

# United Nations Development Programme

# **Active Labour Market Programmes 2**



# **Annual Report**

(January – December 2022)

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### **Acronyms**

ALMP2 Active Labour Market Programmes project

ALMPs Active labour market programmes

DSPF Department of Social Policy and Families

DRRP Department for Reintegration of Repatriated Persons

KEA Kosovo Employment Agency

EMIS Employment Management Information System

EO Employment Offices

KAS Kosovo Agency of Statistics

MEST Ministry of Education, Science and Technology

MIA Ministry of Internal Affairs

MFLT Ministry of Finance, Labour, and Transfers

MLSW Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare

MOCR Municipal Offices for Communities and Returns

MOU Memorandum of Understanding
NGO Non-Governmental Organization

OG Operational Guidelines

OJT On-the-Job Training Programme

PB Project Board

PES Public Employment Services
SEP Self-Employment Programme

SES Social and Environmental Standards

UNDP United Nations Development Programme

WSP Wage Subsidy Programme

KBRA Kosovo Business Registration Agency

### **Project Card**

**Project Title:** Active Labour Market Programmes 2

#### **Main Objective:**

Active Labour Market Programmes 2 (ALMP2) is a multi-year project, designed together with the former Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare (MLSW)- now part of the Ministry of Finance, Labour and Transfers (MFLT).

ALMP2 is comprised of two separate components, both simultaneously address the pressing issue of unemployment in Kosovo. The first (I) component focuses on improving the capacities of the labour market institutions to design relevant gender responsive policies at central level and improve overall service delivery. This component mainly tackles the needs and limitations in institutional capacities to deliver employment services for all registered jobseekers in Kosovo. The second (II) component focuses on sustainable economic reintegration for repatriated women and men. This component is delivering employment measures and developing institutional capacities for addressing the needs of repatriated jobseekers in Kosovo. Each of the outputs and their respective objectives corresponds to timelines, set of activities and results that are separate. However, activities from both outputs often overlap, since they both work towards addressing unemployment in Kosovo.

Regarding the improvement of the capacities of the labour market institutions (I) the project sets out to strengthen and ensure the sustainability of the links between labour market actors – employers, jobseekers, policymakers, public employment services and vocational training and educational institutions. The project does so through a) improving the human resource capacities and providing continued direct implementation of active labour market measures for vulnerable groups – with a particular focus on youth and women – and by providing further technical support for the capacities of implementing institutions; B) The enhancement of the labour market knowledge base to ensure evidence-based decision-making among labour-market actors. The timeline for this intervention with approved no-cost extension is **01 September 2018 - 30 September 2023**.

For the sustainable reintegration of repatriated women and men (II), the project provides skills development and employment opportunities, by working closely with labour market institutions and in partnership with the private sector in Kosovo. Reintegration is sought through implementing active labour market measures, namely, on-the-job training, wage subsidy, vocational training, and self-employment program. The foreseen timeline for this intervention is **01 January 2019- 31 December 2022**.

The project Is implemented in partnership with the Employment Agency of Kosovo (KEA) as the main project partner and financed by the MFLT, the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

Start/end dates of the project: March 2014—- December 2022.

Main Project Partner(s): MLFT, Kosovo Employment Agency (KEA) Regional and Municipal Employment Offices, Vocational Training Centres (VTC), Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA), Municipal Offices for Communities and Returns (MOCR), Municipalities, Private Sector Enterprises, Civil Society Organizations (CSO's), Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MEST), Ministry of Industry, Entrepreneurship and Trade (former Ministry of Trade and Industry (MTI), Kosovo Agency for Statistics (KAS), other labour market institutions, Regional Development Agencies (RDA), and Business Associations (BA)

**Partner projects:** SDC-funded "Enhancing Youth Employment" project (EYE), the EC-funded project "Enhancing Employability for Vulnerable Groups" (EEVG— finished), World Bank projects, GIZ projects, Aligning Education with Labour Market Needs (ALLED) project, EC-funded KOSVET 6 project (finished) and others.

#### **Donors:**

Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland (2014-2016): 1,200,000 €

**Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare** (2015, 2016, 2017, 2018-2019): 2,260.208 €

Ministry of Internal Affairs (Employment and training project 2016-2018): 1,682,083 €

Ministry of internal Affairs (Self-Employment Program 2018): 1,011,000 €

Ministry of Internal Affairs and Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare (2019-2022): 3,039,000 €

