

Progress Report

Progress Report No.: 5

Contract Number: OEZA 8116-00/2020
Title of the Intervention: Higher Education Research and Applied Science Plus (HERAS+)
Project Period: June 2020 – December 2023

Reporting period:

Reporting period: 01 June – 30 November 2022	Report submitted on (date): 30 January 2023
Due date:	31 January 2023

Graz, 30 January 2023

Veronika Nitsche, WUS Austria on behalf of the Consortium consisting of WUS Austria, ZSI and OeAD

Table of contents

Glossary of Terms (Abbreviations)	3
Summary of the progress of the intervention (not more than 1 page)	5
Background/ context (update)	5
Stakeholder analysis (update)	11
Monitoring results	13
Risk Management	41
Lessons learned and perspectives	45
Finances	46
Annexes	48

Glossary of Terms (Abbreviations)

ADA	Austrian Development Agency
ADC	Austrian Development Cooperation
ADA CO	ADA Coordination Office
AI	Administrative Instruction
AS	Applied Science
ALLED 2	Aligning Education with Labour Market Needs Project-phase II
AoK	Assembly of Kosovo
BMBWF	Bundesministerium für Bildung, Wissenschaft und Forschung
CET	Center for Excellence in Teaching
CRIS	Current Research Information System
CSO	Civil Society Organizations
DCET	Didactic Center for Excellence in Teaching
EC	European Commission
EDP	Entrepreneurial Discovery Process
EHEA	European Higher Education Area
ENQA	European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education
EQAR	European Quality Assurance Register
ERA	European Research Area
ERASMUS+	European Region Action Scheme for the Mobility of University Students
ESG	European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance
EU	European Union
JRC	Joint Research Center
GAP	Gender Action Plan
GIZ	German Technical Cooperation
HE	Higher Education
HEIs	Higher Education Institutions
HERAS	Higher Education, Research and Applied Science Project
HERAS+	Higher Education, Research and Applied Science Plus Project
HRBA	Human Rights Based Approach
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
ITP	Innovation & Training Park Prizren
KAA	Kosovo Accreditation Agency
KESP	Kosovo Education Strategic Plan
KUSA	Kosovo United State Alumni
KREEN	Kosovo Research Education Network
KCDE	Kosova Centre for Distance Learning
LFM	Logical Framework Matrix
MESTI	Ministry of Education, Science, Technology and Innovation
MLSW	Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
NCP	National Contact Points
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
NQA	National Qualifications Authority

NSC	National Science Council
OeAD	OeAD-GmbH Austria's Agency for Education and Internationalisation
OKAA	Organisation for Kosovan Alumni Association
PP	Programmatic Partnerships
PCM	Project Cycle Management
PEAS	Performance Evaluation of Academic Staff
QAIN	Quality, Accountability, Integrity, and Transparency
QATEK	Quality Oriented Teacher Education in Kosovo
RAE	Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians
ResearchCult	Enhancing Research Culture in Higher Education in Kosovo
R&I	Research and Innovation
SB	Selection Board
SBM	Steering Board Meeting
SD	Social Dimension (of Higher Education of the Bologna Process)
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SME	Small and Medium-sized Enterprise
SPO	Strategic Planning Office
STAND	Strengthening university autonomy and increasing accountability and transparency of Western Balkan universities
SWOT	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats Analysis
S3	Smart Specialisation Strategy
TORs	Terms of References
ToT	Training of Trainers
UP	University of Prishtina "Hasan Prishtina"
UUHP	University "Ukshin Hoti" in Prizren
UIBM	University "Isa Boletini" in Mitrovica
UHZ	University "Haxhi Zeka" in Peja
UKZ	University "Kadri Zeka" in Gjilan
UFAGJ	University "Fehmi Agani" in Gjakova
UASF	University of Applied Science in Ferizaj
US	United States
VET	Vocational and Educational Training
VTC	Vocational Training Centres
WB	Western Balkan
WG	Working Group
WUS AT	World University Service Austria
ZSI	Centre for Social Innovation

Summary of the progress of the intervention (not more than 1 page)

During the reporting period, the activities have been implemented as planned. Planning, development and implementation of activities was coordinated and fully aligned with beneficiaries and other stakeholders.

On the policy level, the project has contributed towards effective developments of policies along European standards in HE and R&I, adapted to the national context. In particular, the project has initiated, developed and launched a roadmap that serves as a guiding document for MESTI related to performance-based funding of public HEIs. For this purpose, the project facilitated a learning visit of a Kosovo delegation to the Austrian Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Research in order to exchange on Austrian experiences in this field and to adapt it to the Kosovan context. In addition, the project provided expert support for the finalization of the KAA law and liaised with the AoK, MESTI, KAA, EQAR and ENQA. Also, at policy level, the project supported the process of revising the law on scientific research activities (ongoing process).

On the university level, the project provided comprehensive support for public HEIs with regard to the development/revision and upgrade of their strategic development, action plans, regulatory frameworks and institutional accreditation. Thematically, the project addressed existing needs such as building capacities of academic staff on advanced teaching methodologies, research promotion, performance evaluation mechanisms, quality assurance instruments and improving quality and content of syllabi by implementing the concept of learning outcomes in HEIs' processes. The support on university level was provided based on the findings of the baseline assessments conducted within the project and funded within the project's funds earmarked for public HEIs.

On the research level, the project has contributed towards an enhanced quality of research capacities and the internationalization of its higher education and research system. To this end, the project further supported the development of the CRIS, which will serve as a national repository for information regarding researchers, institutions, national and international funded projects, licensed research institutions, research infrastructure, journals and activities. The project also supported the development of a new Administrative Instruction for registering scientific innovative institutions (in the process of finalization) as well as the development of a new web-platform for the Kosovo National Contact Points (NCP) which promotes the services offered within Horizon Europe.

The implementation of project grants (programmatic partnerships, research grants, scholarships, social dimension and applied science small grants) are on track and proactively monitored by the project. In the development of deliverables, the project has cooperated with beneficiaries (MESTI, public HEIs, KAA, SPO) in a consistent manner, being actively engaged in working groups, follow-up meetings, action papers and similar. This has contributed to achieving the required impact of each activity in line with the proposal.

Furthermore, the 2nd Annual Higher Education Conference took place during the reporting period as well as the 2nd HRBA workshop (October 2023). Last but not the least, the mid-term evaluation of the project was initiated and ongoing (finalization envisaged in February 2023; more information will follow in the next progress report).

Background/ context (update)

Update on EC progress report for Kosovo education chapter

The 2022 EC progress report for Kosovo (Chapter on education) highlighted achievements in areas the project HERAS Plus is associated with, namely: i) Progress in the development of the Smart Specialization Strategy (S3) platform - the platform will facilitate awareness-raising about smart specializations and growth potentials, consultations, and stakeholder involvement in the S3 development and its implementation; ii) Development of the Current Research Information System (CRIS) which aims to ensure systematic data collection with regard to research, science and innovation, that will be used to support the research information system as evidence-base for strategic decision-making; iii) A new Horizon Europe dedicated web portal provides a single-entry point for all participants, including SMEs, and every information related to Horizon Europe opportunities; and iv) regarding Kosovo's performance in Horizon Europe, positive progress was noted. Concerning the latter, HERAS Plus has implemented capacity building activities for NCPs and individual researchers and has provided guidance and consultations.

Government adopts new strategy on education for the period 2022-2026

During the reporting period, MESTI successfully finalized the development of the new education strategy¹ which was adopted on 27 October 2022 by the Government. The strategy is crucial for the further development and advancement of the education sector in Kosovo between 2022-2026. The strategy is along five thematic priority areas: i) Early childhood education; ii) Pre-university education; iii) Education, professional training and adult education; iv) Higher education; and v) Digitalization of education. The strategy is complemented by an action plan. The financial cost for implementation are estimated to be around 323 million Euros. According to MESTI, around 70% of this amount has been secured. This Strategy is the result of the commitment of about 150 specialists of different profiles who represent all interested parties: Government, local Government, education workers, academic community, civil society, businesses and development partners. HERAS Plus was not included in the official working group that developed the education strategy, but provided feedback with regard to higher education priority during the consultation process.

Update on the finalization of the law on higher education

On August 2022, following the public consultation process and incorporation of the received feedback, MESTI finalized the revised law on higher education and submitted it to the Government and AoK for further proceedings. According to MESTI, the draft law includes new regulations and also strengthens existing provisions with the aim of safeguarding quality assurance and university autonomy as follows: i) Clearer criteria for establishing higher education institutions; ii) Definition of obligations and tasks of governing structures of public higher education institutions; iii) Definition of minimal standards and conditions for academic appointments; iv) Performance based financing of public HEIs; v) Setting up mechanisms for ensuring academic integrity (an Ethical Committee at the central level, ethical counselling at every institution of higher education); vi) Verification of achieved academic titles before the entry into force of the new law. To date, the law is still under Government/AoK scrutiny, and no new developments have taken place. Noteworthy, the project was part of the official working group and during the proceedings, it provided direct expert inputs whenever was necessary.

¹ <https://masht.rks-gov.net/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/03-Strategja-e-Arsimit-2022-2026-Eng-Web.pdf>

Update of strategic documents of public Higher Education Institutions

The revision and upgrade of strategic documents of public Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) is an ongoing process, extensively supported by HERAS Plus. Strategy revision mainly happens when public HEIs apply for institutional accreditation, since KAA standards require HEIs to have a strategic document which foresees the elaboration of all aspects of higher education, including vision, mission, objectives, quality assurance, research and other relevant matters. In 2021 and with the support of HERAS Plus, the University “Fehmi Agani” in Gjakova (UFAGJ) and the University “Kadri Zeka” in Gjilan (UKZ) passed institutional accreditation, whereas currently, the University of “Haxhi Zeka” in Peja, the University of Applied Science in Ferizaj, University of “Isa Boletini” in Mitrovica and University of “Ukshin Hoti” in Prizren are undergoing the process of institutional accreditation for which the revision of the existing strategy document is a prerequisite. In both cases, the project works closely with the University officials and provides substantial support in the process of revision of the strategies.

Kosovo Accreditation Agency (KAA) becomes an affiliate² member of ENQA

On 3rd October 2022, KAA announced that it became an affiliate member of the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA). This decision was made by the ENQA Board at their meeting on 20th September 2022 and was welcomed by all Kosovan stakeholders. This is widely believed to provide a credible guarantee for quality in higher education, facilitating the process of recognition of graduates' diplomas in European countries. However, the affiliate membership does not substitute the full membership to ENQA and EQAR. KAA is currently in the process of developing a formal application for full membership which according to KAA should be submitted in 2023.

Update on the new law on the Kosovo Accreditation Agency

As reported previously, the final draft of the KAA law was approved by the Government and is now in the hands of the Assembly of Kosovo (AoK) for further proceedings. To date, the AoK organized three public consultations of the draft law with all relevant stakeholders in order to further shape the principles of the law as well as its detailed provisions. One of these consultations was supported by the project. According to the timeline of the AoK, the law shall enter the plenary discussion by the beginning of 2023.

Dismissals the Rectors of the University of Prishtina and University of “Fehmi Agani” in Gjakova

During the reporting period, the Steering Boards of the above-mentioned universities dismissed their rectors. Both rectors were half-way of their mandates and arguments for their dismissal related to low performance, mismanagement of the institutions, lack of transparency and lack of follow-up with regards to statutory matters. In the case of UP, the Steering Board announced a call for the position of a new Rector and completed the procedure with a new rector being in place as of 22 November 2022. The project is following closely the developments on the ground with the aim is to ensure continuity of cooperation between UP and HERAS Plus with the newly elected leadership of the universities. In the case of the University of “Fehmi Agani” in Gjakova there is currently an acting rector with further proceedings pending.

² The ENQA Affiliate status is open to organizations worldwide that have an interest in quality assurance of higher education but that cannot, or do not want to be ENQA members. Affiliates do have the right to attend and speak at the bi-annual ENQA General Assembly meetings, thereby giving input to matters related to the strategic development of the Association. Affiliates, however, are not permitted to vote in the ENQA General Assembly or to be part of statutory bodies such as the Board, Agency Review Committee and Appeals and Complaints Committee.

