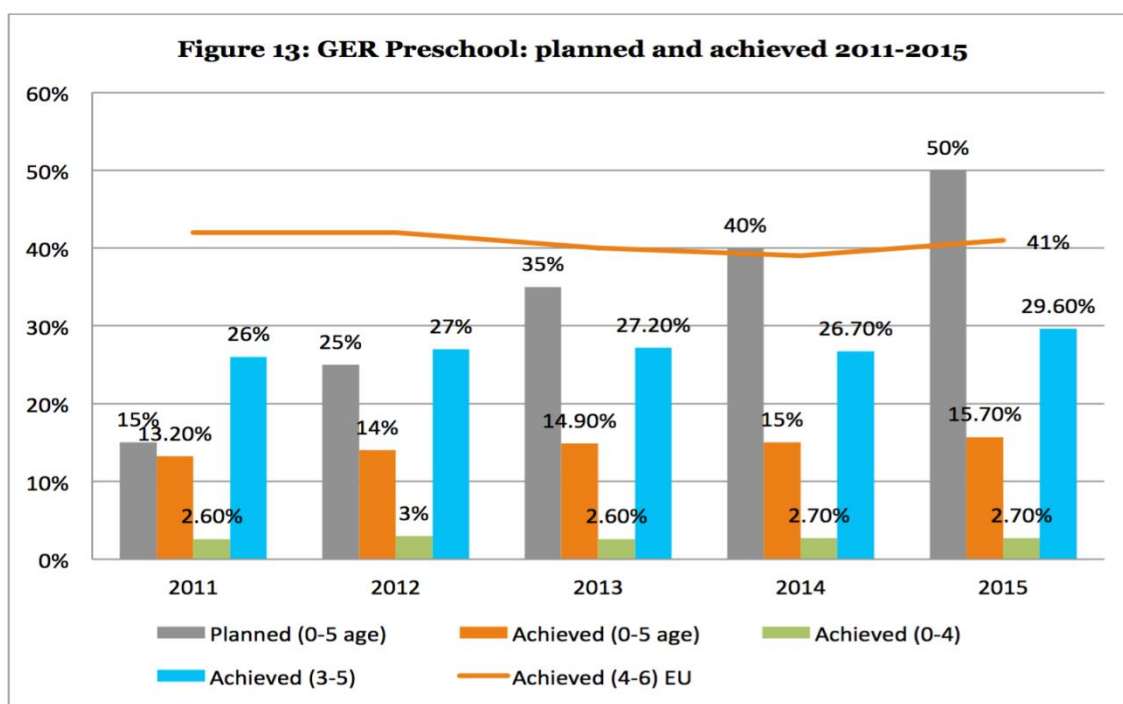
Building on the success of the previous Young Cell Scheme (YCS), this action foresees the continuation of this project with a view to further strengthening the Kosovo civil service especially in the perspective of the upcoming PAR and challenges related to the implementation of SAA.

Pre-School Education

The first target of the KESP sub-programme – Preschool Education was as follows: *By 2016, all children regardless of age, gender and ethnicity are included in pre-primary education.* In order to contribute to the achievement of this goal, the initial plan foresaw the initiation of several activities, including the provision of support for the establishment of new pre-primary classes to improve the inclusion, the organisation of awareness campaigns for parents on the possibility to include children from both the majority as well as the minority communities in pre-primary education and development of teaching and learning tools.

From statistical indicators on the inclusion in pre-primary education (aged 5-6) analysis, it results that this target is achieved. The targets set on the inclusion rate in pre-primary education were not based on statistical data, because the target of 70% inclusion by 2016 was achieved at the beginning of Kosovo Education Strategic Plan (KESP) implementation. Specified shortcomings could have resulted as a consequence of the lack of a clear picture in relation to the number of population of this age group and shortcomings in collecting and processing data from the field. Law on Pre-University Education (2012) classifies the preschool education as every form of structured organisation of preschool education for 0-5 age groups.

Data on the numerical inclusion of children in public preschool education remain, surprisingly, the same since 2004 (around 5,500 children). Difficulties in registration of data can come also from the failure to report data by private institutions. Parties interviewed within the thematic assessment emphasized that a number of private institutions operate without license and in several cases, Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MEST) has no proactive approach in entering of these data.



As can be seen in the graph, the inclusion rate in preschool education (aged 0-5) is too low and no significant change has been made during the implementation of the plan. The only progress that can be outlined at this stage is the success achieved in inclusion of 5 year-old children within the pre-primary education. However, the opening of community-based centres supported by development partners are encouraging. There is little progress in the construction of new facilities and adding the number of rooms in existing kindergartens. Four existing facilities have been renovated for the purpose of increasing the space in Prishtina. During the reporting stage, only one public preschool institution has been constructed in Shtime and two other public-private preschool institutions in Prishtina, Prizren, Gjakova and Mitrovica. There is a wide range of small and medium sized municipalities where the preschool education is not organised at all, such as Malisheva, Dragash, Novoberda, Deçan, Hani i Elezit, Mamusha, Juniku, Leposaviç, Zubin Potok and Shtrepce. The kindergarten construction plans will also have to cover the needs of most marginalized and vulnerable communities.