**United Nations Development Programme** (2014-2016): 312,500 €

The Government of the United Kingdom (2016): 68,000 €

Municipality of Vushtrri/Vučitrn (2019): 31,518 €

Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports (2020): 500,000 €

**Total Project Budget (2014-2022):** 10,104,309 €

<b>Expected Outputs</b>	Project Indicator(s)/Baseline/ Targets/Status 2022
OUTPUT 1: Human Resource capacities of MLSW, EAK and PES are improved for delivering of employment services by Employment offices, VTCs, and Labour market research and evidence	Indicator 1.1: The performance of PES in the provision of Employment Services  Baseline 1.1: Limited capacities of PES and MLSW  Target 1.1 The performance of PES in the provision of Employment Services is improved through provision of technical expertise and direct interventions.  Status: PES implement an improved service delivery model addressing the needs of registered jobseekers.
output 2: Sustainable economic integration for unemployed young men and women registered in the PES through active labour market measures (Wage Subsidy programme, Self-Employment, Internship and On the Job	Indicator 2.1: Number of <i>regular</i> jobseekers benefiting from the active labour market measures  Baseline 2.1: 13,980 people  Target 2.1 2021: At least 600 jobseekers have benefited from the measures  Status: 336 (2018) + 512 (2019) + 0 (2020) + 392 (2021) + 0 (2022) = 1240
Training);	Indicator 2.2: % of newly benefiting <i>regular</i> jobseekers are women Baseline 2.2: n/a
	Target 2.2: At least 50% of ALMP beneficiaries are women

**Status:** 211 (2018) + 282 (2019) + 0 (2020) + 273 (2021) + 0 (2022) = **766 (62%)** 

**Indicator 2.3:** % of newly benefiting *regular* jobseekers are from among the non-majority communities

Baseline 2.3: n/a

**Target 2.3:** At least 10% of beneficiaries are non-majority communities **Status:** 30 (2018) +87 (2019) + 0 (2020) + 45 (2021) = 162 **(13%) Indicator 2.4:** The number of repatriated jobseekers who have benefited from ALMPs

**Baseline 2.4:** 1,185 repatriated have benefited from ALMPs (2012-2017) **Target 2.4:** At least 1,400 repatriated persons have benefited from the ALMPs (2019 – 2021)

**Status:** 357(19') + 263(20') + 444(21') + 471(2022) =**1535** 

**Indicator 2.5:** % of *repatriated* women who have benefited from ALMPs **Baseline 2.5:** 30% of ALMP beneficiaries are repatriated women (2012-2017)

**Target 2.5:** At least 30% of ALMP beneficiaries are repatriated women **Status:** 96(19') + 54(20') + 95(21') + 122(2022) = 367(24% of total)

**Indicator 2.6:** % of repatriated persons from non-majority communities benefited from ALMPs

**Baseline 2.6:** 23% of ALMP beneficiaries are repatriated persons from non-majority communities

**Target 2.6:** At least 30% of beneficiaries are repatriated persons from non-majority communities

**Status:** 56(19') + 42(20') + 29(21') + 71(22') = 198(13% of total)

Results are presented in cumulative, presenting the total number of beneficiaries to date against set target indicators for each section.

#### Part A

#### (1.a) Executive Summary

The Active Labour Market Programmes 2 project (ALMP2) is the second phase of UNDP's employment programme implemented since 2005. The project is implemented in close cooperation with the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare (MLSW) that is now part of the Ministry of Finance, Labor and Transfers (MFLT) and also together with the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA), public employment services (PES), and the Kosovo private sector.

The project is in line with and contributes to strategic priorities of the MLFT (former MLSW) and addresses the key development challenge in Kosovo, unemployment. The project's main component, along with the institutional capacity development activities, is employment promotion and skills development of women and men. The project is well-established with over 17,000 women and men that have been part of one of several active labour market programmes implemented since the start.

In recent years, the project has evolved to respond to another critical challenge in Kosovo's sustainable development: the reintegration of repatriated persons. In this regard, the project collaborates effectively with the MIA, particularly the Department for Reintegration of Repatriated Persons (DRRP) and the Employment Agency of Kosovo (KEA). This collaboration amongst key stakeholders ensures adequate service provision to repatriated jobseekers in the field of skills development and employment.

Active Labour Market Programmes 2005-2022	Number of beneficiaries/years					
						202
	17	8	9	0	1	2
On-the-job Training	4,573	243	181	40	24	25
The Wage Subsidy Programme	2,926	292	391	56	14	4
The Self-Employment Programme	63	360	267	167	119	242
Internship Programme	1376		30		392	
Public Works Project	3,194					
<b>Professional Practice in Enterprise for VET</b>						
students	1,138					
Training at Don Bosco	40					
Trainings at Vocational Training Centers			439	59	108	
Entrepreneurship training for the SEP					287	222
			1,30			
Subtotal	13,310	895	8	322	944	493
TOTAL	17,272					

Table 1 Number of ALMP beneficiaries 2005-2022

#### **Summary of results:**

# OUTPUT 1: Human Resource capacities of MLSW, KEA and PES are improved for delivering of employment services by Employment offices, VTCs, and Labour market research and evidence-based decision making.