Harmonization aspects of the intervention

The project is in regular contact with other donor funded projects with the aim to avoid overlaps and to create synergies. During the reporting period, two new projects started in the higher education sector (see below description on the GIZ and KREEN project) whereas the other projects remained as listed in the previous progress report. HERAS Plus maintained sound communication channels with all of them. For more updates, please see below:

Project: Aligning Education with Labour Market Needs Project-phase II (ALLED2), funded by ADA and EU: The specific objective of the project is to strengthen the quality and relevance of education and training programmes for the labour market and to support the adaptation of the legislative framework and mechanisms as a precondition for increased employability. ALLED2 expects to achieve 5 results: i) Study programmes in public HEIs serve as a competence hub for the industry and Vocational and Educational Training (VET); ii) Professional qualifications and occupational standards meet National Qualifications Authority (NQA) criteria for validation; iii) VET schools and Vocational Training Centres (VTCs) offer qualitative programmes based on the labour market needs; iv) Education and training system related governance procedures support the alignment of education and training with labour market needs; and v) The link between the VET and the business sector is more structured. The target group and direct beneficiaries are MESTI, the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare (MLSW), public universities, Municipal Education Departments (MED), VET schools, VTCs, the KAA and the NQA. The indirect beneficiaries are: HE and VET students, job seekers, private sector, adult learners, including women and men from various backgrounds.

Project: Quality, Accountability, Integrity, and Transparency (QAIN), funded by ADA: The aim of the project has been to improve quality and competitiveness of the higher education sector which contributes to social and economic development of the country. Furthermore, the project aimed to ensure that Kosovo's higher education system is acting based on internationally aligned quality standards, transparency, integrity, and accountability standards. The target groups, beneficiaries and local partners were the KAA, MESTI, the seven public universities in Kosovo, students, and young academic staff from public universities. The indirect target group was the Kosovo society at large. The project was successfully completed in October 2022.

United States (US) Embassy support for KAA: The US Embassy finances two projects for the KAA through its implementing partner, the Kosovo United State Alumni (KUSA) engaged by WUS Kosova. Both projects together have a project budget of sixty-five thousand dollars. The aim is to strengthen the institutional and technical capacity of the KAA and to meet the main criteria for regaining Kosovo's membership in ENQA. In addition, the objective of these initiatives is to support the KAA in strengthening institutional independence, increasing transparency and institutional accountability: i) The first project targets the key criteria required by ENQA, including thematic analysis and methodology for its implementation, development of an internal quality assurance system, implementation of the European Standards and Guidelines in higher education (ESGs), establishing mechanisms for internal assessment of the KAA, staff training and collection of inputs from all stakeholders in higher education in Kosovo; ii) The second project is related to the development of the new KAA website, the establishment of an electronic platform for issuing online certificates for accredited programs and the establishment of a platform for reporting violations of accreditation standards. The project HERAS Plus has followed up closely with the KAA to seek alignment of the activities with the above-mentioned projects. Noteworthy, HERAS Plus also has the aim to support the KAA to join ENQA, including the revision and implementation of the ESGs. Due to close coordination so far, overlapping could be avoided.

Erasmus+ project: Enhancing Research Culture in Higher Education in Kosovo / Research-Cult (2019-2022): The overall aim of the ResearchCult project was to support the enhancement of a research culture in Kosovo's HEIs by supporting the development of policies and good practices as well as developing new regulations, structures, and mechanisms in project beneficiary institutions in Kosovo. The project had the following specific objectives: i) Assessing the current state of research capacities in Kosovo's higher education sector; ii) Increasing research stimulation and support by establishing university offices/centres and their strategic plans to support constant research activities among their institutions; iii) Enhancing university strategies for publication of scientific research work through developing and approving internationally recognized standards for scientific journals, as well as establishing inter-institutional scientific journals in the key research priorities in Kosovo; iv) Promoting research work through annual research joint scientific conference; v) Improving research quality and standards by developing research ethics and integrity regulation and establishing research ethics committees in higher education institutions; vi) Facilitating regular access to research publication and establishing an online open access platform/database for accumulating research knowledge. As reported in the previous progress report, the project and ResearchCult have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to align their activities and complement each other, given the identified areas of overlapping. The implementation of the MoU is going smoothly and both parties meet on a regular basis. The project planned to end in 2022 but was extended to May 2023.

Czech funded project: Raising higher education teaching standards in Kosovo (CERGE-EI Foundation)³: The project has started implementation in the second part of 2021 and targets social sciences faculties which constitute approximately 50% of Kosovo's university-level teachers. At the core of the project is a series of pedagogical development workshops based on CERGE-EI's popular and tested Teaching Principles and Practices course. This inducts the CERGE-EI Foundation's Teaching Fellows into the latest university-level pedagogy. The project is driven by the Foundation's Kosovo-based network of Western-trained PhD-level economists. They will benefit from the mentorship and oversight of CERGE-EI and subsequently form the core of an in-country team to develop and expand the training and development framework across all academic disciplines. The impact of this project is immediate. These professors (teacher trainers) are consistently regarded by their students and their peers as among the best teachers at faculty. The project has had a formal meeting with the heads of this project who have agreed on plans how to align their activities, in particular at the University of "Haxhi Zeka" in Peja. One of the findings of the baseline assessment is also related to pedagogy and teaching. The intervention of HERAS Plus are complemented with activities of the project CEERGE-EI.

Project: "Support to Digital Transformation in Kosovo" (2021 –2024), funded by GIZ: The project has the following focus areas: 1) Science for local Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs); 2) Technology for local SMEs; 3) Innovation for local SMEs; 4) Science, Technology & Innovation: Digital Innovation Hub Prizren. Through their support they plan to: use E-Infrastructure at Innovation & Training Park (ITP) Prizren; strengthen the innovation & ICT Community by creating synergies among local ecosystem stakeholders; combine traditional sectors with new sectors to foster a knowledge-driven society; location marketing for the city/region of Prizren as a new ICT centre, possibly also with sub-focal points; and using synergies with ITP activities and other projects. The project and the German Technical Cooperation (GIZ) team met several

³ <https://www.cerge-ei-foundation.org/about>

times to identify possible joint events. Common areas of interest of both projects are Horizon Europe, Smart Specialization Strategy (S3) and cooperation between academia and industry.

Erasmus+ project: Quality Oriented Teacher Education in Kosovo (QATEK): The aim of the project is to introduce mechanisms and skills in initial teacher education institutions in Kosovo to implement internal quality assurance practices that lead towards an enhancement of quality of graduates, capable of moving ahead school reform. Increasing the quality of teacher education in Kosovo has the potential to lead to major changes in school practice, acknowledged as necessary in the Kosovo school system. Changing teacher practice to reflect the new professionalism implies the need to develop teacher education institutions that are oriented towards improvement and monitoring the achievement of those targets to close the significant gap between current teacher practice realities in schools and the demanded teacher professionalism as reflected in current local policy set up and European level references. In addition, the project also supports the development of management capacities to manage comprehensive internal quality assurance processes which contribute to the understanding of weaknesses and the development of interventions that can lead to an improvement. HERAS Plus and this project have no areas of common interaction, but both projects usually target the same audience (academics and public HEIs).

Erasmus+, STAND project: Strengthening university autonomy and increasing accountability and transparency of Western Balkan universities (2021-2023): The project aims to improve the processes and mechanisms of university autonomy by increasing the management capacities, accountability and transparency of universities in the Western Balkans (WB) in three target countries – Albania, Kosovo and Montenegro. The concept entails investing in the strengthening of mechanisms that ensure the long-term sustainability of university autonomy, transparency and accountability. The project foresees cooperation between HEIs in the WB region, their respective ministries and program country partners and contributes to the increasing of professional capacities of HEI staff in partnering HEIs. There are no overlapping activities with this project, but some assessments foreseen under STAND will be consulted when supporting MESTI with regard to a performance-based funding system.

The GIZ project Fostering Applied Research Activities in Kosovo was launched in September 2022 in the Innovation and Training Park (ITP) Prizren. The project is jointly financed by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and the European Union. The project is being implemented in the framework of GIZ's Digital4Business component of the Digital Transformation Center at the Innovation and Training Park (ITP) Prizren, in partnership with EduTask.

Kosovo Research Education Network (KREN) was launched on November 2022 and is situated at the Innovation and Training Park (ITP) in Prizren. The network offers i) each HEI a secure, fast and managed network with internet and wifi services and ii) a hybrid cloud infrastructure with Azure Stack on-premise focused on scalability and availability; iii) Provides support to knowledge dissemination and information exchange as an integrated part of KREN; iv) Deployed in highly powerful architecture with a cluster of servers to satisfy all educational needs; and v) enhances access to offices for all students and teachers through trainings and deployment of assistance. The infrastructure and resources of KREN can benefit many processes in research and innovation. In particular, it can support universities with the necessary infrastructure to secure data management, storing and research infrastructure and enabling open data and open access to research and research infrastructure.

Stakeholder analysis (update)

During the reporting period, the project interacted with new stakeholders, namely the grantees of the Social Dimension and the Applied Science Small Grant Schemes. (For more information see below under Act. 2.5 and Act. 2.7). The rest of the stakeholders remained the same as in the previous progress report. The interaction with these stakeholders is described below:

Stakeholder	Who exactly	Interaction with the project
MESTI	As the main stakeholder responsible for the education and research sector (including development of legal frameworks and education policies/strategies), especially its Department for HE and for Science as well as the Minister's Cabinet.	The interaction between the project and MESTI takes place, almost on a daily basis. HERAS Plus, being located in the premises of MESTI, makes contacts and liaison much easier and as such meetings are usually scheduled on a short notice or ad-hoc. The interaction is very intensive, starting from the support in the preparation of events, organization, delivery to substantial follow-up. This approach enables full ownership of the processes from the side of MESTI.
KAA	As the main quality assurance body for HE in Kosovo with currently 7 employees (with the new law, the KAA is expected to recruit up to 40 staff), KAA Board members (9) and the KAA Appeals Committee (5).	The project and KAA have signed an MoU where main principles of interaction are agreed hereto. It also includes interaction at two levels, operational and management, thus, in both cases regular and constant liaison is enhanced. Same as above, the interaction is very intensive, starting from the support in the preparation of events, organization, delivery and substantial follow-up.
Strategy Planning Office (SPO)	Located within the Government (with 5 employees), which is the key institution for the development, implementation and monitoring of a Smart Specialisation Strategy (as well as other areas).	The interaction with the SPO during the reporting period stretched from advisory services, specific support provided to an exchange visit to Austria. Since they are located in the Government and a small unit, the interaction goes slowly but is expected to go smoothly on the long run.
Public HEIs	University of Prishtina "Hasan Prishtina"; University "Ukshin Hoti" in Prizren; University "Haxhi Zeka" in Peja; University "Fehmi Agani" in Gjakova; University "Kadri Zeka" in Gjilan; University "Isa Boletini" in Mitrovica and University of Applied Science in Ferizaj	Very intense and sustainable interaction has been established with all 7 public HEIs. With some of them, MoUs are signed and in addition, baseline assessments have been developed in full accordance and consultation with the public HEIs at all levels.
Research organisations, academic staff, National	Specific facilities of public HEIs, academics, scholars that have applied for programmatic partnerships, research grants, and scholarships.	The interaction between all stakeholders at this level allows them to learn from each other's experiences in a stimulating and competitive environment. This provides a platform for exchange between HEIs and other stakeholders. At this stage, HERAS

**Contact
Points
(NCPs)**

Plus tries to support the NCP system for H2020 (Horizon Europe), Erasmus+ and to enhance research development and internationalization of research activities.

**Human
Rights
Based Approach
(HRBA)/Social Dimension:
Students/Civil Society Organization
(CSOs)⁴**

Students including from vulnerable/underrepresented groups are direct beneficiaries of the Social Dimension Small Grant Scheme and indirect beneficiaries of HRBA related activities. Underrepresented/vulnerable groups of students include: a) groups from lower socio-economic background, b) minorities including members from the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities, c) students with a disability, d) non-traditional students (mature students, students with foreign qualifications), e) female students (in particular those from the RAE communities), f) students from rural areas, and g) returning migrants.

These stakeholders are consulted when different assessments, studies, and project deliverables are being developed. The project has foreseen concrete activities how to involve students from marginalized groups /relevant CSOs, to empower them and to promote their rights when it comes to access, participation and completion in higher education.

**Kosovan–
Austrian
scholars
(Alumni)
OKAA**

Kosovan scholars that have graduated at Austrian HEIs as well as Kosovan scholars that have graduated at Austrian HEIs in the last 20 years with support of ADA funded projects.

The project has initiated the establishment of the association OKAA and the entire process has been supported by the project. On the long run, the association is expected to be led by its members. Currently, 7 board members are selected and interaction takes place mainly with them, except for formal events when bigger numbers of scholars are invited to participate. The OKAA is expected to further promote the internationalization and academic mobility between Kosovo and Austria, to share lesson learnt and to act as catalyst for generating new ideas to be funded by possible future donors.

**Donor
funded projects**

ADA funded, US projects, EU/Erasmus+, GIZ

Regular meetings, invitation to each other's activities, formal and non-formal gatherings to hear about the progress of the implementation, identification of areas of common interests and mitigation measures how to avoid overlapping.