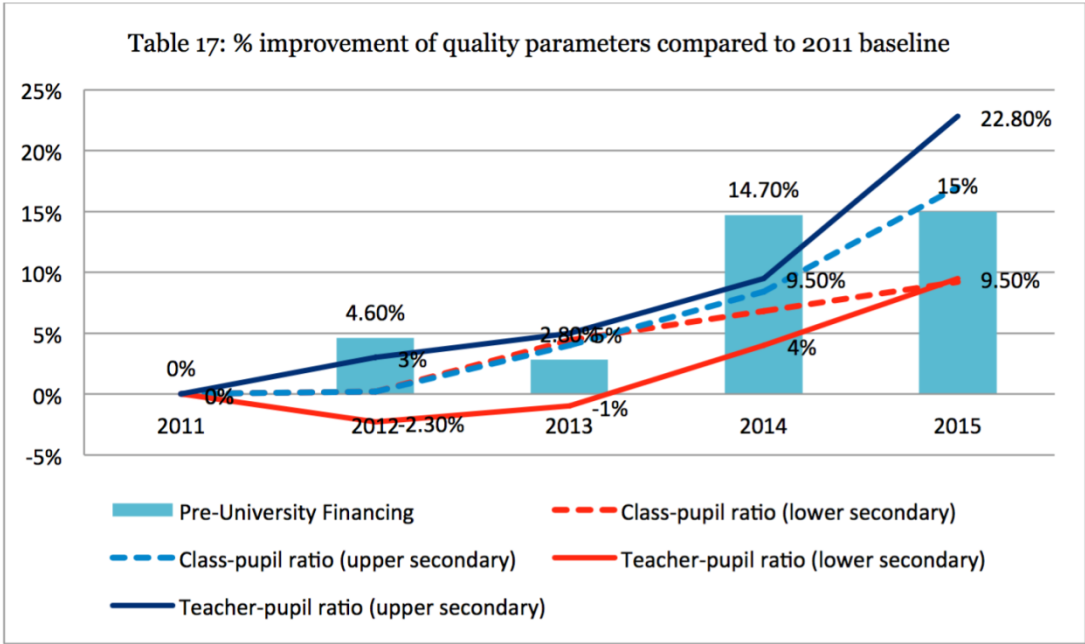
The numerical inclusion of children under 5 remained almost the same during the last decade. The changes in the rate of inclusion are more attributed to the demographical changes and the decrease of the number of basic population of these age groups. Reported data include only official data within Education Management of Information Systems (EMIS) (2015), even though the allegations that data do not include a certain number of children in private institutions and northern municipalities seem to be partly valid. The collection and registration of data and infrastructure investments and in human resources remain the main challenges to be addressed during the next planning cycle.

Table 6: Key quality parameters in Preschool Education 2011-2015

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Number of educators (0-5)	1300	1320	1,357	1364	1364
Number of female educators	1300	1319	1,356	1363	1363
Pupil - teacher ratio	19.6	19.3	19.1	18.6	18.6
Pedagogue – child ratio	1500	1500	1500	1500	1500

Source: EMIS 2015, MEST

Concerning primary education, limited progress has been made in achieving improvement with regard to student-teacher ratio, as well as class-student ratio (see graph). The Kosovo basic Education Programme and the EU Twinning Project to Support the implementation of KESP (including its predecessor, Kosovo EU Education SWAp Project) were key instruments in improving quality education in this sub-sector. However, BEPs activities were concluded in early 2016, while there are concrete attempts by MEST to ensure sustainability of the project's deliverables by ensuring finances for several training activities through the Teacher Professional Development Centers (TPDC). A continuation of donor support for these centres is crucial for their effective operation, especially by ensuring that all 25 centres remain operational and within the operational plans of Municipal Education Directorates.



Teacher Professional Development

Despite the progress achieved, the implementation rate of KESP 2011-2016, TPD has underperformed compared with targets and initial activities. The greatest progress is observed in the drafting and updating of legislation for teachers' professional development and harmonisation of the pre-service qualification programmes with Curriculum Framework. Key elements of this sub-programme are covered by administrative instructions but lack the sustainable mechanisms for implementation of the legislation. Significant progress is noted in advancing the qualifications of teachers. The Inclusion Roadmap which has been already rolled out by the current existing project will serve as a basis to address issues of inclusion in teachers training programmes.

For the purpose of providing the opportunity to improve teacher qualification, MEST has supported the establishment of four specialised higher education programmes: Preschool Education (BA), Early Childhood Education (BA) in the University of Prishtina, Preschool Education (BA) in the University of Peja, Preschool Education (BA) in the University of Mitrovica and Preschool Education (BA) in the University of Gjakova. There are no accurate data concerning improvements in the qualifications of educators in preschool education in EMIS. However, based on Kosovo Agency of Statistics (KAS) data (2010-2015), the structure of qualifications in preschool education has marked a significant improvement during the plan implementation cycle.

OUTLINE OF IPA II ASSISTANCE

Priority areas to be addressed by the proposed Action are enhanced access to pre-school education, higher quality in education, and increased inclusion in education with a special focus on children belonging to minority and marginalised/ vulnerable communities as well as on girls in rural areas. Concrete activities that are foreseen in this Action will focus on improving quality in education by providing school-based and in

line with the new curricula teacher training thereby securing a learning-friendly environment with a focus on pre-school and primary education levels. Moreover, the proposed Action seeks to establish a new generation of civil servants who will act as initiators of the urgently reforms in Public Administration Sector and in line with the requirements stemming from the recently signed SAA.