- From March 2022 to June 2022 the project conducted an external impact assessment of the Internship Programme. Findings indicate a positive impact perception from the beneficiaries, as well as the companies and NGOs engaged in the internship programme. A notable preference is given by beneficiaries for internships where mentors were available to them.
- During the reporting period, the project provided technical assistance in organizing and delivery of seven workshops where staff from the public employment services, MFLT, KEA, DSPF have worked on administrative legislation and application procedures.
- The application procedures were simplified for social assistance beneficiaries through the development of secondary legislation which consists in developing of following administrative instructions: Administrative Instructions for calculating the monthly amount of Social Assistance, Administrative Instructions on Administrative Procedures for return of the payments by Social Assistance Scheme beneficiaries, Administrative Instructions on Administrative Procedures for return of the payments by Social Assistance Scheme beneficiaries and Administrative Instructions on determining the procedures for the payment of one-time social assistance support.
- Heightened inter-institutional coordination through the Platform for the Integrated Management of Social Services and the Active Inclusion Integration Platform.
- Improved data collection and processing for the Department of Social Policy and Families (DSPF).

OUTPUT 2: Sustainable economic integration for unemployed young men and women registered in the PES through active labour market measures (Wage Subsidy programme, Self-Employment and On the Job Training); Sustainable economic reintegration for repatriated women and men.

#### **Repatriated Jobseekers:**

- 25 repatriated persons benefited from the On Job Training scheme
- 4 repatriated persons benefited from the Wage Subsidy programme
- 242 repatriated persons benefited from the Self Employment Programme
- 509 received Self-employment and Entrepreneurship training

#### Gender Mainstreaming, Governance and Environment

The ALMP2 project utilizes best practices and lessons learned from the implementation of the previous phases where the project was directly involved in establishing the KEA. Further the project has provided expertise in generating feasibility studies for the implementation of an

employment fund, supported the KAS in the compilation of the Labour Force Surveys (LFS), as well as jointly with the Ministry of Trade and Industry (MTI) produced skill need assessments. Additionally, in liaison with the University of Prishtina, the project has established a platform of collaboration between the Kosovo institutions and academia. For this, the project supported the establishment of an academic journal consisting in organizing two scientific conferences integrated within the Faculty of Economics. The 1<sup>st</sup> international conference produced the journal" Knowledge Based Society as a Strategy for Faster Economic Growth" and 2<sup>nd</sup> conference produced the journal on "Migration, Diaspora and Economic Development. Thus, the project's institutional cooperation has been founded on the very successful partnership of the past ten+ years.

Women represent **62**% of regular jobseekers within the project to date (exceeding the planned **50%** mark set in the project document), however within the target group of the repatriated beneficiaries, women only represent **24%**, **this due to predominantly men driven migration**, **resulting with a low level of participation of women within the target pool of repatriated jobseekers.** Within the scope of activities related to repatriated jobseekers, the project works actively in promoting gender inclusive measures, where for each vacant spot in employment schemes, preference is given to women candidates.

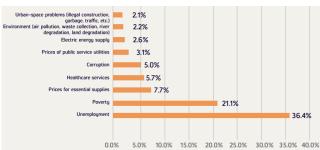
ALMP2 follows the UNDP Social and Environmental Standards (SES) in all three levels: Programme Level Principles, Project Level Standards, as well as Social and Environmental Management System Requirements. Within the programmatic level, ALMP2 contributes directly to **strengthening the resilience of societies** to the impact of shocks, disasters, conflict and emergency situations (i.e., COVID-19 response via provision of vouchers and employment measures throughout the pandemic which were vital for the private sector). In project level, ALMP2 contributes towards fulfillment of Standard 7: Labour and Working Conditions and Standard 5: Displacement and Resettlement. In compliance with the Standard, the project ensures the safety and health of workers (during the COVID19 pandemic, private sector companies were obliged to follow health safety standards), compliance with employment and labour laws, applicable rules and regulations and international commitments (enforced via Memorandums of Understanding and employment contracts). Regarding Standard 5, a major component of the ALMP2 project addresses the need for economic integration of repatriated jobseekers. In line with UNDP practices, ALMP applies strict SES measures such as regular stakeholder engagement and development of joint response mechanisms, provision of equal access to information; and regular monitoring, reporting and compliance.

### **PART B (Detailed Progress Report)**

#### (1.b) Background information

According to the Kosovo Labour Force Survey 2021 (LFS)<sup>1</sup>, for the second quarter of the year 2021, two thirds of the population in Kosovo are working age population, with an employment rate of 30%. Men have a comparatively higher employment rate (44%) than women (16%). The unemployment rate was 20.5% and more pronounced for women (22.1%), compared to men (19.9%). The highest unemployment rate was among the 15-24 age group at 38.9%. The inactive workforce was quite high at 62.3%, and again, this variable was also negatively skewed towards women (79.4%), compared to men (45.1%). The economic sectors that most people were employed in continue to be trade (18.1%); construction (11.4%); education (11.3%); and manufacturing (9.6%).

Based on the recently published Public Pulse<sup>2</sup>, findings from the April 2022 opinion poll show that three most pressing issues reported were unemployment (36.4%), poverty (21.1%) and prices of essential supplies (7.7%).