Kosova Center for Distance Education - Mëso Online

Contractual relations with all of them in order to implement their respective projects

⁴ A separate Annex has been developed on this consisting of 3 Parts (for detailed information see Annex 5: Reporting on Target 4.4 of the SDGs in line with the HERAS+ LFM). The annex is updated regularly for each progress report.

Social Dimension (SD) grantees	(KCDE) NGO; ETEA NGO; Psycho-Social and Medical Research Center NGO; University "Isa Boletini" Mitrovica; Human Rights Center of University of Prishtina "Hasan Prishtina"; different groups of students.	under the Small Grant Scheme in accordance with the signed agreements and its provisions. Findings from the SD projects are also promoted within other HERAS Plus activities.
Applied science grantees	University of Prishtina 'Hasan Prishtina', University 'Haxhi Ze-ka' in Peja, University 'Isa Boletini' in Mitrovica, OPTIMA NGO, Space SyntaKS NGO, EdGuard Institute and others.	Contractual relations with all of them in order to implement their respective projects under the Small Grant Scheme in accordance with the signed agreements and its provisions. Findings from the SD projects are also promoted within other HERAS Plus activities.

Monitoring results

For quantitative and qualitative dimensions of the project's achievements along the Logical Framework Matrix (LFM) as well as in line with detailed planning, see Annex 1 and Annex 2. Regarding environmental, gender and social risk management and sustainability, see Annex 3. For monitoring information related to HRBA, see Annex 4. Below detailed information is presented for each output and activity, including photos and annexes.

Output 1: MESTI is enabled to effectively develop and implement policies along European standards in HE and research adopted to the national context. KAA has satisfactorily addressed and implemented key ENQA recommendations

Act.1.1: Support to MESTI for the development of policies, laws, regulations and strategies in the areas of higher education and applied science

In 2022, the administrative instruction (AI) on applied science saw relevant progress in terms of drafting and discussion, including a national expert, working group and international feedback. However, final decision about its adoption could not be taken due to a change of MESTI's priorities in the second half of 2022.

On July 2022, the project together with MESTI organized an event to present a 'rough 'draft of a roadmap – advising the Government of Kosovo on how to establish a system of performance-based funding for public HEIs, based on Austrian experiences. The event was also used to collect direct feedback from participants which were ultimately included in a consolidated version of the roadmap. The roadmap concludes that the current system of funding public HEIs would profit from a transition towards a system of performance-based funding, as it would increase accountability, a participatory approach and competitiveness of the public higher education sector.



The second working group meeting on performance-based funding of public universities, 14 July 2022.

As a follow-up to the working group proceedings and aimed at the finalization of the roadmap, the project organized and facilitated a study visit to Austria for a Kosovan delegation, composed of representatives of MESTI and of public HEIs (12-15 September 2022).



Official visit in Austria, 12-15 September 2022.

During the visit, the delegation from Kosovo had different meetings and workshops at the Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Research as well as at Austrian HEIs where they received information on lessons learnt from Austria, how the system was developed and implemented, and which capacity building measures were taken by the Ministry in order to inform and prepare HEIs for the new system. All this information and knowledge will be taken into consideration in Kosovo when developing/implementing a similar system in Kosovo.

After thorough consultations, the project finalized the roadmap and launched it in November 2022 (Annex 6: Roadmap Document Advising the Government of Kosova on how to Establish a System of Performance Based Funding for the Kosovar Public Universities). Participants in the event included the Austrian Ambassador, ADA, MESTI, representatives of the Austrian Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Research, Rectors and Vice-rectors of public HEIs, Higher Education experts, academics, students and representatives of donor funded projects in the sector.



Launching of the Roadmap for the Performance based-funding of public HEIs, 25 November 2022.

In close cooperation with MESTI, the project also organized a two-day workshop (28-29 July 2022) for the draft of a concept document for the revision of the Law on Scientific Research Activities. The event assembled the members of the working group. (Annex 7: MESTI Decision on establishing WG on drafting the concept document for the revision of Law on Scientific Research Activities). As a result, a concept document for further proceedings at MESTI was drafted.



The 3rd Working Group meeting for the Revision of Law No. 04L-135 on Scientific Research Activities, 28-29 July, 2022.

Act. 1.2: Support to KAA in implementing selected ENQA recommendations and development of new standards and procedures for the accreditation process

The project supported the first public hearing for the KAA law, organized upon request and in close cooperation with the Committee on Education, Science, Technology, Innovation, Culture Youth and Sport of the Assembly of Kosovo (AoK).



KAA Law Public Hearing event

This event targeted higher education institutions' representatives and academia to enable a forum of discussion about the last version of the law. Participants commented and discussed

different provisions of the law, such as the roles and responsibilities of the KAA bodies, accreditation timelines and accreditation validity, external evaluation, and the broader vision of the Higher Education sector.

As a follow up to the finalization of the KAA law, the project facilitated an official visit of officials from the European Quality Assurance Registry (EQAR) to Kosovo on 16 June 2022, where EQAR representatives met with the representatives of MESTI, KAA and members of the Committee on Education, Science, Technology, Innovation, Culture Youth and Sport of AoK.



Official meeting of the EQAR representatives with AoK members, 16 June 2022.

This visit contributed to an enhanced policy dialogue between Kosovan institutions and stakeholders to reach a common understanding about the content of the KAA law. At the same time, EQAR officials shared their positive feedback regarding the progress made in Kosovo since the exclusion of KAA from ENQA/EQAR.

On 17 June 2022, the project supported a valuable exchange between a HERAS Plus international expert and the KAA staff and board members. Best practices and comparative perspectives were provided on different topics, including on the development and approval of policies (evaluation standards, etc.), decision-making procedures, stakeholder involvement, and the composition of the board and its responsibilities.



Joint meeting of Heras Plus international expert with Kosovo Accreditation Agency, 17 June 2022.

During this event, KAA representatives were informed about practical examples and advice was provided on different processes and instruments the Agency could adopt in future. The substantial exchange also evolved around best practice of ensuring labor market relevance of study programs and enhancing the third mission of universities. Insights from this meeting will inform and shape the project's support and contribution to KAA and quality assurance in higher education.

Act.1.3: Support to the implementation of the Law on innovation and knowledge transfer by developing and implementing instruments to build bridges between universities and the economy

On 20 September 2022, the project together with MESTI, supported and provided feedback to the working group proceedings (Annex 8: MESTI Decision on establishing WG on drafting the AI on Register of the scientific innovative institutions) for developing a new Administrative Instruction (AI) on the “Register of Scientific Innovative Institutions”.



HERAS Plus supports the development of a new Administrative Instruction on the Register of Scientific Innovative Institutions, on 20th September 2022.

During the reporting period, the AI was finalized with expert support from the project which included a series of consultations with working group members and other relevant stakeholders (Annex 9: Final Draft of AI on Register of the scientific innovative institutions). The AI is now under final review by MESTI. Next steps shall include a broader public consultation and eventually, the adoption by the Minister (More information will follow in the next progress report).

Noteworthy, the AI is highly important for MESTI since it regulates (among others) i) the definition of R&I activities and outputs; ii) a definition of the requirements for respective Institutions to become licensed for receiving public R&I funds as well as monitoring procedures; iii) the conditions/requirements for issuing a license; iv) institutional obligations related to national interest; v) institutional obligations related to international documents and directives and; vi) dissolution of institutions. For this purpose, HERAS Plus has repeatedly provided expert support (national and international). From international expertise, a rolling definition of R&I priorities for innovation actions from MESTI has been suggested, focusing in particular on green and sustainable solutions. A combined technical development of the Register with CRIS (see below) in future has been strongly suggested, in order to create a national innovation platform and database for licensing, monitoring, project application, execution/accounting and output storage.

Act. 1.4: Implementation of a basic research information system (CRIS) as evidence-base for strategic decision making of the MESTI and public HEIs

The proceedings for the development of the Current Research Information System (CRIS) continued intensively during the reporting period. Several working group meetings and sessions were organized, chaired by MESTI and supported by HERAS Plus and ResearchCult⁵.

⁵ More information about the partnership MoU signed between HERAS Plus and ResearchCult can be read in the previous progress report.



The 7th Working Group Meeting about the Kosovo Research Information System (KRIS), 6 September 2022.

Once developed and in force, the CRIS will act as a national research information system for systematically gathering data on research indicators in Kosovo and its diaspora community, enabling data generation for specific interest groups and users (Annex 10: Presentation of CRIS). As a management information system, CRIS will serve as a national repository for information regarding researchers, institutions, national and international funded projects, licensed research institutions, research infrastructure, journals, and activities. In order to make CRIS self-sustainable, the project supported MESTI to integrate it within the structures of the Kosovo information society agency that will host the platform (Annex 11: Conceptual Plan of CRIS submitted to AIS). The next steps are piloting the final CRIS in January 2023 followed by a new AI that will outline the main provisions of implementation of CRIS (More information will follow in the next progress report).

Act. 1.5: Supporting the development and piloting of a Smart Specialization Strategy (S3) for Kosovo

The project followed up on findings from the study visit to Austria⁶ which related directly to the development of the Smart Specialization Strategy (S3). To this end, the project attended an event organized by the Strategic Planning Office (SPO) and the Joint Research Center (JRC)⁷. In this event, the report on qualitative analysis, as well as the next steps for finalizing the Entrepreneurial Discovery Process (EDP) were presented and HERAS Plus provided its inputs (Annex 12: Qualitative analysis of preliminary priority areas in the Smart Specialization process in the Republic of Kosovo).

Furthermore, the project is planning to engage a national expert to support the development of S3 in close consultation with the SPO. The purpose of this assignment will be to support a fitting policy mix which is a core component of the S3 delivery. The assigned expert is expected to contribute to the process of data collection (derived from the working group proceedings), synthesizing inputs and offering concrete solutions/inputs for integrating the research and scientific innovation components in S3 (More information on this will follow in the next progress report).

Act. 1.6: Implementation of at least 2 key instruments for applying a HRBA in HE

During the reporting period, the project successfully developed the 2nd instrument for applying a Human Rights Based Approach (HRBA) in higher education (Annex 13: Report - Gender

⁶ For more information about the visit, see previous progress report.

⁷ At the time of this progress report, it is unclear to what extent the Joint Research Centre (DG JRC) will further support Kosovo in its endeavor to establish a S3 strategy. EC priorities for future support of the S3 in the Western Balkan economies in this regard are currently being assessed. This is seen as a signal for the SPO to speed up the progress with regard to S3 development.

Equality in Higher Education Institutions in Kosovo). As previously reported, the project closely followed the development of the 1st HRBA instrument and findings from the 1st HRBA workshop in 2021, where key stakeholders recommended to develop a 2nd HRBA instrument that explicitly targets gender equality in higher education. This was followed by the development of a comprehensive analysis, including a set of focus groups and interviews. On 11 October 2022, the project organized the 2nd HRBA workshop where the analysis developed by a national expert and the project was launched and presented in front of 40 representatives from universities, public institutions and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs).



Workshop on Gender Equality in Higher Education in Kosovo, 11 October 2022.

The workshop was held on the International Day of the Girl Child and provided a platform for different stakeholders to discuss possible ways to strengthen gender equality in higher education. The Workshop was enriched with insights, data and views from different panelists including MESTI, the Gender Equality Agency, public HEIs, Kosovo Women's Network (KWN) and students.

The document is the first comprehensive analysis dedicated to various dimensions of gender equality in higher education in Kosovo and looked at the current state of gender equality, the existing mechanisms and practices and the views and experiences of academic staff and students in this regard. The report offers guidance and proposes recommendations to strengthen gender in various dimensions of academic life. The discussions and exchanges from the workshop were compiled in another report that was shared and disseminated with the aim to further advocate for advancing gender equality in higher education (Annex 14: Report from the Workshop on Gender Equality in Higher Education).

Output 2: Strategic plans of public universities are reviewed, developed, and decision-making processes are based on these strategies and better contribute to a competitive HE sector as well as to economic, social and cultural development of Kosovo

Act. 2.1: Develop capacities of public universities for conducting their own baseline assessments and strategic plans

On 13 October 2022, HERAS Plus, MESTI and public HEIs organized the 2nd Annual Conference on Higher Education in Kosovo. This year's Conference focused on Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) of strategic documents of HEIs.



The Second Annual Higher Education Conference, 13 October 2022.

The main aim of the event was to convene all relevant stakeholders of the higher education sector in Kosovo to discuss different questions related to monitoring and evaluation of strategic documents of HEIs. In this regard, a Manual on how to conduct monitoring and evaluation was developed and launched during the event (Annex 15: Manual for monitoring and evaluation of strategic documents in public universities of Kosovo). To help universities respond to increased pressure to improve their M&E systems, the conference was an opportunity for delegates to come together to share their experiences and to acquire new knowledge. The conference proceedings were compiled in a policy brief document which was shared with all attendees of the Conference as well as with other relevant stakeholders (Annex 16: Policy Brief from the 2nd Annual Conference on Higher Education in Kosovo). The document also includes ideas and suggestions for the 3rd annual conference which is envisaged for 2023.