The implementation of the proposed Action will produce immediate and tangible results, as well as long-term intended impact on the target audiences and final beneficiaries. As a direct consequence of the implementation of the Action, the following results will be achieved:

Result 1: Support improvement of education infrastructure with particular emphasis on kindergartens and other pre-school facilities;

Result 2: Improved Capacity building for teachers' professional Development. This activity includes Teacher Professional Development (TPD), Training Curriculum, and Databases;

Result 3. Young Cells Scheme, Selected candidates chosen based on the professional administrative capacity gaps of the Kosovo public sector, complete postgraduate degrees in EU universities in relevant technical fields and are subsequently employed by the Kosovo government.

RELEVANCE WITH THE IPA II STRATEGY PAPER AND OTHER KEY REFERENCES

This proposed Action is also fully aligned with the Indicative Strategy Paper for Kosovo, section Education, Employment and Social Policies which clearly stipulates that *"EU targeted policies aimed to raise the employability and social inclusion among particularly vulnerable groups"*. It is also aligned with the ERP Recommendation 7, which calls to: *"Improve the quality of education by continuing to roll out teacher licensing and training; improve access to pre-primary and primary school education"*. Moreover, it is also linked to the Enlargement Strategy which recognizes the need for Kosovo to further improve the service delivery by strengthening the civil service, since its professionalism and the presence of a certain degree of political interference need still to be address.

Regarding human capital, The Draft National Development Strategy 2017-2021 identifies increased inclusion of children in pre-school institutions as a tool that will *"allow better success at higher levels of education"*. It also targets improving quality of teaching in the primary and secondary education" as a field of immediate intervention since the latter is a pre-requisite for better success of the education system". Furthermore, quality in education will certainly be enhanced through the *"strengthened mechanisms of accountability and certification in the education system"*.

Efficient and effective public administration is crucial to fulfil the Copenhagen Criteria and has a key role to play in improving governance through more stable institutions and the implementation of the PAR agenda. Support to public administration and governance will therefore continue to be a priority as far as the IPA II is concerned.

Furthermore, with regard to SAA Obligations, the Indicative Strategy Paper for Kosovo acknowledges the need in the foreseeable future for Kosovo to build the necessary capacities and secure the resources to be able to address the key challenges arising from the approximation to the EU acquis, which are essential for all concerned ministries and other relevant institutions. Therefore, it is imperative that Kosovo continues reforms of the administration through ensuring professional recruitment of the civil servants. Moreover, it is also linked to the Enlargement Strategy which recognizes the need for Kosovo to further improve the service delivery by strengthening the civil service, since its professionalism and the presence of a certain degree of political interference still need to be addressed.

The 2015 European Commission Progress Report indicates that the rates of school enrolment are comparable with countries in the region, with the exception of access to pre-school education or early childhood education. Only approximately 3.7 % of children receive early childhood development services (age 0-5). At the same time, approximately 74% of children aged 5-6 attend pre-primary education.

LESSONS LEARNED AND LINK TO PREVIOUS FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

In terms of Education, sector support programmes financed by multilateral and bilateral donors in Kosovo, some important lessons need to be put forward. While there has been a significant amount of funding available for project and programme implementation, their effectiveness and sustainability was not brought up to scale. This means that the beneficiary needs to put more emphasis on the sustainability of actions, after they have been concluded pilot-wise. The key to achieve the desired impact is the capacity of Kosovo institutions to exercise ownership over project deliverables. To do this, there has to be a serious willingness for reform (especially in public administration) and increased capacity of the relevant institutions which will ensure both project ownership and sustainability. In the future, ownership could be improved by including a commitment of the beneficiaries to maintain the project results after the project has finished, especially in cases where policy advice is the main outcome and where institutional and staff costs are in question. In terms of administrative capacity, proper allocation of human resources according to needs and IPA programme activities as well as stronger involvement of all departments concerned within the Ministries as regards preparation of fiches and tender documentation should be ensured.

Local non-governmental sector provide important (but limited) capacities particularly to teacher training and school management and is able to draw on regional expertise for specific knowledge and skills deficient locally. In turn, this lowers the implementation costs significantly, hence contributing to greater aid efficiency. In parallel to the greater role given to local actors, the EU and other donor organisations should also focus on on-going capacity development of local consulting market as key to effective aid absorption in the later stages of Kosovo's European path, when the inflow of investments by the EU Commission is expected to increase multi-fold. Another important dimension to be considered is the capacities of education institutions to absorb the technical assistance and support on one hand, while taking leadership and ownership of processes on the other. The beneficiary's sense of ownership is also key to the success of the project. Therefore, a close and regular involvement of the beneficiary from the very early stages of the project and throughout the entire project cycle is of utmost importance.

As regards the Young Cell Scheme, there is a need to properly regulate the employment of the graduates from the programme, by establishing procedures defined by the new Law on Civil Service. MEI and MPA have agreed on to include an article which stipulates: "The Government of Kosovo based on paragraph 1 of Article 6 of the Law on specific areas deficient in the civil service may sign agreements with different organizations or countries with the aim of advancing the professional civil service through scholarship schemes. Beneficiaries of scholarships can be civil servants and all other persons who fulfil the conditions required by the scheme. Civil Service institutions will take responsibility to accommodate individuals from paragraph 2 of this Article the civil service, in accordance with the law and respecting the principles of civil service defined in law. For the implementation of this Article ministry responsible for public administration will issue a bylaw." In addition, the above activities will build on existing projects, such as the currently running twinning project on education, the work of which needs to be taken further: first priority concerns the implementation of the new Kosovo Curriculum Framework (KCF) in the classrooms. Relevant teacher trainings and textbooks are a pre-requisite for the above activity to take place. The KCF roll-out has already started in pilot schools in Kosovo by the current Twinning project (EU-Finland-Austria). The same project has trained a considerable number of teachers (over 3000), while it has produced the Inclusion Roadmap and ICT Roadmap. Both have been approved by the Government of Kosovo (GoK) and both will serve as a basis for formulating the respective teacher trainings.