According to the Kosovo Youth Study 2020<sup>3</sup>, the lack of job opportunities

Figure 1 Perceptions on major problems currently facing Kosovo

(81%), poverty or poor economic situation (68%), and nepotism/corruption (42%) remain the top three challenges for young people in Kosovo. While these problems were also voiced as top issues in 2018, an increased ratio of young people mentioned the lack of job opportunities (an increase of 21 percentage points (pp)) and poverty or a poor economic situation (an increase of 19 pp) in 2020. At the same time, the study shows that regardless of ethnicity, age, or gender, focus group participants agreed that unemployment was the number one challenge for youth in Kosovo.

Through providing employment opportunities, as well as helping public institutions to deliver more effective, tailored, and modern services, the project contributes to a number of **Sustainable Development Goals: SDG1:** End poverty in all its forms everywhere, **SDG5:** Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls, **SDG8:** Promote inclusive and sustainable economic growth, employment and decent work for all, **SDG10:** Reduce inequality within and among countries, and **SDG16:** Promote just, peaceful and inclusive societies.

The project is in line with the UNDP Eight Point Agenda (SC 1325), especially point 6 (Ensure gender-responsive recovery) and in line with the UNDP Gender Equality Strategy. The project is

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> https://ask.rks-gov.net/en/kosovo-agency-of-statistics/add-news/labour-force-survey-lfs-q2-2021

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> https://www.undp.org/kosovo/publications/public-pulse-brief-xxii

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> https://www.ks.undp.org/content/kosovo/en/home/library/poverty/youth-challenges-and-perspectives-in-kosovo.html

ensuring provision of equal opportunities to men and women jobseekers and encouraging young, disadvantaged women to undergo training and enhance their skills, hence increase their employment opportunities.

#### (2.a) Reporting on Project Progress

Output 1 Human Resource capacities of MLSW, EARK and PES are improved for delivering of employment services by Employment offices, VTCs, and Labour market research and evidence					
Target	Indicator status (Fully/Partially/Not achieved) <sup>4</sup>	Explain the status of the indicator	Means of Evaluation/ Verification		
PES implement an improved service delivery model addressing the needs of registered jobseekers.	Fully achieved	PES provide Employment Services and receive regular technical assistance via project expertise	ALMP2 Project database, reports, ToRs, Contracts.		

Provision of technical expertise for MFLT (former MLSW), KEA, and VTC in provision of trainings and employment services for registered jobseekers.

#### **External evaluation of the impact of the Active Labour Market Programmes 2**

In September 2022, the project contracted one international and one local expert to conduct an extensive evaluation of project activities, through the scope of relevance, impact, effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability, as well as to elaborate on lessons learned and recommendations for future interventions. Specifically, the evaluation<sup>5</sup> highlighted:

- ALMP2 is content-rich (activity-intensive) and its implementation deploys a flexible approach
  within the overall evaluation strategy, involving interactions with an impressive number of
  stakeholders.
- The technical assistance and capacity building activities enable institutional stakeholders on the central and local level to improve labour market policy development and deliver efficient needs-based measures to vulnerable groups. They consist of the following types of interventions:

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> The target is "Partially achieved" when 60% of target is reached; Target is "Not Achieved" when less than 60% of target is achieved; target is "Fully achieved" when 100% or more of target is achieved.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> The complete evaluation and findings are presented in Annex 2



- Effectiveness: Most of the project's target outputs and results have been achieved, apart from some of the indicators' targets related to repatriated women and non-majority groups. The non-achievement of their involvement (in the period 2019-2022) is due to external factors, where representatives of these two groups have been low in numbers. The quality of project interventions and results is found satisfactory as the Public Employment Services reform supported by the ALMP2 project has led to improvements in the PES delivery model and increased capacity of EOs and VTCs. The project has demonstrated flexibility to effectively respond to COVID-19 related implementation challenges, through modifying procedures and introducing new methods.
- **Efficiency:** All the activities implemented have had positive effect on the target groups and have been implemented in an efficient manner within the planned budget, meeting the main project indicators and within the general project timeframe. Findings suggest that some delays in the implementation of project annual plans and reallocations of resources between budget lines have been implemented which does not influence the overall project implementation. The support provided to the beneficiaries has been implemented efficiently, reaching the most vulnerable on the market from and putting efforts to actively involve the local business in the ALMMs' implementation.

#### Analysis and impact assessment of the internship scheme

The project contracted an external evaluator to measure and assess the impact of the internship scheme that was implemented throughout 2021. However, the evaluator was engaged for the period of March 2022 to June 2022. Through this period, the evaluator was requested to: conduct a desk review, design the evaluation methodology, as well as the database and questionnaires for employers and beneficiaries (interns). Further, the evaluator conducted an online survey with 100 employers (out of 300) and 150 beneficiaries (interns out of 392) that have been engaged in the internship programme. Overall, the evaluator has presented the findings through the following categories:

**Effectiveness:** Beneficiaries largely agree that the internship duties given were matched with their knowledge and skills (94.5% of the beneficiaries of which 30.8% men, 63% women, and

0.7% others). 93.7% of the beneficiaries reported that from the internship program, they received the professional experience they expected.