Act. 2.2: Development and implementation of a competitive fund for strategic development of public universities

Through this activity, the project provided tailor-made support and expertise to all public HEIs in line with the recommendations from their respective baseline assessments. More information on project support for each public HEI is presented below:

University of Prishtina “Hasan Prishtina” (UP)

As mentioned above, the UP rector was dismissed during the reporting period (November 2022) and as a result, certain activities were put on hold. The project met with the new Rector with the aim to ensure the continuation of activities. During the meeting, the project made direct reference to the signed MoU as a basis for continued cooperation. It appeared that there had been no comprehensive handover between the previous and upcoming senior management.



Heras Plus meeting with University of Prishtina Rector Qerim Qerimi, on 6th December 2022.

As reported previously, the project supported the UP to develop a roadmap for measuring the performance evaluation system for academic staff. As a follow-up to this initiative, the project decided to support the implementation of this document. In consultation with the UP senior management, a working group composed of all faculties of UP was established, including also the project as a member (Annex 17: UP decision on establishing WG on drafting the regulation on measuring the performance evaluation system for academic staff). During the reporting period, the project in cooperation with UP conducted an analytical review of the roadmap and possible legal implications that may come with its implementation (Annex 18: Establishment and implementation of the academic staff performance evaluation system at UP). This input was presented in one of the WG events organized during the reporting period which will be essential when developing the above-mentioned regulation. To date, the development and finalization of the regulation is put on hold and more information will follow in the next progress report.

University 'Isa Boletini' – Mitrovica (UIBM)

During the reporting period, there were no specific activities at UMIB. The project met several times with senior management to analyze the activities implemented so far and to discuss how they contribute towards the implementation of the baseline assessment. At those meetings, the project and senior management worked together on the formulation of upcoming activities which will be directed towards the establishment of a didactics/excellence center, support for institutional accreditation and the development of a roadmap on digitalization for enterprise resource planning (More information will follow in the next progress report).

University "Ukshin Hoti" in Prizren (UUHP)

On June 2022, the project facilitated a tailor-made event related to the third mission of universities, considering experiences and perspectives from Austria.



Workshop with University of Prizren on "The Concept of the Third Mission of Universities", 16 June 2022.

The concept of the third mission of universities was elaborated in light of concrete examples on how projects and activities in this area are being developed and implemented at three Austrian universities: the University of Vienna, the Technical University of Graz and Vienna University of Economics and Business. Through this activity, the project aims at building capacities of public HEIs, for designing, implementing and promoting the third mission of universities, complementary to their efforts in the fields of teaching, learning and research.

During the reporting period, the project also supported UUHP with preparations for their institutional accreditation. On 01 September 2022, the project organized an event with 20 academic staff to present the expert review of over 20 instruments (internal regulations, guidelines, questionnaires, and reporting templates) that are currently being used in the quality assurance (QA) process at the university. The workshop served as a platform to present the findings and discuss the recommendations.



Meeting with University of Prizren on Presenting Analysis for Institutional Accreditation, 1 September 2022.

On 25-26 November 2022, a workshop was organized with support of the project to further assist UUHP in the process of preparing for institutional accreditation.



Workshop with University of Prizren on Support in the Process of Preparing for Institutional Accreditation, 25-26 November 2022.

This two-days' workshop was attended by managerial, academic and administrative staff of UUHP involved and contributing to the preparation for institutional accreditation. The project will continue to support UUHP to further streamline quality assurance process and mechanisms and to provide direct expert interventions for UUHP's Self-Evaluation Report (SER).

On 06 October 2022, the project organized another workshop for UUHP aimed at functionalizing the Center for Excellence in Teaching (CET) which will operate at the university.



“Training of Trainers” Workshop with University of Prizren for the Didactic Center for Excellence in Teaching (CET), 6 October 2022.

The event addressed modern teaching methodologies which may be subject of future training modules to be developed and delivered by CET (Annex 19: The training modules for CET UUHP). The event was attended by CET affiliated academic staff of UUHP, being in the process of becoming CET trainers. The workshop was followed by a 2-days training of trainers (ToT), which took place on 21-22 October 2022.



“Training of Trainers” Workshop with University of Prizren, Didactic Center for Excellence in Teaching, 21-22 October 2022.

University of Applied Science in Ferizaj (UASF)

During the reporting period, the project and the UASF cooperated with regard to several activities in line with the findings of their baseline assessment:

First, the project provided expertise for developing a strategic document for UASF focused on the digitalization of processes and services at the University (Annex 20: UASF Digitalization strategy). In order to support the drafting process for the strategy, a set of workshops and events were supported by the project.



Working Group Meeting on Digitalization Strategy with UASF, 15 April 2022.

Furthermore, the project provided expert support for advising UASF on designing and adopting modern performance evaluations mechanisms for academic staff. These mechanisms are now comprised of a number of quantitative or qualitative indicators and are summarized in a separate Manual developed under this activity (Annex 21: UASF Manual for academic staff performance evaluation). Same as above, several workshops and events were supported by the project to facilitate the development of the Manual in a participatory and inclusive manner.



Workshop with management and academic staff of University of Applied Sciences of Ferizaj on new performance evaluation tools, 2-3 December 2022.

In September 2022, the project organized a tailor-made one-day training for UASF aimed at improving the design of learning outcomes of study programmes and courses at university. This training also provided inputs on how academics can plan and design teaching, learning and assessment methods according to learning outcomes. Finally, the trainings provided insights on how quality assurance mechanisms can ensure that learning outcomes remain relevant, by providing regularly for evaluations and updates.



Learning Outcomes workshop with University of Applied Sciences Ferizaj, 21 September 2022.

Last but not the least, the project supported UASF in conducting a 3-day workshop (3-5 November 2022) to prepare UASF for their institutional accreditation. The project provided expert support and facilitated working group sessions in the process of compiling, reviewing, and editing the application documentation for institutional accreditation.



Workshop with UASF working group on Institutional Accreditation and review of Self Evaluation Report, 3-5 November 2022.

University “Fehmi Agani” in Gjakova (UFAGJ)

On September 2022, the project organized a three-day tailor-made training for academic staff of UFAGJ on Project Cycle Management (PCM) which is considered critical for further institutional development of the university in areas such as internationalization and the absorption of new funds from different donor funding organizations. The training was tailored to the specific needs of UFAGJ.



Project Cycle Management Training with University of Gjakova, 12-15 September 2022.

It aimed at building capacities of a selected team of UFAGJ academic staff for writing, monitoring and implementing projects. The program covered the main topics of PCM. The delivery method included presentations, group work and coaching. All training sessions were followed by concrete exercises which had to be completed in working groups.

During the reporting period, the project also organized and facilitated a tailor-made training on “Embedding the concept of learning outcomes in achieving strategic education objectives”. In general, the program was designed to ensure that participants of the UFAGJ strengthen their skills for developing Learning Outcomes that reflect labour market relevance and address societal needs. The project further focused on building capacities for aligning the designed LOs with teaching, learning and assessment methods in ways that enhance the quality of education. Lastly, the participants were coached in developing ideas and tools for enhancing self-evaluations of courses and study programmes.



Learning Outcomes workshop with University of Gjakova, 23 September 2022.

University “Haxhi Zeka” in Peja (UHZ)

During the reporting period, the project supported a five-days Training of Trainers (ToT) on the “Advancement of teaching methods in higher education” for academic staff of the UHZ. This event was co-organized and co-funded with the CERGE-EI Foundation project⁸. The central aim of this activity was to develop and deliver a series of pedagogical tools based on CERGE-EI’s popular and tested Teaching Principles and Practices course.



HERAS Plus supports an extended training on advanced teaching methods for University of Peja, 30 May – 3 June, 2022.

UHZ academic staff benefited from the on-site expertise and subsequently expanded the gained knowledge across different academic disciplines. At the end of the event, the participants took a written exam and were provided with certificates.

The project also provided expert support for conducting an assessment on the labor market relevance of existing study programs (Annex 22: Assessment on Labor Market Relevance for the Existing Study Programs of the UHZ). The study concludes that the programmes at UHZ need to be further upgraded in line with the labour market needs which would be also very valuable with regard to the process of program accreditation.

⁸ More information about this project can be found in the section ‘harmonization aspects of the intervention’.

The project also supported the development of a new strategic document necessary for institutional accreditation. For this purpose, the project engaged a local expert and organized a two-day workshop that was attended by senior management, steering board members, deans, academic staff, representatives of the private sector, civil society and media.



Workshop with University of Peja on Developing the University Strategic Plan, 6-7 October, 2022.

At the end of the reporting period, a consolidated draft of the strategy was available (Annex 23: UHZ Draft strategy 2023-2026) and the finalization and adoption by the Steering Board of UHZ was underway (More information will follow in the next progress report).

University “Kadri Zeka” in Gjilan (UKZ)

Same as above, the UKZ requested support to assess the labour market relevance of existing study programmes. The activity turned out to be very complex due to its active involvement of members of the Steering Board, senior management and academic units. Stakeholders at UKZ differed in their approaches related to the methodology and scope of the assessment. The project was proactively coordinating and facilitating this process and ultimately an agreement could be found. The activity could be finally kicked-off in a workshop and the follow-up was spearheaded by a national expert engaged by the project.

Kickoff meeting with University of Gjilan on Assessing the Market Relevance of Study Programs, 17 May



2022.

At the end of the reporting period, a rough draft of the assessment was available (Annex 24: Towards a model of determining program relevance for labor market: the case of UKZ) and shared with UKZ officials. Follow up, a consolidation, upgrade and potential endorsement of the assessment is expected to happen in the upcoming period (More information will follow in the next progress report).

The project also organized and facilitated a two-day tailor-made workshop on Project Cycle Management (PCM) which was attended by a core team of academic and administrative staff of UKZ, who were determined to work on further advancing the university's performance in applying and implementing projects.

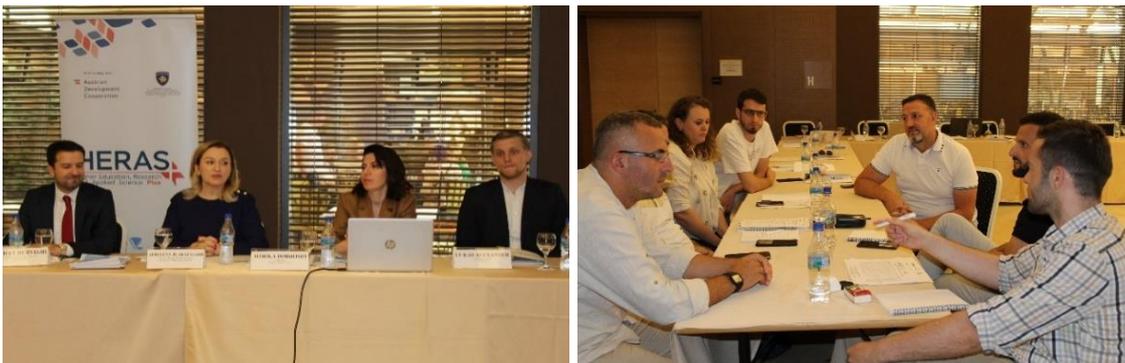


Project Cycle Management Training with University of Gjilan, 29 – 30 November 2022.

The workshop aimed at building capacities for writing, monitoring and implementing projects. The program covered all main topics related to PCM. Delivery methods included presentations, group work and coaching sessions. The UKZ team members, who participated in the training, were guided to work on concrete project ideas aiming to convert them into project proposals for potential funding.

Act. 2.3: Support to internationalization and mobility (e.g., through Erasmus+)

During the reporting period, the project prepared and delivered two training events for public HEIs on how to successfully apply for and implement Erasmus+ international mobilities in higher education. The events also contributed to an enhanced awareness regarding Erasmus+ funding possibilities. The first event was dedicated to academic staff of UP and was strongly connected to previous, similar interventions offered by the project. (In 2021, the project conducted a series of tailor-made workshops that included also coaching, aimed at transforming ideas of UP academic staff into concrete project proposals - for more information, see the previous progress reports).



Training: "Successfully implementing and applying for Erasmus+ International Mobilities in Higher Education, 28 June 2022.

Same as above, the second training also aimed at providing theoretical and practical knowledge on the Erasmus+ mobility funding scheme, with a specific focus on mobility projects for academics, students and university staff in Kosovo (particularly Key Action 107/171), covering the program's basic structure, its budget, implementation and application process.



Training: "Successfully implementing and applying for Erasmus+ International Mobilities in Higher Education, 28 June 2022.