Continuation of the Young Cell post-graduate scholarship scheme (11th round) in the next school year (2017/18) has been specifically requested by GoK in light of the need for additional expertise in Kosovo in the fields related to implementation of obligations arising from the SAA, and because of the scheme's contribution to the public administration reform processes in Kosovo and to the creation of an apolitical, professional and efficient body of civil servants. Additional expertise is particularly required in the field of legal approximation and economic matters. In order to ensure that the awarded YSC grantees are integrated into Kosovo's public administration immediately upon return (and are offered at least a 3-year employment contract by GoK), the Ministry of Public Administration has been involved in the programme as a member of the project steering committee. The grantees are furthermore obliged to finish a short-term internship in Kosovo's public administration prior to their deployment to Master studies in order to facilitate their

integration in the public sector upon return, and increase awareness among the beneficiary institutions of the program and of potential future employees. In the ongoing 10th round of the project, a pilot scheme for existing civil servants was introduced, which proved to be a welcoming addition to the programme, and should be continued. Representatives of the donor community have been regularly informed of the progress in the YCS project, and contributed by conveying the information about the YCS program to relevant universities in their respective EU MS. Such cooperation is planned to be maintained in the future in order to ensure as wide as possible list of quality Master programmes in the field of law, economics and public administration to which the awarded grantees can apply.

2. INTERVENTION LOGIC

LOGICAL FRAMEWORK MATRIX

OVERALL OBJECTIVE	OBJECTIVELY VERIFIABLE INDICATORS (*)	SOURCES OF VERIFICATION	
<p>To improve quality of Education in Kosovo at all levels, with special emphasis on Pre-school education, inclusion of children belonging to minority communities and reforming the Civil Service.</p>	<p>Employment rate 15 to 64 years, total % Progress made towards meeting Copenhagen Criteria</p>	<p>Eurostat EC Kosovo report.</p>	
SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE	OBJECTIVELY VERIFIABLE INDICATORS (*)	SOURCES OF VERIFICATION	ASSUMPTIONS
<p>To increase the number of children included in pre-school education (0-5) enhance capacity building for Teacher Training and resources; and to generate a core group of civil servants in fields identified as weak areas for Kosovo, who will initiate reforms necessary for SAA implementation.</p>	<p>SO 1.1 Number of kindergartens built SO 1.2 Number of children - including children belonging to minority communities/ vulnerable groups- aged 0-5 enrolled in pre-school education SO 2.1 Number of Pre-school Educators and Primary Education teachers trained SO 3.1 Number of grantees that completed their postgraduate degrees in EU universities</p>	<p><u>EMIS</u> <u>PISA</u> <u>KAS</u> <u>MEST annual reports</u> <u>Annual budgets</u> European Commission Progress Report. Administrative reform policy studies. Progress reports on related Projects to strengthen the Kosovo administration.</p>	<p>Commitment on the part of the Kosovo government to reform the public administration. Improved communication and exchanges of information between and within governmental bodies.</p>

RESULTS	OBJECTIVELY VERIFIABLE INDICATORS (*)	SOURCES OF VERIFICATION	ASSUMPTIONS
<p>Result 1: Increased participation in Pre-school education from all communities, with special emphasis on vulnerable groups, such as rural areas and minorities to the EU average participation in pre-school education;</p> <p>Result 2: Increased number of teachers that receive training to improve their performance; improved achievement from pupils in reading/writing and Math</p> <p>Result 3: Selected candidates chosen based on the professional administrative capacity gaps of the Kosovo civil service, complete postgraduate degrees in EU universities in relevant technical fields and are subsequently employed in the civil service.</p>	<p>R1: Number of children (including children belonging to minority communities/ vulnerable groups) supported to have enhanced access to kindergartens;</p> <p>R 2: Number of training events (per thematic areas) conducted and adapted in order to achieve higher quality in education and a higher degree of inclusion in education (with special emphasis to minority community members/vulnerable groups);</p> <p>R3. Number of YCS graduates employed.</p>	<p><u>EMIS</u> <u>PISA</u> <u>KAS</u> <u>MEST annual reports</u></p> <p>Students' diplomas. Employment contracts. Budget allocation for employment of students upon return. Government strategy papers and policy documents. Contractors' reports.</p>	<p>Interest of EU universities in being involved in the selection process; R.1: Municipalities, in which kindergartens will be constructed, are willing and able to allocate sufficient resources to ensure maintenance and sustainability of community projects; concerned municipalities allocate land, and provide technical documentation, permits as well as access to proper infrastructure. Support from local and central authorities.</p> <p>R.2: Key stakeholders from both central and local levels of governance are sufficiently involved in the needs assessment to ensure accuracy in the provided trainings and commitment.</p> <p>R.3: Candidates will not withdraw after selection and coordination between the MEI and all line institutions is functional;</p> <p>Non-resignation from the civil service; Opportunities to absorb YCS open in the different departments of Kosovo civil service;</p> <p>Full commitment of all stakeholders and beneficiaries during implementation of the project; the government takes into account lessons learned from past experience in addressing the problems</p>

DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITIES

Result 1: Participation in Pre-school education from all communities, with special emphasis on vulnerable groups, such as rural areas and minorities to the EU average participation in pre-school education increased.