**Impact**: 98% of the beneficiaries strongly agree or agree that this program has had a significant impact on their life and professional experience (of which 30.1% men, 67.2% women, and 0.7% others). 73.4% of the beneficiaries in the internship program has increased their professional knowledge and skills (of which 16.8% men, 55.9% women, and 0.7% others).

**Sustainability**: 98.6% of the beneficiaries considered the provided internship as an effective form of intervention to accelerate full-time employment (of which 31.5% men, 66.4% women, and 0.7% others). From the employers' perspective, 93% of the companies and 81.3% of the NGOs considered the internship as a good opportunity to assess a person for future hiring.

**Future impact**: 73.2% of the beneficiaries see themselves working in Kosovo, while the rest (26.8%) see themselves working abroad. The most common reasons for leaving Kosovo are the lack of employment opportunities (73.6%) and no merit-based employment (42.9%).

**Gender equality:** 96.2% of the beneficiaries reported that in their workplace men and women are treated equally, while the rest (a very small percentage) reported the opposite. Almost all of the employers (98.3% of the companies and 75% of the NGOs) reported that they do not have a strategy/policy to increase gender equality in the workplace.

# Support the Vocational Training Centers with technical experts for a one (1) year period

The project team has conducted regular meetings with the EA and VTC, as well as the employment offices to identify the challenges faced by the public employment services and provide direct assistance and mentoring for each employment office. During the reporting period, the project has engaged two trainers at the vocational training centre in Prizren (one for tailoring and one for bakery classes).

# Provision of technical assistance via a junior associate for the Kosovo Employment Agency

From September 2021 to March 2022 the project has engaged a junior associate in providing technical assistance to the KEA in monitoring and reporting on the agency annual workplan, the provision of administrative assistance in organizing workshops, coordinating meetings, entry and analysis of data for reports sent by local employment offices. Overall, the project assisted in improving service delivery at the agency level through reducing some of the administrative burdens for the officials.

#### Provision of legal expertise for the Ministry of Finance, Labour and Transfers

The project assists the MFLT in the restructuring process of all its departments by revising regulations and other administrative instructions. This is done to enable the utilization of all human resources and capacities to implement relevant strategies and actions plans foreseen by

the ministry. In this context, the ALMP2 project has engaged a Local Legal Expert to support the MFLT and provide technical assistance for the general secretary office in the restructuring process. The legal expert commenced in May 2022 and was involved in the provision of services for a duration of 6 months.

To date, the expert has reviewed legislation for employment, pension schemes, and draft regulations for internal organization of the ministry. Additionally, the legal expert has worked on the draft of Internal Regulation, focusing on the merger of the Department of Macro-Economic Policies and the Department of Fiscal Policies; the merger of the Department of Pensions and the Department of Families of War Martyrs and Invalids; and the elaboration in four divisions of the Labour and Employment Department.

# Provision of legal expertise to the Department of Social Policy and Families (DSPF) on developing secondary legislation

The project provides on-going technical expertise to the DSPF in developing and amending secondary legislation with the intent of simplifying application procedures for social assistance beneficiaries. The consultant employed via the project provided expertise between 09 April 2022 – 15 August 2022, and produced the results:

- Facilitated working groups for the revision of secondary legislation, collected inputs and submit a report for approval by the MFLT.
- Developed administrative instructions for calculating the monthly amount of social assistance.
- Developed administrative instructions on administrative procedures for return of the payments by social assistance scheme beneficiaries.

#### **Provision of website support for the Kosovajob Portal**

The project has provided direct assistance in the design and development of the web application platform "Kosovo Job Portal" for the KEA. The platform is linked with the Employment Management Information System (EMIS) in order to enable provision of all employment services online by the KEA. The project extended the system and warranty support for the website until 31 December 2022.

#### Provision of legal support for the KEA

The project supported the KEA through the provision of a legal expert. The expert examined and prepared legal proceedings on implementation of contracts for the beneficiaries that benefited through active labour market schemes.

#### Technical assistance to the MFLT on drafting the internal development strategy

The expert engaged through the project identified and analysed strategic documents related to the scope of the ministry. The expert also facilitated workshops and consultative meetings, as well as drafted the internal development strategy of the MFLT.

Provision of technical assistance for design, development, update and maintenance of a new Website for the Kosovo Ministry of Finance, Labour and Transfers

The project is involved in designing and developing the website for the MFLT to be used as a tool for communication and collaboration between the MFLT stakeholders and for sharing real time information and promotions of the ministry's activities. The timeline for implementation of this activity is 15 November 2022 (for a fully functional website) and from 15 November 2022 to 15 Novembe— 2023 - maintenance support and the warranty period.