Noteworthy, this intervention was prepared jointly with the Kosovo Erasmus+ Office and their officials were present at the opening of both workshops.

Act. 2.4: Development and implementation of programmatic partnerships

The implementation of the five programmatic partnership projects (PP) is underway. The project monitored the implementation of PPs proactively on-site and provided guidance and back-stopping advice whenever necessary. A short summary on the progress of each project gathered from monitoring, is provided below:

PP_1_Upscaling University-Industry cooperation through education-knowledge transfer coordinated by Fachhochschule Salzburg GmbH (Salzburg University of Applied Sciences) with the Kosovo partner University of Applied Sciences in Ferizaj (UASF), has successfully completed the planned activities in the reporting period. Notably, the Master Program "Interior Architecture and Design with Wood Products" was entirely transformed in the scope of this cooperation through a thorough process stretching from program analysis, interviews and discussions with the industry and students to considering labour market relevance and employment prospects. All identified issues were addressed and the program is accredited for five years (the maximal duration), and 40 students (the targeted value) are already enrolled in this program. The Knowledge Transfer Centre (InLAB) was equipped with two purchased computers that will enable cooperative work with the industry. Functionalization of the InLab was assessed and discussed and will be comprised of sections related to Start-ups (cooperation with the industry); Applied Research (cooperation with Industry and Universities); and Internationalization (benchmark Universities in other countries). It was decided that UASF will own the intellectual property of potential Start-ups. The main upcoming activity is the final/launch event planned for May 2023 in Kosovo (Annex 25: Programmatic Partnerships Interim-Reports).

PP_2_Treatment of pediatric acute lymphoblastic leukemia with a modified resource-conserved BFM protocol in Kosovo - coordinated by Medical University of Graz with Kosovo partner Medical Faculty of the University of Prishtina (UP), is running as planned. The surveillance of the flow-cytometry investigations run in Prishtina, to minimize the misdiagnosis risk and incorrect treatment protocols, are being successfully conducted. Thanks to the capacity building offered in the scope of the project (including under HERAS) the core physicians' team was able to correctly diagnose 80 flow-cytometry analyses (which were double-checked in Graz by Prof.

Wolfgang Schwinger). Therefore, the aim of securing a permanent excellent staff for the Pediatric Oncology Hematology ward in Prishtina is achieved and project partners consider this as the best guarantee for the future of pediatric hematology and oncology in Kosovo. Thanks to the new equipment secured with national funds, the final advancement of the present treatment protocol (which introduces the high-dose Methotrexate (MTX) in the consolidation phase of the protocol) is underway. Project partners plan to publish a monography of the last ten years, that also includes the support provided by HERAS and HERAS Plus. The project team plans also public TV appearances and interviews for local newspapers and publishing in a medical journal of the analysis conducted with the accumulated data (since HigherKos- up to the current phase). (Annex 25: Programmatic Partnerships Interim-Reports).

PP_3_Research capacity building to strengthen Empirical Education Research on Social Cohesion and Equity in Kosovo – coordinated by University of Graz with three Kosovo partners: 1. University “Isa Boletini” Mitrovica (UIBM); 2. University “Ukshin Hoti” Prizren (UUHP); and 3. The University of Prishtina “Hasan Prishtina” (UP). Project partners reported on team building and group formation activities, whereas network meetings were used for scientific discourse and community support, such as the interdisciplinary interinstitutional network of emerging researchers (consisting of 17 emerging researchers) and 9 research teams contributing to the creation of a strong knowledge base on aspects relevant to social cohesion and equity within the Kosovan schooling system. All nine working groups have drafted the first outlines of a book chapter (derived from the PISA and TIMSS research). Research groups will finalize their book chapters until December 15, 2022. So far research outcomes of the project have been presented at four international conferences in Austria, Armenia, Germany and Norway in the form of a keynote⁹, a symposium¹⁰, four papers¹¹¹²¹³¹⁴ and three posters¹⁵¹⁶¹⁷. Findings are planned to be presented in a symposium to the research community and policymakers on March 7, 2023 (national teachers’ day) in Prishtina. (Annex 25: Programmatic Partnerships Interim-Reports).

PP_4_Professional development for engineers of tomorrow (PDET) - Coordinated by Montanuniversitaet Leoben in Partnership with the University ‘Isa Boletini’ in Mitrovica (UIBM), finally completed all the necessary processes and contract signing that enabled the projects’ start as of September 1st 2022 (instead of June 1st 2021). A 2-day KOM took place at the UIBM in Mitrovica on September 27th and 28th, and a focus group will be set up with industrial advisors, faculty members and students. This will aid in understanding the teaching-learning environment, student insights, educational pedagogy and didactics, and most importantly, industry needs. A labour market analysis will proceed with the upcoming activities and lay the foundation

⁹ Wendt, H. & Hahn-Laudenberg, K. (2022). Recognition and participation through the lenses of large-scale assessments. Keynote at the EARLI SIG13 “Moral and Democratic Education” Conference 2022. Kristiansand

¹⁰ Grajcevcic, A., Shala, M., Hoxha, F., Sadiku, A., Bahtiri, S.K. & Billac (2022). Teacher education programs: Using data from PISA and TIMSS assessments to guide practice and teaching in Higher Education in Kosovo. Symposium presented at the *Teacher Education Policy in Europe (TEPE) Network Conference 2022*. Graz.

¹¹ Kacaniku, F., Aliu, J., Musliu, A. & Saqipi, B. (2022). Using Kosovo 2018 PISA results to inform teacher education policy: An investigation of the relationship of teacher instructional practices, student motivation and achievement in reading. Paper presented at the *Teacher Education Policy in Europe (TEPE) Network Conference 2022*. Graz.

¹² Shabanhaxhaj, S. & Wendt, H. (2022). Early childhood education in Kosovo: Evidence from TIMSS. Paper presented at the *European Conference on Educational Research*. Yerevan.

¹³ Jusufi, D. (2022). Westbalkan als Bildungsraum – Messinvarianz von Kontextvariablen in Nachkriegsländern in iLSAs. Paper presented at the AEPF 2022. Stuttgart.

¹⁴ Zylfiu, B. (2022). Inquiry-based learning in history: Beliefs and practices of Kosovan teachers. Paper presented at the *Teacher Education Policy in Europe (TEPE) Network Conference 2022*. Graz.

¹⁵ Bytyqi-Damoni, A. & Metaj Macula, A. (2022). Are students’ perceptions and attitudes toward science predictors of science achievement? Findings from PISA 2015 in Kosovo. Poster presented at the *Teacher Education Policy in Europe (TEPE) Network Conference 2022*. Graz.

¹⁶ Bytyqi-Damoni, A. & Metaj Macula, A. (2022). Are School Characteristic and School Systems Related to Student Performance in Science? PISA 2015 Results from Kosovo. Poster presented at the *European Conference on Educational Research*. Online.

¹⁷ Jusufi, D., Wendt, H. & Schwippert, K. (2022). Messinvarianz von Kontextvariablen in Nachkriegsländern in iLSAs. Poster presented at the AEPF-Nachwuchstagung 2022. Stuttgart.

for the milestone activity: The development of the Accelerator Program at UIBM in Mitrovica. (Annex 25: Programmatic Partnerships Interim-Reports).

PP_5_Programmatic Partnership between the Kosovo Accreditation Agency (KAA) and the Agency for Quality Assurance and Accreditation Austria (AQ Austria), Project partners successfully concluded several workshops in line with the agreed working modules: 6 activities (online workshops) were completed until summer 2022. The project partners worked on "IQM & core internal strategic management processes; EQA procedures; decision-making procedures; publishing of reports/outcomes" and as well on "Design of Methodologies/Implementing process/Peer review process: stakeholder involvement - guidelines, administrative procedures & review of processes in place". Based on the wish of the project partner KAA, the project partner exchanged experiences as well regarding ESG 3.4 "Thematic Analysis". The project partners agreed that one staff member of KAA will shadow a full conduct on an institutional re-accreditation of an Austrian Private University. The German fluency of the staff member will enable this exchange since the entire re-accreditation procedure will be conducted in German. With this additional opportunity, which has not been planned in the initial project outline, AQ Austria opens the possibility to observe in practice all contents and practices shared during the first series of workshops. In December 2022, the staff members, involved and actively participating in all workshops so far, will visit AQ Austria. The visit to AQ Austria will be followed by additional workshops until June 2023. (Annex 25: Programmatic Partnerships Interim-Reports).

Act. 2.5: Development and implementation of Social Dimension (SD) small grant scheme for students, CSOs, schools and HEIs

The implementation of the SD grants is underway. The project monitored their implementation proactively on-site and provided guidance and back-stopping advice whenever necessary. A short summary on the progress of each grant gathered from monitoring, is provided below:

SD-01-2022: "Research on the number of students of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities and mediation in the enrolment of new students in the university using the reserved quotas for minority communities" - The objective of the project was to conduct research on students from Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities completing their higher education in public universities in Kosovo and raising awareness on the University quota reserved for the communities. . The project has finished with the planned project activities on time as outlined in the project proposal. The project team has met with the Rector of University "Ukshin Hoti" Prizren (UUHP) to promote the utilization of the quota system in order to enhance access to higher education for (future) students from Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities. The information materials produced within the project have been distributed to partner schools, organizations and potential students. Through the project and in line with its objectives, awareness could be raised at the institutional level about quotas for the enrolment of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities at the University (Annex 26: SD-01-2022 Narrative Report).

SD-02-2022: "Promotion of Gender Equality and War against Bullying in RAE Community" - The objective of the project was to raise awareness on incidents of discrimination and bullying and to promote equal opportunities in education and on the labor market for Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities in the municipality of Fushe Kosove, South Mitrovica and Prizren. Lectures provided within this project focused on the topics gender equality and bullying among peers and lecturers presented brief concepts of both terms. Lectures were completed with primary school pupils and high school students. Along with the informative video shown to the participants, the project team distributed brochures developed within the project. The team also presented the project to the workshop organized by HERAS Plus on Gender Equality in Higher

Education in Kosovo on 11 October 2022. During the workshop, the project members - a group of students – had the opportunity to meet with different academics and civil society members specialized in this field (Annex 27: SD-02-2022 Narrative Report).

SD-03-2022: “Student Support and Development Service” - The goal of the Student Support and Development Service (SSDS) is to equip students (specifically students from marginalized communities) with the necessary skills, knowledge, and tools to effectively overcome their personal and academic challenges, in order to complete higher education studies and to become contributing members of the society. The goal is to prepare new students of the faculty and to offer services of support for new students. The Service Center was formally opened in November 2022. Students of the Department of Pedagogy are involved in volunteering or internships with the Center. The Faculty of Education will also require external support in order for the Student Center to continue functioning beyond the lifetime of the project. The center is preparing to apply for Horizon Europe and ERASMUS+ grants in order to continue its work.

SD-04-2022: “Students, University and Dealing with the Past Processes in Kosovo” - The main objective of the project was the delivery of lectures in the field of transitional justice to students. Through these lectures and discussions, the Center has promoted the importance of transitional justice and peace building education at the university level and in transitional justice processes in Kosovo. The project team organized several discussions within a series of workshops and met with other initiatives working on the topic of Transitional Justice. The lecturers were professors from the field who teach at the Faculty of Law, from University of Prishtina and also active members of civil society organizations (CSOs) that deal with transitional justice matters. The participants of the workshops are students from the Faculty of Law and from the Faculty of Philosophy of University of Prishtina. Project activities have been implemented according to the plan. The most prominent challenge for the Human Rights Center is the fact that Transitional Justice isn't included in the curricula as a mandatory subject. The project team has developed a brochure on the importance of studying transitional justice which will be shared with other universities in Kosovo, both in online and hard copy format (Annex 28: SD-04-2022 Narrative Report).

SD-05-2022: “Raising awareness on the inclusion of marginalized groups in University of Prishtina “Hasan Prishtina” - The main goal of the project was to identify obstacles that affect study progress as well as causes for drop out level of students at University of Prishtina. The target group of this project are minority communities, students from lower socio-economic backgrounds and female students. The project team has developed a questionnaire to collect data on the satisfaction of services and study conditions at UP. The project team has met with civil society organizations such as Handikos. A workshop was organized and served as a platform to discuss challenges and ideas and to identify what can be done differently in order to support marginalized communities. The data of the report will also be used as evidence for the development of policies and strategy of the University for further strengthening the inclusion of marginalized groups at UP.