- **Activity 1. Support improvement of education infrastructure:** this activity includes assessment analysis for /and subsidizing the building of education infrastructure such as pre-primary, and all municipal public infrastructure that contributes to educational development.

Result 2: Number of teachers who receive training to improve their performance increased; achievement from pupils in reading/writing and Math improved.

- **Activity 2: Improved Teacher professional Development:** in general, this activity aims to establish an objective and adequate activities in relation to the development of pre-service teacher, an objective on the development of in-service teachers including mentoring, an objective with regard to working conditions and recruitment, an objective about quality management on teaching including student-teacher relationship, normative and evaluation of the performance, an objective with regard to equal opportunities (gender, ethnicity and age) and one concerning the management system of human resource development on teaching (policy development, external evaluation, data collection and assessment of needs).

Result 3: Number of selected candidates chosen based on the professional administrative capacity gaps of the Kosovo civil service, which complete postgraduate degrees in EU universities in relevant fields and are subsequently employed in the civil service.

- **Activity 3: Young Cell Scheme:** This activity includes the selection of up to 50 candidates per IPA programming year for postgraduate studies in specific identified-areas of the civil service that need strengthening; organisation of information and communication campaign; organization of language courses; placement of students in EU universities, internships and arrangement of employment contracts before students' departure; supervision of students during their studies and support during their employment; systematic incorporation of YCS into governmental institutions at local or central level; development of concise contracts between Kosovo and YCS before they depart to universities; logistical support to Alumni to organize activities that will have an impact on reforming policy issues in Kosovo; support alumni strategic developments; continuous support to the YCS Alumni Association in advisory capacity with the aim of strengthening their organizational capacities.

RISKS

Overall, absorption capacities of some institutions may be limited. To provide training for the implementation of the new Curriculum Framework, Kosovo teachers will be faced with significant challenges to implement novelties brought by the New Kosovo Curriculum Framework. Another risk is also MEST's inability to ensure sustainable budget for teacher training and promotion. Ensuring a long-term and predictable teacher training budget, MEST will need a system of regular salary incentives for the evaluation and promotion of teachers as a part of licensing process. Improve the teacher training information management system at MEST level. Teacher training information management is needed in order to (i) track the teachers progress towards meeting licensing requirements, (ii) producing policy development information related to decisions on teacher training provision, and (iii) understand individual teacher profiles and identifies priority professional development needs. Another risk could be considered to be the system's inability to ensure subject specific training, as well as focus on the provision of subject specific related teacher training. As regards the pre-school infrastructure related projects, the concerned municipalities, where kindergartens will be constructed, there is a need to guarantee the continuous support and commitment of action activities, particularly land allocation on behalf of the concerned Municipalities.

Risks related to Activity 3: Young Cell Scheme:

- The government does not offer employment opportunities for the scholars.
- Most of YCS returnees seem to be highly committed to their work and fulfil their contractual commitments after the end of their scholarships and return to work for the Kosovo civil service. However, they seem to be very dissatisfied and de-motivated with low salaries and the non-settlement of their contractual status in a longer term perspective.
- The government will not be able to offer a competitive career for scholars due to lack of funds or leaving them in uncertainty with short-term contracts.
- There is a high rate of fluctuation in the civil service and the scholars can easily convert their knowledge for the private sector.
- In order to mitigate this possible risks government has decided that some of the grantees will be selected from within the civil service. Furthermore the employment of the individuals outside of the civil service benefiting from the scheme will be according to the law on civil service.

CONDITIONS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Conditions for the implementation of the action have been met. MEST, MEST, in line with its strategic KESP goal to bring the levels of enrolment in Pre-school at the EU standards, has already commenced constructing kindergartens and has requested the EU office to support the construction of new kindergartens where these are most needed. MEST will co-finance this activity. At the same time, MEST will secure the provision of financial support in order to ensure the sustainability of the newly-funded pre-school institutions, after they have been operationalized. Similarly, MEST will do so for the new kindergartens that will be built with the financial support of the EU.

MEST, through various projects (among which the Twinning Project funded by the EU, the Basic Education Programme by USAID, which was recently completed etc.) provides sufficient financial support to fulfil its commitment to TPD as outlined in KESP, in order to achieve sufficient professional development support for at least 80% of teachers by the end of 2019.

The Ministry of European Integration will secure a commitment to include in the fiscal year 2017 0.5 million EUR which will be considered as co-financing for the first lot of Young Cell Scheme under this action programme, and 0.5 million EUR for the fiscal year 2018 for the second lot. The value of the EU funds for each lot will be 1.5 million EUR.

3. IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

MEST is responsible for drafting and implementing education and research policy in Kosovo. The leading institution/main beneficiary of the Action is Ministry of Education and other institutions involved: Employment Agency; Employment Offices; Vocational Training Centres; Ministry of Trade and Industry, Ministry of Finance; Municipalities of Kosovo.

MEI is in charge of coordinating the implementation of the Young Cell Scheme from the side of the government. The MEI has the responsibility to support and follow the graduates in their employment process as well as progress in the respective ministries. MEI was put in charge of coordination of YCS due to its capacity as coordinator of EU assistance to Kosovo. For this purpose MEI has appointed one official in charge of coordination of the YCS.

METHOD(S) AND TYPE(S) OF FINANCING

With regards to Activity 1: support improvement of education infrastructure with particular emphasis on kindergartens and other pre-school facilities: geographically, this activity will tackle Kosovo's major centres, namely in sixteen Municipalities of Kosovo. The suggested contract modality is **Works contract**.