# Technical assistance in data registry at the Department of Social Policy (DSP) within the Ministry of Finance, Labour and Transfers

The expert provided administrative and technical support for coordinating activities with the KAS, with regards to data collection and processing, as well as publishing research reports. Specifically, the daily tasks included recording the data from research and surveys conducted by the DSP, developing reports of findings, summarizing achievements in the field of social policy and prepare draft reports for publication in the Department's website. Proper data collection and reporting is crucial for understanding the impact of social policies. Engaging an expert in data registry and processing has improved the quality of reporting and publications presented by the DSP. The technical expertise has been implemented from 14 June 2022 to 31 December 2022.

# Technical expertise for the Department of Social Policy and Families, Ministry of Finance, Labour and Transfers

During the period of November 2021 to February 2022, the project delivered technical assistance to the DSP and MFLT on implementation of recovery measures and provision of technical assistance for working groups on the Law for Social Assistance. The contracted expert provided assistance on drafting the operational manual for the social assistance scheme, organized 5 working groups for the development of the Law for Social Assistance, compiled comments and compared law to existing EU legislation. Additionally, the project also assisted in drafting a manual for delivery of social assistance scheme which includes application forms, and other relevant documents for implementation of social assistance scheme.

Strengthen the capacities of institutional structures within the MFLT and the KEA by organizing policy development workshops and study visits to exchange best practices with other countries and development research knowledge on the labour market.

The project assisted in organizing and deliver the following workshops:

- I. Finalizing the Manual for the Application of procedures on the social assistance scheme according to the legislation on the Social Assistance Scheme (16 Feb 2022) during this workshop, staff from the department of social policy drafted and finalized the manual regarding applications for the social assistance scheme.
- II. "Regulation on Internal Organization and Systematization of Jobs in the Ministry of Finance, Labor and Transfers" (25-27 February 2022) – during this workshop, 28 representatives from public institutions, associations, social assistance beneficiaries, and

Kosovo protection corps discussed and examined the draft regulation on internal organization within the ministry. The workshop covered the reorganization of the Budget Department, the Macroeconomic Policy Department, the Fiscal Policy Department, the Property Tax Department, the Government Aid Department, the Department of Social Policy and Family, the Department of Pensions, the Department of Families of Martyrs and War Invalids, the Department for Employment and Social Entrepreneurship Policies, and the Audit Department.

- III. Drafting of the law on labour (12-14 May 2022) during this workshop, 14 participants from the MFLT have examined and incorporated feedback on the draft labour law.
- IV. Review of the annual work plan of the Employment Agency for the year 2022 (9<sup>th</sup> of June 2022). During this workshop, representatives from the EAK examined the national strategy for economic development, economic reform, and employment policymaking.
- V. Workshop on implementation of Kosovo's Active Inclusion Integration Platform (AIIP) through the Integrated Case Management System (23-24 June 2022) with 23 representatives from the Employment Agency (EA), the Department of Social and Family Policies (DSPF), the Employment Office (EO), and the Center for Social Work (CSW). Throughout the workshop, participants identified the following key challenges and solutions in implementing the AIIP platform:

Challenges

#### Solutions

- Exchange of information between the CSW and EO
- Lack of access to EO data for the CSW
- Refusal of job by the jobseeker and how to reflect it in the system
- Lack of feedback from the companies, namely from the employer or the jobseeker during participation in the ALMM measures
- Use of the integrated system by staff and the need for additional training
- Lack of ability to complete the Individual Work Plan at the service provider institution
- Modification of CSW and EP systems with special emphasis on category two beneficiaries of social assistance
- Communication with clients and parties
- Lack of cooperation with NGOs

- Modification and simplification of the Individual Work Plan and career counseling
- Training on career counseling and individual work plan
- Periodic meetings of CSW and EO staff on the implementation of the system - every 3 months
- Exchange of lists of registered clients of the EO and CSW through the system and mutual information
- Grouping of SAS beneficiaries by the CSW and presentation to the EO in real time
- Training for SAS employees on the use of the system(s)
- Trainings on primary and secondary legislation
- Training/workshop for database administrators from both institutions

 Lack of cooperation with Municipalities and other Institutions at central and local level

- together with SAS service heads/advisor
- Develop skills for communication with partners/clients
- Training related to communication, gender equality, and sexual harassment
- Strengthen cooperation with NGOs
- Strengthen cooperation with municipalities regarding vacancies and need for workers
- Roll out information campaigns and increase public awareness in schools and women's groups, about the role of the EARK and the opportunities offered
- VI. Workshop on the implementation of "scheme 1.8 "Government for Families" (29 July 2022). During this workshop, 44 officials from the employment agency have discussed modalities for implementation of the wage subsidy measure as part of the scheme 1.8 "Government for families" as well as foreseen targets for the rest of the annual workplan.