SD-06-2022: “Equality through education - raising awareness of the rights of persons with disabilities” - This project aimed to increase the capacity of students and junior academic staff of University ‘Isa Boletini’ in Mitrovica (UIBM) - not studying law or being lawyers by profession - to understand the rights and legal obligations of persons with disabilities. The project has developed a questionnaire for academic staff and students to measure the current knowledge about the rights of persons with disabilities. The team has also organized awareness raising workshops with students and junior academic staff. The workshops provided the opportunity

for the University to also benefit from discussions with civil society members and providing an update on curricula of the BA and MA programs. The team has analyzed the data gathered through the questionnaire and workshop and organized a roundtable discussion to present the findings. The project team members suggested having a database with all necessary information for people with disabilities. The project team has also developed promotion materials and produced a promotional video distributed via the official website of the University of Mitrovica (Annex 29: SD-06-2022 Narrative Report).

SD-07-2022: "Increase higher education opportunities through equal access to e-learning and technology" - The overall goal of the project is to increase higher education opportunities through equal access to e-learning and technology. Through desk and field research, the Kosovo Centre for Distance Learning (KCDE) team has assessed existing digital skills and competencies and identified challenges related to accessibility, connectivity and e-learning in higher education. The findings are summarized in a report that assesses existing needs of marginalized groups in accessing, participating, and completing higher education and the impact of technology, with a special focus on gender perspectives. Through the research, KCDE has identified factors why the students have not been able to follow online classes during the pandemic. The implementation team has also finished a process of tracking students who weren't active during the COVID outbreak. The team has noted there is a lack of an online platform for each municipality that would showcase the number of students who were missing during the COVID time. Through activities such as the movie night, students from the Faculty of Education participated and met with Avni Mustafa who is a human rights activist and expert on Roma Inclusion.

SD-09-2022: "P2P Mentoring Program" - The goals of the P2P project was to raise awareness on the importance and promotion of higher education to high school students from marginalized groups; to increase the enrollment of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities at Kosovo public universities, as well as to provide supportive orientation programs for graduates from minority communities.. There was a very positive response from the participants who attended the training sessions. The project team contacted focal points for finding students from Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities. In three schools, the project managed to have info sessions with a total of 22 students, 10 of them were from Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities. ETEA awarded 8 mentors and 13 mentees certificated for successfully completing the P2P Mentoring Program (Annex 30: SD-09-2022 Narrative Report).

SD-10-2022: "Building Psychological Capacities for Returning Migrants (BPCRN)" - The project goal was to support high school students who are returning migrants with their journey through academia as well as with social challenges they may encounter. The project aims to empower young students to continue their high school studies and to encourage them to advance to higher education. Through extensive research via a feasibility study, the project has addressed the challenges encountered by returning migrants when reintegrating into society. A noted challenge for the project was the delay of activities at primary and high schools which was due to a strike of public administration. The project activities were later on implemented when schools were opened. The project activities and call for participation in counselling sessions have been disseminated through Facebook and other social media platforms of the organization. The information was shared with Youth Assemblies and other organizations like GIZ that work on similar projects with bigger outreach. The produced research report was published in the Facebook page of the organization. During the final stage, the project was conducting individual

sessions held by educational psychologists who focused on supporting students with their academic qualification and reintegration status as per identified needs (Annex 31: SD-10-2022 Narrative Report).

SD-11-2022: "Promoting Austrian involvement in state-building in Kosovo" - The goal of the project is to promote the OKAA to potential members through various activities and inputs (including on the Social Dimension of Higher Education). These activities are expected to increase OKAA's visibility and to become a platform to future Kosovo-Austrian alumni. The project aims at connecting state and non-state actors from both countries and explore new areas of cooperation. During the project timeline, OKAA has worked towards raising awareness about the goal of the organization, preparing visual promotion of notable alumni and planning an international conference. The aim of the conference is for the alumni to build social cohesion between amongst Kosovo-Austrian alumni.

Act. 2.6: Implementation of recommendations identified during HERAS workshops on applied science approaches

This activity is connected to Act. 1.1 and was planned to further support the implementation of applied science policies of MESTI. During the reporting period, however, no progress or no new developments can be reported due to a change of priorities on the side of MESTI (see above under Act. 1.1).

Act. 2.7: Development and implementation of applied science (AS) small grant scheme

During the reporting period, the project launched the call for the AS small grant scheme which aims to promote applied study programme approaches in HE in Kosovo (Annex 32: Guidelines of Applied Science Small Grant Scheme). Based on the successful experiences and positive responses during the previous phases of the project, the AS scheme has been upscaled under the current project in terms of its scope. The project received a solid number of applications (38), submitted by groups of students, CSOs and universities, faculties, and similar. The received applications were reviewed from an eligibility point of view and a thorough evaluation was conducted by the selection committee in accordance with the agreed criteria. The best 10 projects were selected for funding (Annex 33: Technical eligibility of AS applications & Results from the evaluation of the applications).

During the reporting period, the project prepared, negotiated and signed contracts with all AS grantees and a joint workshop for all grantees was organized to discuss implementation modalities, challenges that they might face, reporting templates (both, narrative and financial) and other matters which are essential for a smooth and efficient implementation. In addition, all grantees presented their respective projects during the workshop and discussed possible synergies, challenges and opportunities that may emerge during implementation.



Applied Science Grant Scheme Internal Workshop, 7 September 2022.

The implementation of the projects will be proactively monitored on-site by the project team and new updates, including on challenges and good practices – will be included in the next report:

AS-01-2022: Concrete Applications of Algorithms and Data Structures in modern Web and Mobile Development - The main objective of the project is to target Computer Science students who will soon enter the IT industry. The goal of the training sessions is to prepare students with applicable knowledge. The trainings will also serve as platforms for students to network with other employed students in well-known companies. The training sessions are planned for University of Mitrovica, University of Gjilan, University of Prizren and University of Prishtina.

AS-02-2022: Transformational learning through study visits and internships in various sectors of the tourism industry - The main objective of the project is to foster the collaboration between potential employers and students from the Faculty of Business, University 'Haxhi Zeka' in Peja. The project consists of study visits in different restaurants and hotels in Peja where the students can get introduced to entrepreneurs and develop their professional skills.

AS-03-2022: Strengthening links between academic and professional development for students of the Faculty of Economics (UIBM) - The main objective of the project is to strengthen links between academic and professional development for students of the Faculty of Economics. More specifically, it aims to increase the cooperation between industry and higher education and to identify the needs of labor market, so they can be included in curricula of study programs. This project aims to identify the needs of the labor market through discussions between representatives from business community, academic staff and students. The project will influence the preparation of students with an education that is more aligned to the needs of the labor market and society. The project plans to organize a roundtable with relevant stakeholders from the labor market and other faculty members.

AS-04-2022: Career orientation and skills needed for professional work for students that come from marginalized communities' backgrounds - The main objective of the project is to establish a network for building soft skills for forty students aged 18-25 from Kosovo's marginalized communities and youth with hard social and economic conditions. The participants will be part of a series of trainings where they will acquire soft skills needed for professional work. The goal is to create learning opportunities for young people from marginalized communities in order to respond to needs of professional work.

AS-05-2022: Justify a network for jurists - The main purpose of this project is to establish an online platform for law students from all over Kosovo. The goal of this project is the development of practical knowledge for students in the field of justice, so they can perform better and more easily. The proposed platform will be a new tool for law students that can be beneficial for networking with professional stakeholders.

AS-06-2022: The relation of the diploma of the graduates at the University of Prishtina with their current occupations - The main objective of the project is to collect information about the correlation of labor market and university experience among graduates after 2008 from University of Prishtina - Faculty of Philosophy, Faculty of Economics, Faculty of Law and Faculty of Mathematics and Natural Sciences. The data retrieved from the intended survey will be beneficial for future generations who will have to select study programs.

AS-07-2022: An examination of the access to employability skills and future career choices, of the students of the Faculty of Philosophy, University of Prishtina - The main objective of the project is to understand the curricula of the Faculty of Philosophy and to identify career opportunities and relevant labor market needs. A survey will be conducted investigating career choices and possibilities to create new job opportunities for graduates of the Faculty of Philosophy. The project will also provide students with access to extracurricular activities such as training and internships that will be facilitated by the University in collaboration with civil society.

AS-08-2022: How relevant is the Faculty of Education of University of Prishtina with teachers' pedagogical needs - The main objective of the project is to provide significant support to the Faculty of Education of the University of Prishtina in generating empirical evidence for the relevance of their study offer. The outputs from this proposal will inform the Faculty of Education on the request for program update for the teachers' pedagogical needs.

AS-09-2022: Climate Changes in Higher Education Curricula - The main objective of the project is to establish a baseline analysis and mapping of the curricula of higher education institutions about how the climate change topics are addressed to the students. The conducted survey with students will assess their knowledge and attitudes to the climate changes from the perspectives of causes, effects, and measures to mitigate climate changes in individual and community level.

AS-10-2022: Bridging the Gap Between Industry and Academia The main objective of the project is to establish a cooperation with the industry so that the existing study program at Department of Chemistry Faculty of Mathematical and Natural sciences, University of Prishtina, to be adapted to the demands of the labor market. From this cooperation will be derived very useful recommendations for the department of chemistry to initiate the development of new programs which are directly related to the demands of the labor market in Kosovo. Through the cooperation agreements will be enabled the realization of the practical work of the students in different companies which is foreseen to be included in the study program.

Output 3: Kosovo has further advanced the quality of its research capacities and the internationalisation/ Europeanisation of its higher education and research system.

Act. 3.1: Improved structural integration of Kosovo in Horizon Europe through an adjusted NCP system, a deliberate decision on the association of Kosovo to Horizon Europe and facilitated access of Kosovan researchers to European R&I programmes

During the reporting period, the project prepared and delivered a workshop on Horizon Europe Project Proposal Writing. It further supported capacity building of the Kosovo National Contact Points (NCP) structure and provided training of young professionals on Horizon Europe.



Workshop on Horizon Europe Project Proposal Writing, 22 September 2022.

The workshop on Horizon Europe Project Proposal Writing attracted a wide range of professionals from HEIs and civil society organizations. The event offered an overview of the Horizon Europe collaborative project actions and practical guidance on the entire application process, including areas such: Development of a project idea; Call Decoding; Excellence and Ambition; Implementation Part: Activities-, Task description and Work Packages; Project Budget and Eligible Costs; Deliverables and Milestones; Impact Pathways; Exploitation and Dissemination, Communication.

Back-to-back with the workshop, the project in cooperation with MESTI, supported selected participants identified by the NCP coordinator with individual consultations to upgrade the project concepts/ideas developed during the training through feedback and guidance for application to Horizon Europe calls.

On another note, the project supported the development of the Kosovo NCP Platform¹⁸, which was launched, presented and elaborated at an event supported by the project.



Launch of the Kosovo NCP platform, 24 August 2022.

During this event, the respective Kosovo NCPs were trained on how to use and utilize the platform, guided by the Training Manual prepared for this purpose (Annex 34: NCP Platform User Manual). The support for developing the Kosovo NCP Platform has been reiterated after several consultations and meetings with MESTI officials. The platform is considered necessary because it is a pledged commitment in line with the association agreement signed between MESTI and the European Commission. The platform is a crucial tool for NCPs to exercise their role in communicating to the general public and specific target groups information related to relevant calls, training and networking opportunities, training or/and grants offered to build capacities of NCPs and/or researchers. The platform will be populated by the NCP members, coordinated by MESTI whereas maintained technically by the project until the end of 2023.

Act. 3.2: International R&I cooperation support is provided to Kosovan researchers both at regional and European level through two dedicated support mechanisms

The implementation of the nine research projects is underway. Upon approval of the extension of the duration of the project, all grantees were invited to come up with adjusted timeline and whenever this was needed, they had the opportunity to opt for a 10% increase of the budget for possible new ideas, provided that those fit the objectives/results of the original project proposal. All projects will be prolonged for several months, at the latest until June 2023, and additional activities with a budget increase will be implemented in seven projects only (based on their requests). A short information on the progress of each project is provided below:

K-02-2021: Air Pollution in Kosovo - impact on human health, behaviour change, and policy recommendations – Since the last reporting period, two articles derived from the project’s research were published: “Air Pollution in Kosovo: Short Term Effects on Hospital Visits of Children due to Respiratory Health Diagnoses”¹⁹ and “Particulate Air Pollution and Primary Care

¹⁸ <https://kosovoncp.rks-gov.net/>

¹⁹ <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/36011773/>

Visits in Kosovo: A Time-Series Approach²⁰". Additional papers are due to be submitted soon. While the first study is a time series study and in addition to hospital data also primary care data are now available, the second study is a repeated survey in schools including training packages as a sort of intervention.

K-03-2021: Historical demography in Kosovo - The "Historical demography in Kosovo" – Since the last report, the project managed to get permission to access the necessary research sources and is now in the phase of digitizing appropriate sources (scanning, xeroxing or photographing them). Additional appropriate sources for transcription (household registers and birth registers for Janjevë) have been identified and are in the phase of being transcribed and coded. An extension of the project duration was granted until March 31st, 2023 which will allow ample time for the project's completion.