With regards to Activity 2: the EU contribution will represent EUR 1 million (The activity aims at strengthening the existing mechanism of teachers' professional development and at enhancing practical trainings (pre-service/in-service) for subject teachers as well as teacher induction and mentoring. Improvement of performance assessment and provide for the grounds of teachers' promotion within the existing licensing scheme on the basis of equal opportunities. Teachers' training will be developed according to the needs stemming from the new curricula. Proper management of human resources on teaching shall also be addressed through this activity. The suggested contract modality is a **Service contract**.

With regards to Activity 3: the EU contribution will represent EUR 3 million in total, divided into **two lots** of EUR 1.5 million. MEI will secure an additional funding for **scholarships** in the total value of EUR 1 million (EUR 0.5 million EUR for each fiscal years 2017 and 2018 respectively). The first lot will follow the IPA 2014 Young Cell round, with the aim to ensure that the selected candidates will start their studies in the academic year 2017-2018, and the second lot will be tendered to ensure that the selected candidates will start their studies in the academic year 2018-2019. This activity is to be implemented through a **Direct Grant award to the British Council (BC)** as the best placed entity to implement the project due to its considerable administrative and technical expertise and capacities in running scholarships schemes. BC has acted as a longstanding partner of the Ministry of European Integration (MEI) and the EU Office on the Young Cell Scheme scholarship programme.

YCS is the only scholarship programme in Kosovo that offers the opportunity/obliges the awarded grantees with a 3-year employment contract in the civil service upon their return from the MA studies (in Round X, a pilot scheme for the existing civil servants has been furthermore introduced, allocating up to 10% of scholarships for them). The scheme allows Kosovo to receive relevant expertise in the field of public administration, law and economics, needed in its European path, as well as helps the government to keep the best BA graduates in Kosovo.

BC has experience in running the YCS programme in the three past consecutive rounds (Round IX in 2012/13, Round IXa in 2014/15, and Round X in 2015/16) and has advantage of physical presence and operational experience in Kosovo (its own branch office, permanent staff, wide pool of experts, regular coordination with civil service officials in charge of the YCS programme). BC's global reputation and wide network of partner universities that have experience with YCS grantees have furthermore resulted in the programme being able to secure discounts in the 10th round on enrolment fees with certain EU universities that increased their enrolment fee levels for the upcoming study year, while some EU universities also agreed to prolong their deadlines for enrolment of students exclusively for the YCS programme (even if the official deadlines were already missed). If the YCS programme is to deploy students to MA studies in the study year 2017/18, immediate operationalisation of the selected partner with a relevant network of contacts is of paramount importance.

4. PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT

METHODOLOGY FOR MONITORING (AND EVALUATION)

In line with the IPA II Implementing Regulation 447/2014, an IPA II beneficiary who has been entrusted budget implementation tasks of IPA II assistance shall be responsible for conducting monitoring and evaluations of the programmes it manages. Monitoring should be carried out from the commencement of all projects, and beneficiaries should allocate sufficient resources for data collection from the outset.

Project monitoring should be set up in each twinning, service and supply contract and call for proposals, through the following actions by the beneficiary:

- a) It will ensure that monitoring requirements are promoted in information to potential beneficiaries;
- b) During calls for proposals/tenders, the Beneficiary and CA will ensure that monitoring requirements are explained to potential beneficiaries in the guidelines for applicants, and that the requirements for financial, outputs and results information in the application form is compatible

with the strategic documents (financial table and measure-level monitoring indicators) and the operating structure's monitoring needs;

- c) A Project Steering Committee (PSC) will hold the main responsibility for monitoring and evaluating the projects. The PSC will also be responsible for establishing the methodology and instruments for monitoring the implementation of the project. The Project Steering Committee will be comprised of: members from the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare, Ministry of Education and Ministry of European Integration, representatives from the EU Office, and representatives from the civil society sector.
- d) The request for payment from final beneficiaries, including the financial, outputs and results data, will be checked by the CA and verified by Beneficiary, as part of the financial management and control system, before being forwarded for payment, to ensure they are compatible with the contractual obligations
- e) The verification of operations by the CA/ Beneficiary through sample on-the-spot visits to projects will include checks as to whether the expenditure claimed has actually been incurred and the outputs achieved.

Overall coordination of monitoring the financial and technical progress of the Action will be organised by the EU Office for Kosovo (EUO) as Contracting Authority.

The European Commission (EUO) may carry out a mid-term, a final or an ex-post evaluation for this Action or its components via independent consultants, through a joint mission or via an implementing partner. In case a mid-term or final evaluation is not foreseen, the European Commission may, during implementation, decide to undertake such an evaluation for duly justified reasons either on its own decision or on the initiative of the partner. The evaluations will be carried out as prescribed by the DG NEAR guidelines for evaluations. In addition, the Action might be subject to external monitoring in line with the European Commission rules and procedures set in the Financing Agreement.