Workshop "Finalizing Administrative Instructions of the Law for Social Assistance Scheme". During this workshop the following key documents were reviewed and finalized: Administrative Instruction No. 04/2017 for the Calculation of the Monthly Amount of Social Assistance, Administrative Instruction No. 08/2010 for the Administrative Procedures for Returning Payments from the Beneficiaries of the Social Assistance Scheme Earned Without a Legal Basis, Administrative Instruction No. 04/2013 on the Procedures for submitting the Request for Social Assistance a—d Project - Administrative Instruction No. 06/2013 on the Calculation of Material and Non-Material Goods and Computable and Non-Computable Incomes, Administrative Instruction No. 12/2013 for determining the procedures for one-time aid



Figure 2 Footage from the workshops.

OUTPUT 2: Sustainable economic integration for unemployed young men and women registered in the PES through active labour market measures (Wage Subsidy programme, Self-Employment and On the Job Training)

Job Training)			1	
Target	Indicator status (Fully/Partially/Not achieved) <sup>6</sup>	Explain the status of the indicator	Means of Evaluation/ Verification	
Target 2.1: At least 600 jobseekers have benefited from the measures (Regular jobseekers)  Target 2.2: At least 50% of ALMP beneficiaries are women (Regular jobseekers)	Fully Met  Fully Met	1240 regular jobseekers have benefited from ALMP2 employment measures to date.  766 out of 1240 of beneficiaries are women. (62%)	ALMP2 project database, Memorandum of Understanding (MOUs), Certificates ALMP2 project database, MOUs, Certificates	
Target 2.3: At least 10% of beneficiaries are non-majority communities  (regular jobseekers)	Fully Met	162 out of 1240 of beneficiaries are non-majority communities (13%)	ALMP2 project database, MOUs, Certificates	
Target 2.4: At least 1,400 repatriated persons have benefited from the ALMPs (2019 – 2021)	Fully Met	<b>1535</b> repatriated persons have benefited from ALMPs	ALMP2 project database, photos, MOUs	
Target 2.5: At least 30% of ALMP beneficiaries are repatriated women	Partially	<b>367</b> (24%) out of 1535 repatriated beneficiaries are women.	ALMP2 project database, photos, MOUs	
Target 2.6: At least 30% of beneficiaries are repatriated persons from non-majority communities	Not achieved	<b>198</b> (13%) out of 1035 repatriated beneficiaries are persons from nonmajority communities	ALMP2 project database, photos, MOUs	

Provision of employment and skills development through the Wage subsidy (WS), Self-Employment (SEP) and On the Job Training (OJT) for long-term jobseekers in partnership with private enterprises.

The project implements active labour market measures in close cooperation between the KEA and the private sector. The project team has provided technical support for EO counsellors and the representatives of the VTCs at every stage of the implementation of the ALMPs. In part, the technical expertise was also focused on ensuring that measures are implemented according to procedures outlined in the manuals. The project team has been directly involved in developing the templates, selection of candidates, and overseeing the implementation of the schemes.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> The target is "Partially achieved" when 60% of target is reached; Target is "Not Achieved" when less than 60% of target is achieved; target is "Fully achieved" when 100% or more of target is achieved.

Additionally, the team monitor the payment process and secure that all the applicable regulations are implemented throughout the implementation of the project.

The project has had a two-pronged approach in addressing the labour market needs, thus expanding the scope of impact by simultaneously providing employment measures for the **repatriated jobseekers** and the **regular job seekers**. Below are the administrative regulations that define each category:

**Repatriated jobseekers** are defined and bounded by the regulation (GRK) No. 22/2020 on reintegration of repatriated persons:

- 1.3. **Repatriated person** a person from Kosovo who, due to the lack of legal basis for staying in a foreign country, is repatriated to Kosovo regardless of their return manner.
- 1.4. **Reintegration** social and economic reinclusion of repatriated persons in the society of Kosovo after repatriation.
- 1.14. **Reintegration measures** actions of the relevant institutions to provide the assistance and support for repatriated persons during the reintegration process.
- 14. MLSW/KEA shall be responsible for the integration of repatriated persons in the labour market through the Active Labour Market Measures (ALMMs).

Regular jobseekers are defined by the Labour Law of Kosovo Nr. 05/L -077 and the Law on the Employment Agency NR. 04/L-205<sup>7</sup>

- 1.1. **Registered unemployed** any person from the age of eighteen (18) to sixty-four (64) years old, unemployed and registered at the employment agency of Kosovo;
- 1.5. Active labour market measures (ALMM) measures consisting of support and temporary interventions for individuals or groups identified as having difficulty entering employment in the labour market.

**Employment Offices** provide the following active labour market measures for regular jobseekers: wage subsidies, on-the-job training, vocational training, internships, self-employment, public works.