K-05-2021: The impact of COVID-19 on consumer food safety perception in Kosovo and Albania - an international comparison with developed countries (Acronym: IMPACT) - major activities since the last interim report include the finalization of data collection (including 200 interviews more than originally foreseen) in Kosovo and Albania and the analysis of collected data (including datasets from Austria). On September 6th, 2022, the preliminary results were presented in a joint workshop in Prishtina in front of academics, experts, farmers, and entrepreneurs from the food value chain.²¹ A research paper is currently being finalized and planned for publishing in a reputable journal. The prolongation and the 10% additional budget applied for will be used to publish two academic articles in international, peer-reviewed journals, instead of one and to invite academic staff from Kosovo and Albania at BOKU for a short visit (3-4 days).

K-06-2021: Community-based multilingualism meets internationalization: The University of Prizren as a nexus of intercommunity contact in Kosovo – Since the last reporting period, the final symposium in Prizren took place on July 12-13, 2022. It was a hybrid event (with physical presence of the team from Vienna) with over 60 attendants present at the University "Ushkin Hoti" Prizren and several international attendants, among them the invited speakers, present online. ICLHE Conference in Maastricht (NL), 18-21 October 2022: The abstract of the Kosovo team was eventually accepted for a presentation instead of a poster. Currently, teams are in the process of co-writing a research article to be submitted to the Q2 journal *Multilingual and Multicultural Development* (1.961 (2021) Impact Factor; acceptance rate 26%).

K-07-2021: Building a post-war justice system in Kosovo: The independence, impartiality, fairness, and accountability of the internationalized judiciary – Whilst the project partners have finalized uncovering the legal framework and other legal authorities that govern the research and identifying the international and national cases concerning the topic, this project was awarded with the "Faculty of Law Research Award" by the University of Graz²² This award recognizes the research excellence of the project, the expected impact, the involvement of young researchers and the ensured long-lasting and sustainable exchange of knowledge on questions related to rule of law principles in post-conflict societies by establishing a Regional Scientific Network for researchers on post-war justice systems coordinated by the University of

²⁰ <https://www.mdpi.com/1660-4601/19/24/16591>

²¹ <https://boku.ac.at/wiso/mi/newsitem/70351>

²² <https://trainingszentrum-menschenrechte.uni-graz.at/en/research/forschungsprojekteresearch-projects/>

Haxhi Zeka. A three-day Workshop and Roundtable with relevant stakeholders will be held during February 2023 to discuss the conducted research.

K-08-2021: Physical fitness, anthropometric and nutritional status of young Kosovan adults - an 8-yr follow-up study - During the previous reporting period, the project has held its kick-off meeting (online) and selected and adapted the questionnaires for data collection. The necessary documentation has been submitted to the University Clinical Center Ethics Committee for data collection review and approval.

K-09-2021: The Testimonies of State Reprisals: Experiences of Imprisonment, Work Dismissals, and Social Exclusion. Narratives of Kosovan Educators, Students, and Artists between 1989 and 1999. In Kosovo and Serbia, the Ph.D. researchers have conducted the collection of written materials, press and archive sources, interviews with actors/witnesses, and drafting of the research paper. The research work done by the Serbian researchers has enabled a solid factual basis for testing the hypotheses and writing a paper on the patterns of awareness and attitudes of the Serbian public towards the state reprisals, social exclusion and segregation, and the parallel education system in Kosovo during the 1990s. The validation workshop is expected to take place in following reporting period.

K-12-2021 - Automated Examination Timetabling in the Faculty of Electrical and Computer Engineering - University of Prishtina. During the reporting period, already three working variants of the automated methods for the examination timetabling problem have been developed. Seven bachelor students have graduated with the empirical research work conducted in the project's scope. Five master's students and a university assistant have developed advanced machine learning solutions which have been presented in the following Conferences: 1. "The Iterated Local Search approach for the original version of the examination timetabling problem (as defined by the University of Udine)" was presented at the 13th International Conference on the Practice and Theory of Automated Timetabling in Leuven, Belgium from 30 Aug 2022 until 2 Sep 2022; 2. The approach based on Iterated Local Search and Genetic Algorithms has been developed for the photo slideshow problem and has been presented at 14th Metaheuristics International Conference which was held from 11 to 14 July 2022 in Ortigia-Syracuse, Italy. The team leader from University of Prishtina, has presented the research results at two scientific conferences, namely: the 13th International Conference on the Practice and Theory of Automated Timetabling and the 14th Metaheuristics International Conference. The planned activities for the upcoming 3-month period will culminate in developing a prototype of the automated examination timetabling, which is being conducted by a master's student.

K-13-2021 - Farmer's Handbook as a tool to improve pig welfare in Kosovo and Albania – After the three workshops held in Vienna, Tirana, and lastly in Prishtina, the "Handbook for Farmers" was disseminated to pig farmers in Albanian and Serbian language in order to improve pig health and welfare in Kosovo and Albania. The implementation/intervention phase will follow for 20 pig farms by selecting (1-3) individual farm improvement measures.

Act. 3.3: Development and implementation of system of fellowship grants (300 months) including set up of alumni system

The candidates selected from the 1st and 2nd round of the call have started their scholarships in Austria and implementation goes smooth and as planned. The project maintains sound contacts with the scholars and their mentors and provides guidance and back-up as needed.

Upon approval of the extension of the duration of the project, the project offered the existing scholars to come up with proposal of extending their scholarship studies with additional months. This was welcomed by two scholars and the project prepared all necessary paperwork in order for the contracts of them to be adjusted and aligned with the new timeline.

During the reporting period, the project launched the 3rd call in line with adjusted Guidelines (Annex 35: Guidelines for PhD&PostDoc Scholarships 3rd call). In total, 18 applications were received by the deadline of 15 November 2022 (Annex 36: Applications overview for the 3rd call of the scholarships). In the coming period, the project will organize a selection board meeting (consisting of ADA, MESTI, WUS AT and OeAD representatives) to decide on the candidates that will be awarded scholarships (More information will follow in the next progress report). As reported earlier, the scholarships provide a platform for future PhD graduates and post-Doc researchers to contribute to the institutional capacity development of their home institutions in Kosovo by completing their PhD studies and the post-Doc research at a university in Austria.

Concerning the Organization of Kosovar Austrian Alumni (OKAA), the project continued to support the development of the association's capacities. Namely, the project earmarked and granted one SD grant (see above under Act. 2.6) which supports the activities organized and implemented fully by the OKAA. External expertise was engaged to develop and design a new logo and other promotion materials that reflect the OKAA profile (Annex 37: OKAA Logo and PR materials). In addition, the project together with OKAA worked on preparations for a study visit to Austria of all OKAA members (Annex 38: The concept document of the OKAA study visit). The visit will take place from 22-25 January 2023 with the aim to empower the OKAA board by exposing its members to new ideas for potential activities and opportunities for possible cooperation with Austrian counterparts. It will also serve as an opportunity to promote the newly established association with relevant Austrian counterparts (More information will follow in the next progress report).

Coordination, steering, monitoring and management measures

During the reporting period, the project organized its 4th Steering Board Meeting (SBM) in blended format. Most of the members took part physically, whereas as announced, some of them connected via Zoom platform. At the meeting, the members reviewed the project's implementation progress, discussed issues related to a non-cost extension and budget amendment as well as the mid-term evaluation of the project. For each of these points, the Steering Board Members provided their views and inputs as can be seen from the meeting minutes (Annex 39: 4th SBM minutes). All Steering Board Members expressed their satisfaction with regard to the pace of implementation and encouraged the project to continue along the same lines.

The project continued its efforts with regard to cooperation, coordination and monitoring, including all relevant stakeholders such as MESTI, KAA, public HEIs, students, researchers and others. The pace of the pandemic was decreasing with time which boosted the implementation of activities and by that the utilization rate of the funds was further increased.

Some of the project activities were monitored and steered in close cooperation with the beneficiaries such as MESTI, KAA and public HEIs. This modus operandi strengthens ownership of beneficiaries towards effective implementation as well as sustainability of project results.

Update on mid-term evaluation

During the reporting period, the project launched the call for the midterm evaluation as per the TORs approved by ADA (Annex 40: ToRs for Mid-Term Evaluation). The call for bids had to be readvertised due to the lack of sufficient applications (a minimum of four applications were required). Within an extended application timeline, a sufficient number of applications could be received and a company was selected by an independent selection panel, consisting of external experts. The kick-off of the review was taking place in November 2022 and since then, the evaluation team has been in the process of preparing the inception report (Annex 41: Inception Report of Mid-Term Evaluation). Furthermore, the field mission in Kosovo started with different stakeholder meetings. The validation workshop with preliminary findings and recommendations from the field mission is scheduled for 9 December 2022 (More information will follow in the next progress report).

Communication, outreach and visibility efforts

During the entire reporting period, the project paid strong attention to communication, outreach and visibility. Each activity is promoted and made visible (to the extent possible) in the project Facebook page, LinkedIn page and website. These platforms are updated regularly, and the followers of the social platforms continue to increase. The visibility of donors and the consortium members is always ensured in all posts. At the events, the project team always refers to donors and whenever possible, the logos and banners of all are placed as required. The above-mentioned system of communication flow enables dissemination of information in a transparent and clear manner.

In addition, the project successfully developed and launched the project brochure which provides an overview of the main processes, activities, and milestones achieved from the start of the project until December 2021 (Annex 42: HERAS Plus Brochure). Through the brochure, the project clearly demonstrates that the progress made is also due to the excellent cooperation with all relevant stakeholders, including MESTI, KAA, SPO, public HEIs and project partners. All information and text is illustrated and visualized with selected photos.

Risk Management

Description of the risk	Likelihood	Possible impact	Prevention/ and or mitigation measures
OUTCOME LEVEL			
ENQA has changed its statute and will allow new members to join only if they are official signatory of the Bologna process	High	High	<p>Risk prevention is not in the sphere of influence of the project.</p> <p>Kosovo becoming official signatory is a political process and does not depend only on the compliance of the Kosovo higher education system with the Bologna principles.</p> <p>Risk mitigation includes efforts from the project side to speak with MESTI, KAA, AoK and other stakeholders to raise awareness of this new provision regarding ENQA membership.</p>

POLICY LEVEL			
New and emerging priorities by MESTI embedded (i.e., performance-based funding of public HEIs), but not enough time to address these priorities within the project lifetime	High	Medium	<p>Risk prevention is not in the sphere of the project</p> <p>The project has modified the budget to accommodate new priorities and MESTI relies heavily on the support of the project. As mitigation strategy, the project has clearly identified what can be still done within HERAS Plus (i.e., roadmap, AI) and what would need to be covered by a potential follow up project.</p> <p>If needed, the project may request another budget amendment in order for these priorities to be reflected accordingly.</p>
The development of AS policies still lacks prioritization by MESTI	High	High	<p>The project has involved the MESTI in all aspects of the process, including design and development of the AS roadmap as well as follow-up actions.</p> <p>Mitigation includes active advocacy from the project vis-a-vis MESTI to establish an own working group that will oversee the entire process and validate the project actions.</p> <p>To date, MESTI is not proceeding with the implementation of AS policies as AS is no priority of the current Government (opposed to the previous Government who strongly promoted AS).</p>
Numerous ongoing reforms and capacity development measures might limit MESTI and KAA absorption capacities.	Medium	Medium	<p>Risk prevention is considered through joint project design with core stakeholders, a detailed background analysis and full compliance of the project with national and relevant EU policies, strategic documents and other.</p> <p>Risk mitigation includes continuous contact with stakeholders, as also the case in HERAS, in order to be able to react immediately to challenges which might influence project implementation.</p> <p>Furthermore, the project outputs are aimed to contribute to improved governance based on transparent procedures and quality along European values and standards, underlining the importance of good governance and transparency in the public sector. In this context, the project will also take into account the ENQA recommendations regarding KAA.</p>
Relevant stakeholders in Kosovo might fail to provide enough instruments for	Medium	Medium	<p>Risk prevention is addressed through joint project design with core stakeholders, a detailed background analysis and full compliance of the project with national and relevant EU policies, strategic and other documents.</p>