INDICATOR MEASUREMENT

Indicator	Baseline	Target 2020	Final Target 2025	Source of information
Number of kindergartens built	0 (2011) 115 (2014)	118	125	Report of MEST
Number of children - including children belonging to minority communities/ vulnerable groups- aged 0-5 enrolled in pre-school education	3,853 out of which 1,812 females (2012/2013) 3,900 out of which 1,895 females (2013/2014)	22,100 out of which 10,387 females	26,000 out of which 12,220 females	EMIS; KSA; MEST annual statistical report
Number of Pre-school Educators and Primary Education teachers trained	0 (2011) 528 educators (2014)	528 ¹	610 ²	EMIS; KSA; MEST annual statistical report
Number of grantees that completed their postgraduate degrees in EU universities	0 (2011) 0 (2014) 235 (2016)	270	370	Reports of Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare
Number of children (including children belonging to minority communities/ vulnerable groups) supported to have enhanced access to kindergartens;	0 (2011) 120 out of which 58 females (2012)	408 out of which 198 females	952 out of which 461 females	MEST Reports

¹ 90 of them to receive new training on the new curriculum

² number including educators hired in kindergartens that are projected until 2020

Number of training events (per thematic areas) conducted and adapted in order to achieve higher quality in education and a higher degree of inclusion in education (with special emphasis to minority community members/vulnerable groups);	0 (2011) 0 (2014) 17 (2016)	20	25	Reports of MEST, Twinning project, KESP
Number of YCS graduates employed	0 (2011) 0 (2014) 177 (2016)	216 (provided that all 35 selected grantees will be sent to Master studies under Round X)	315 (provided that 50 grantees are sent to studies in each of the two upcoming rounds, foreseen under IPA 2016)	Reports of Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare

5. SECTOR APPROACH ASSESSMENT

The proposed action is in line with the new Kosovo Education Strategy 2017-2021 as well as with the Quality Assurance Strategy for Pre-University Education. Increasing quality in education, establishing properly functioning quality assurance mechanisms as well as relevant teacher trainings that will be responsive to concrete needs of a modern school system constitute the most immediate priorities.

Institutional arrangements and coordination: Teacher trainings activity needs to take into consideration, engage actively all relevant actors and be implemented in close coordination with them: Ministry of Education (overall policy-making), Municipal Education Directors (in charge of selecting and deciding on teacher training programmes) as well as School Directors and Principals (in charge for implementing teacher training in schools). Teachers are leaders of change in every education system and safeguarding the quality of their training is essential in this regard.

With regard to infrastructure needs, the government funding currently only covers a small part of the real needs of Kosovo impacting negatively on higher access to education, especially in areas outside the capital. The Government sent the request to the Western Balkans Investment Fund to proceed with needs assessment in infrastructure at all levels of education. The documents that were produced as a result of this assessment were shared with the EU Office in Kosovo. Based on them and also taking into account the relevant up-to-date activities of the GoK as regards construction projects, the present activity has included construction of a certain number of kindergartens throughout Kosovo. The above mentioned activities have been identified as urgent needs not only by the government and institutions of Kosovo (Roadmap for Inclusion and Diversity, a document produced by EU assistance to the sector), but also by a wide range of donors active in Kosovo in relation to the strategic aim of increasing inclusion in education. Moreover, their formulation is done in a way that it will complement and will not overlap with already existing projects.

The Ministry of Education (MEST) from its side tries to coordinate the multiple relevant activities by organizing donor coordination meeting through which essential relevant information is shared amongst active donors in the field of education.

The education sector as well as the employment and the private sector are closely interrelated and every action that is to be implemented in education sector should take into account its potential impact on the whole competitiveness sector. This ensures a more sectoral approach towards addressing the needs. In addition to improving the welfare of the society, education is also a means for the prevention of poverty, protection of children from exploitative work, empowerment of women and integration of disabled 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 (UNESCO 2003). In Kosovo the current low levels (despite the limited progress achieved so far) of inclusion, high rates of unemployment in youth, low levels of active citizen participation show clearly that there is an immediate need for restructuring in-depth the education system starting, of course, from pre-school and primary levels.

Though progress has been achieved in the competitiveness sector overall and the education sector in particular, especially as regards the more focused policy orientation and subsequent adoption of relevant strategies, it is to be noted that still institutional as well as financial capacity still remains to be substantially improved. Ownership of project result still remains lower than expected and pinpoints to the absence of institutional capacity at the required levels.

6. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES

GENDER MAINSTREAMING

Overall the gender gap between male and female in education is small, with a 2 % difference in the obligatory education years (preschool and classes 1-9) and a 3% difference in secondary education (classes 10-13). The MEST has yet to provide data on HE gender index (and general statistics on HE)

however preliminary information suggest that there is a same trend also in tertiary education. Kosovo, with around 20 thousand students enrolling each year is leading with the number of students per capita in Europe; however quality is a huge problem. Yet, Kosovo has the highest unemployment rates in Europe, 35, 5% and the worst affected are its youth (61% unemployment rate) and women (41, 6%).

Over 70% of Kosovo's women have either basic education or no education at all. This is very high figure while the same figure for men is 38%. Taking into account the above fact it is obvious that for women, the opportunities of getting job after finishing their education are limited. In addition to lower education, women also face cultural barriers within society regarding further education and employment. The latter effect is affecting mostly rural areas. Therefore, this action will address the issue of female education with direct impact to their employment and competitiveness in general. At least 50 % of targeted participants of the action shall be women. In addition, specific education and training programs for women will be designed taking into account comparative advantages of women and needs in the labour market.

All planned interventions of the action should take into account the specific impact on women, as part of the overall gender mainstreaming agenda adopted in Kosovo. Gender-sensitive budgeting should also be applied throughout programming cycles to ensure proper division of support to men and women, and ensure consequent results and impact.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

Kosovo is fully committed to a policy of equal opportunity. The implementation of the project will be transparent. All necessary steps will be considered to ensure the equal participation of youth women, men, and people from disadvantaged groups.

Based on the fundamental principles of promoting equality and combating discrimination, participation in the project will be guaranteed on the basis of equal access regardless of sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation. Equal access to all benefits of the Action will be promoted. More specifically; training and other capacity building activities in this project (timing and schedule) will be fully adjusted to the needs of women with children, training and meeting premises will be fully adapted to the needs of persons with disabilities, equal opportunities principles and concrete measures will be embedded in all strategic documents that will be produced under this Action (GfA, local strategies, portfolio of ALMM etc.) and access to employment for all groups in the society will be especially promoted.

MINORITIES AND VULNERABLE GROUPS

Kosovo is fully committed to a policy of equal opportunities and inclusiveness of its whole population of the Kosovo municipalities, including municipalities with minorities. The project will cover at least 5% of disadvantaged groups. In minority municipalities focus will be minority groups.

The Action will take a pro-active approach to facilitating participation of minority entrepreneurs and SME managers in the planning and implementation of activities, through close collaboration with minority owned/managed businesses, and with representatives of Minority-run municipalities. Special efforts will be made to include RAE enterprises in activities, through close communication with local and international organisations already active in the area of entrepreneurship promotion and support among the RAE communities. Close cooperation with programs aiming at creating linkages between minority and majority businesses will strongly be encouraged, thus contributing to the consolidation of the internal market in Kosovo and at the same time, serving the underserved categories amongst our midst.

Vulnerable and social disadvantaged/excluded groups represent the main focus of the Action. Therefore, all the activities will try to maximize the benefits for women and men, youth and children amongst the most vulnerable groups including: ethnic minorities (notably those in poverty and social exclusion), women in rural areas, people with disabilities and their families, victims of domestic violence, children in need of care, and the elderly persons.

ENGAGEMENT WITH CIVIL SOCIETY (AND IF RELEVANT OTHER STAKEHOLDERS)

Civil society organizations have thus far actively contributed and are expected to continue to contribute with research, analyses, teacher training, program development, and other forms of advocacy for public good. However, relevant decision-making education institutions have often neglected their perspectives.

Inclusiveness of civil society in planning and execution of processes is essential to also benefiting from their knowledge and sectorial expertise.

In addition, attempts will be made through the implementation of activities foreseen in this document to bring academia, research institutes and other research organizations at the service of private sector, thus unleashing full potential of the market to develop. Faculty of Education is expected to play a significant role when it comes to education the future cadre of teachers in Pre-University education.

Engagement of civil society has also been ensured through active participation of CSOs from Kosovo and the region in the Berlin process and providing active input to key regional development needs and cross-border cooperation to be facilitated between countries.

ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE (AND IF RELEVANT DISASTER RESILIENCE)

Environmental considerations will be duly reflected in all IPA financed activities. Kosovo has already undertaken concrete steps to implement EU directives of waste management and has jointly with the EU commission invested in beginning to implement these measures. Adequate environment protection measures will be foreseen as per EU financing requirements and Kosovo laws. It should be noted that the legislation in the field of environment protection has been significantly improved, but significant challenges remain to achieve EU standards. Energy efficiency and promotion of renewable sources of energy will be at the core of government attempts to minimize the carbon footprint and adverse effects on the environment.

7. SUSTAINABILITY

Sustainability will be ensured through raising awareness of parents on the importance of preschool and pre-primary education through the debates with parents, public institutions directors, and early childhood educators and experts. Data related to the increasing inclusion in pre-primary education show the level of parents' awareness about its importance. A program for further awareness rising on pre-school education is essential, and also efforts should increase to expand the infrastructure and systems for accommodation of increasing demands. The Kosovo budget will also ensure a continued budget support for the newly established kindergartens, as well as other pre-school institutions.

The proposed priorities under this component strive to address some of the biggest obstacles to competitiveness deriving from mismatch in skills and knowledge between what education institution offer and what is demanded in the labour market. The decision on sectors to support with adequate and up-to-date skilled labour force will depend on the priority sectors identified within the NDS. Furthermore, activities foreseen to develop systemic structures and strengthen existing ones (i.e. NQA) provide for sustainability of results to be achieved.

Results oriented planning initiated by this document, and to be followed throughout further planning and delivery of support will be key to ensuring good governance and high efficiency of implementation. Both internal and external monitoring and evaluation tools need to be foreseen to ensure that objectives of support are met and that intended impact on the target audiences is achieved.

Sustainability of the interventions will also be ensured through the involvement of all relevant actors, at all levels, and clear structures and roles for the implementation and monitoring. The cooperation between various stakeholders is essential as it is virtually impossible to achieve an enabling environment that fosters innovation and growth without proper synchronization of efforts between various stakeholders responsible.

8. COMMUNICATION AND VISIBILITY

Communication and visibility will be given high importance during the implementation of the Action. The implementation of the communication activities shall be the responsibility of the IPA II beneficiary, and shall be funded from the amounts allocated to the Action.

All necessary measures will be taken to publicise the fact that the Action has received funding from the EU in line with the Communication and Visibility Manual for EU External Actions. Additional Visibility Guidelines developed by the European Commission (DG NEAR) will have to be followed.

Visibility and communication actions shall demonstrate how the intervention contributes to the agreed programme objectives. Actions shall be aimed at strengthening general public awareness and support of interventions financed and the objectives pursued. The actions shall aim at highlighting to the relevant target audiences the added value and impact of the EU's interventions and will promote transparency and accountability on the use of funds.

It is the responsibility of the beneficiary to keep the European Union Office fully informed of the planning and implementation of the specific visibility and communication activities.

The beneficiary shall report on its visibility and communication actions in the report submitted to the IPA monitoring committee and the sectoral monitoring committees.