<p>monitoring the implementation of policies and regulations, mechanisms to provide incentives for complying with regulatory frameworks to implement policies and regulations.</p>			<p>Risk mitigation includes continuous contact with stakeholders, as also the case in HERAS, in order to be able to react immediately to challenges which might influence project implementation.</p> <p>Furthermore, the project outputs are aimed to contribute to improve governance based on transparent procedures and quality along European values and standards which underline the importance of good governance and transparency in the public sector. In this context, HERAS Plus will also enhance capacities of key stakeholders for implementing and monitoring relevant regulatory frameworks.</p>
UNIVERSITY LEVEL			
<p>Changes in university management and/or political leadership could influence the continuity of the project and its priorities.</p>	<p>Medium</p>	<p>Medium</p>	<p>Risk mitigation includes reference to signed MoUs and official / introductory meetings with the newly appointed management.</p>
<p>Absorption capacities of HEIs might limit the scope of the impact of the project</p>	<p>Medium</p>	<p>Medium</p>	<p>Risk prevention is considered through joint project design with core stakeholders.</p> <p>Risk mitigation includes continuous contact and communication with stakeholders, as also the case in HERAS, in order to be able to react immediately to challenges which might influence project implementation.</p> <p>Furthermore, project outputs are aimed to contribute to improve governance based on transparent procedures and quality along European values and standards underlining the importance of good governance and transparency in the public sector. In this context, HERAS Plus will also enhance capacities of HEIs in areas such as strategic planning which will ultimately also lead to an increase of HEIs' overall absorption capacities.</p>
<p>Public HEIs might have limited capacities to absorb the funds foreseen with the earmarked funds of the project</p>	<p>High</p>	<p>Medium</p>	<p>Risk mitigation measures include proactive support from the project which also means full administration and management of the services foreseen to be funded through earmarked funds i.e., contracting of local experts, workshop organisation, vendors for the workshop etc.</p>

RESEARCH LEVEL			
The funds allocated for scholarships might not be fully utilized within two rounds of the call due to lack of absorption capacities from the public HEIs and individual researchers	Medium	Medium	<p>Risk mitigation includes continuous discussion with the MESTI and ADA how to adjust and revise the criteria and open-up the scheme for other HEIs too.</p> <p>The project launched a 3rd call (once the non-cost extension was approved by ADA) and 18 new candidates have applied. The balance of the funds will be done once the 3rd call scholars are awarded.</p>
Universities from Kosovo might have limited capacities to implement collaborative research projects at regional or European level	Medium	Medium	<p>Research projects are implemented in close cooperation with MESTI and by regularly advising and coaching the coordinators from Kosovo to support a successful implementation of projects. Furthermore, the project aims to develop further capacities to support Horizon Europe applications through a dedicated support scheme.</p>
The development of CRIS could be faced with lack of ownership by the MESTI and local institutions	High	Medium	<p>The project has involved MESTI in all aspects of the process including design and development of the CRIS (KRIS) roadmap as well as follow-up actions including the contracting of a company for the development of the software platform.</p> <p>Mitigation includes active advocacy from the project vis-a-vis MESTI to establish a working group that oversees the entire process and validates the project actions also during this period. Synergies with the project ResearchCult enable a wider outreach of the CRIS. After the end of ResearchCult in 2023, the MESTI working group continues its activities.</p> <p>In addition, the project has proposed to MESTI to foresee one full time staff that will maintain and coordinate the implementation of CRIS (KRIS) on the long run, for which MESTI already has expressed readiness. There is a clear plan to include this post in the new organigram of MESTI.</p>
SPO is faced with lack of capacities and staff and as a result requires additional support to develop and implement the S3	High	High	<p>During the period an open dialogue with the Head of SPO was started to reconfirm how the project can continue its targeted support.</p> <p>Before any action is taken, the project will liaise with other donors/actors and align its potential new support.</p> <p>As part of the mitigation strategy, the project will take active role in the working groups of the SPO in the process of S3 development, buy-in missing capacities and then engage national expert that could</p>

			fill the void. The general focus and rationale of the project support to S3 will remain unchanged.
The recently developed AIs that support the law on innovation and knowledge transfer might lack implementation due to lack of capacities of MESTI	Medium	Medium	<p>MESTI's ultimate interest was to develop these AIs, but with regard to implementation, there is only a preliminary pilot plan for an innovation voucher to be implemented in 2023 but yet outside the new AI regulation.</p> <p>Risk mitigation consists of an open dialogue with MESTI and other concerned ministries, and provision of support for proactively promoting the AIs. Furthermore, risk mitigation included empowering public HEIs to align the regulations at university level with the new AIs and to develop other necessary templates stipulated in the AIs.</p>
The recently established alumni association OKAA lacks capacities to be self-sustainable and fund-raise for new activities	High	Medium	<p>The project is in constant communication with the board of the OKAA, provides capacity building support and has allocated a grant to support the implementation of their activities.</p> <p>The risk is that once the project stops support, OKAA may not be in the position to identify further funding sources.</p> <p>Risk mitigation consists of support for a plan of activities of OKAA for the next 3-5 years, to identify potential donors, to connect with similar associations from Austria and to learn from their experiences.</p>

Lessons learned and perspectives

- *Organization of the annual conference for the second time this year and development of the Manual on M&E* – The project in cooperation with MESTI and public HEIs, managed to successfully hold its 2nd annual conference (following the 1st annual conference held last year). These annual events have become an excellent platform to discuss emerging higher education issues and to provide ideas on how those could be addressed in the future. This year's conference was dedicated to the topic of monitoring and evaluation of strategic documents of public HEIs which is crucial for the successful implementation of strategies. In this context, the Conference provided the opportunity to launch and promote the newly developed M&E Manual.
- *Direct involvement in the development of performance-based funding* – The project continued to facilitate direct communication between the Ministries of Education in Austria and Kosovo regarding the development of a performance-based funding system for public HEIs. To make sure that the Kosovo system has the possibility to build on lessons learnt from Austrian experiences, the project developed a roadmap that has been endorsed by MESTI and public HEIs and will serve as a reference document for future steps.

- *Being included into the WGs of MESTI and public HEIs for drafting the necessary AIs and regulations* - In order to ensure smooth implementation of some activities that among others require policy and university intervention, the project advocated to be included in the WGs composition. This allowed access and insights into different topics, to identify the needed expertise and in return allowed to formulate the terms and conditions for expert engagement from the project side. Being involved in the WG level allowed the project also to provide comprehensive support for the WG proceedings with regard to the workshop/events organizations.
- *Developing the NCP platform* – During the reporting period, the project in close cooperation with MESTI and NCPs developed a new web platform from scratch. This was very much needed and requested by all stakeholders and the project engaged national expertise which resulted in the launch of the platform. It can be seen already that the platform enhances information sharing and enables the NCP to reach-out to the right target groups - i.e. research, innovation and SME entities. In return, through the NCP platform, Kosovan stakeholder are well informed about opportunities provided by Horizon Europe with the ultimate goal to transform those into concrete funding proposals.
- *Successful organization of the study visit to Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Research of Austria* – In close coordination and consultation with MESTI, the project managed to organize a successful study visit to Austrian Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Research on the newly emerged topic of performance-based funding of public HEIs. The project in cooperation with Austrian counterparts prepared a detailed programme for the Kosovan delegation and liaised with Federal Ministry officials (different departments) and several HEIs. The knowledge and information gathered during the visit was utilized in follow up activities.
- *Continuing efforts to avoid overlapping with other initiatives* – Same as in the previous reporting period, the project continued to be actively involved with other donor projects in order to avoid potential overlaps. This information exchange has taken place on both levels, on management as well as activity level.

Finances

Overall expenditures

Since the start of the project and until the reporting period, the project has spent less than originally planned. This is mainly related to the pandemic, the late signing of the co-financing agreement and to some extent due to structural changes among beneficiary institutions. For instance, since the start of the project and due to early elections, the Government changed three times which had an impact on the continuation of project activities. As a result, certain delays were noted due to the required alignments of planned activities with the new cabinets as well as emerging priorities of MESTI and other beneficiaries. All of this had a huge impact on the utilization rate of the project funds which was addressed in a request for a non-cost extension (already approved by ADA).

With regard to the lower spending related to the pandemic, we have to point out act. 2.2. (competitive fund for strategic development of public HEIs), with a utilization rate of only 26% until the end of this reporting period. For this reason, the assessment phase (baseline development) took longer than expected. This means that tailor-made activities - based on the needs identified in the baseline assessments – could be designed and implemented, only one-year after the start of the project. In addition, a number of Rectors – our main counterparts at universities - have changed for various reasons.

However, the project has entered a new phase within this activity which is related to the purchase of equipment for public HEIs. This phase will combine continued interventions (as also outlined in this and previous reports) with equipment purchases for HEIs being clearly linked to the needs identified in the respective baselines/strategies (see Annex 44: Earmarked Funds: Guidelines for Equipment Requests; for more information, see next progress report). Respective expenditures are thus expected as HEIs are being invited to submit requests for equipment in line with these guidelines.

With regard to the budget for bank and money transfer fees for project accounts, there has been a huge increase which resulted in an overspending of this budget line. The reasons are as follows: In April 2022, without any prior notification the bank account of the project was terminated (TEB Bank Prishtina). Due to management change, the bank requested auditing and revision of the many bank accounts in line with their new administrative instructions. Since then, the consortium has provided all necessary documentation in order the bank account is reopened and functional again, but it took until the end of September 2022 until this issue was solved. Unfortunately, during this period it was also not possible to open a new project bank account at a different bank. The issue with the bank account has caused a discontinuation of financial operations of the HERAS Plus Prishtina Office and as a result, all payments had to be done by the Graz Office which highly increased the overall transaction costs. We may address this as well as additional activities related to performance-based funding of HEIs (emerging priority from the side of MESTI) in a request for budget reallocation.

Staff changes

With regard to staff at the Consortium level, one change has taken place in the reporting period: Alegra Hoheisl (ZSI). The CV is attached as annex (Annex 43: CV Allegra Hoheisl).

The total project budget according to contract	Expenses in the reporting period	Remaining budget	Budget for the following reporting period (estimated)
2.800.000 Euro	367 475,67 Euro	1 525 986,71 Euro	1 525 986,71 Euro

Annexes

Annex 1: Filled in matrix with the detailed description of the achievement of outcome and outputs indicators measured against baseline and target values and reflecting the quantitative and qualitative dimension of the achievement

Annex 2: Detailed planning (action plan)

Annex 3: Progress report on the environmental, gender and social risk management and sustainability plan

Annex 4: HRBA Monitoring Plan

Annex 5: Reporting on Target 4.4 of the SDGs in line with the HERAS+ LFM

Annex 6: Roadmap Document Advising the Government of Kosovo on how to Establish a System of Performance Based Funding for the Kosovar Public Universities

Annex 7: MESTI Decision on establishing WG on drafting the concept document for the revision of Law on Scientific Research Activities

Annex 8: MESTI Decision on establishing WG on drafting AI on Register of the scientific innovative institutions

Annex 9: Final Draft of AI on Register of the scientific innovative institutions

Annex 10: Presentation of CRIS

Annex 11: Conceptual Plan of CRIS submitted to AIS

Annex 12: Qualitative analysis of preliminary priority areas in the Smart Specialization process in the Republic of Kosovo

Annex 13: Gender Equality in Higher Education Institutions in Kosovo

Annex 14: Report from the Workshop on Gender Equality in Higher Education

Annex 15: Manual for monitoring and evaluation of strategic documents in public universities of Kosovo

Annex 16: Policy Brief from the 2nd Annual Conference on Higher Education in Kosovo

Annex 17: UP decision on establishing WG on drafting the regulation on measuring the performance evaluation system for academic staff

Annex 18: Establishment and implementation of the academic staff performance evaluation system at UP

Annex 19: The training modules for CET UUHP

Annex 20: UASF Digitalisation strategy

Annex 21: UASF Manual for academic staff performance evaluation

Annex 22: Assessment on Labor Market Relevance for the Existing Study Programs of the UHZ

Annex 23: UHZ Draft strategy 2023-2026

Annex 24: Towards a model of determining program relevance for labor

Annex 25: Programmatic Partnerships Interim-Reports

Annex 26: SD-01-2022 Narrative Report

Annex 27: SD-02-2022 Narrative Report

Annex 28: SD-04-2022 Narrative Report

Annex 29: SD-06-2022 Narrative Report

Annex 30: SD-09-2022 Narrative Report

Annex 31: SD-10-2022 Narrative Report

Annex 32: Guidelines of Applied Science Small Grant Scheme

Annex 33: Technical eligibility of AS applications & Results from the evaluation of the applications

Annex 34: NCP Platform User Manual

Annex 35: Guidelines for PhD&PostDoc Scholarships 3rd Call

Annex 36: Applications overview for the 3rd call of the scholarships

Annex 37: OKAA Logo and PR materials

- Annex 38: The concept document of the OKAA study visit
- Annex 39: 4th SBM minutes
- Annex 40: ToRs for Mid-Term Evaluation
- Annex 41: Inception Report of Mid-Term Evaluation
- Annex 42: HERAS Plus Brochure
- Annex 43: CV Allegra Hoheisl
- Annex 44: Earmarked Funds: Guidelines for Equipment Requests