During the reporting period January – December 2022, the project implemented the following key labour market measures:

**ALMPs for repatriated jobseekers** (Wage Subsidy Programme, On the Job Training, Entrepreneurship training, Self-Employment Programme)

**What is the OJT?** It is a three-month training programme, guided by an individual plan agreed upon between the jobseeker and the private company; monitored by the trainers of the VTC and implemented by the employment counsellors with the support of the ALMP team throughout the process.

**What is the WSP?** One-year employment programme, which subsidize up to 50% of the employee's wage, based on the profile of the jobseekers (the ones with a higher risk of becoming long-term unemployed are subsidized for a longer period).

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https://aprk.rks-gov.net/en-US/Content/Documents?doctype=3&doctype=4

**What is the SEP?** The Self-employment Programme supports the creation of viable businesses capable of surviving in the competitive market. Apart from providing equipment, the Programme also delivers training and mentoring consultancy on business skills to support beneficiaries to be successful in the chosen field.

What is the Entrepreneurship and Self-Employment Training? Entrepreneurship and Self-Employment Training include training of repatriated beneficiaries before application phase of Self-Employment Programme and consist of business idea and business plan development with certification which equip the participants with skills for next stage of competitive application process under SEP program.

#### **ALMPs for repatriated jobseekers**

The inclusion of repatriated persons into the labour market continues to be an important issue facing Kosovo institutions. The economy is unable to generate enough jobs to absorb the available workforce, and the skills mismatch between the supply and demand within the labour market continuously create unemployment gaps. As a response and to smoothen the integration of repatriated persons into society, active employment measures have been designed and implemented to provide vocational training and employment opportunities in accordance with the needs of the labour market.

Repatriated persons are supported by reintegration schemes based on the Regulation on the Reintegration of Repatriated Persons. The reintegration process is managed by the Department for Reintegration of Repatriated Persons (DRRP) established in 2012, within the MIA. Support from the reintegration department consists of assistance for access to public services and throughout the application process for benefiting from reintegration schemes. The annual reintegration database of the MIA highlights the trend of repatriated persons over the years:

While the trend of returnees in Kosovo shows a decline over the last years (except for 2022), their economic reintegration continues to be challenging as the total number of returnees residing in Kosovo is high (over 20,000). Most of the repatriated persons do not have marketable skills nor the experience needed to secure a

Period	No. Returnees
Jan – Dec 18'	2,395
Jan – Dec 19'	1,536
Jan – Dec 20'	624 <sup>8</sup>
Jan – Dec 20'– 848º	
Jan - Dec 21'	440
Jan- Dec 22'	<i>613</i> <sup>10</sup>

Table 2 Number of returnees over the years (Source: MIA)

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> https://mpb.rks-gov.net/Uploads/Documents/Pdf/AL/359/WEB Raport 2020 Shqip.pdf

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> https://mpb.rks-gov.net/Uploads/Documents/Pdf/AL/375/RAPORTI%20VJETOR%202021%20ALB..pdf

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup>https://mpb.rks-gov.net/Uploads/Documents/Pdf/AL/2453/Rap.i%20shkurter%20vjetor%202022%20ALB..pdf

sustainable income, making their integration into the labour market a complex and challenging socio-economic issue.

The aim of this component is to advance skills and provide employment opportunities for repatriated persons, through holistic and inclusive means, and by working closely with the PES and private sector. The project achieves its objective through the implementation of the active labour market measures: OJT, WS, SEP.

The project published calls for application for repatriated jobseekers with the following result–(January - December 2022):

> On the job training: 25 beneficiaries

> Wage Subsidy: 4 beneficiaries

> **Self-Employment Programme:** 242 beneficiaries who have received tools and equipment to jumpstart their businesses

The project implements multiple employment measures, with the SEP being the preferred measure amongst the target group during the application process. From 2019, the project, through trainings, matchmaking, subsidies, equipment, and labour market studies, has had a direct impact in the employability of over 1600 repatriated jobseekers in Kosovo.

For the year 2022, repatriated women accounted for 25% of the beneficiaries and non-majority communities accounted for 14% of the total beneficiaries. The project is yet to fully reach its intended goals with regards to the gender component. The reasons for a relatively low participation of women within the employment measures are both the cultural context and due to the scheme preference and also low participation of women, this being attributed to the fact that migration in this particular context is primarily male-driven and the vast majority of people seeking reintegration services are men.

Based on the data received from the MIA – the department of reintegration and repatriation, there is a clear disproportion between the number of repatriated men and women (on average 5 men are repatriated for every 1 woman), creating a challenge in implementing gender inclusive measures. Quotas have not been used for this target group as a form of increasing the inclusion of women in the measures, due to the priorities linked to repatriated persons and the economic empowerment of this demographic.

### The Self Employment Programme

The self-employment programme provides equipment, training and mentoring for young jobseekers. The set of equipment is distributed through a competitive process of selecting the best business ideas put forward by repatriated jobseekers. The SEP is implemented by the EO and VTC with the support of the ALMP2 team. Furthermore, the program supports the creation of viable businesses capable of surviving in the competitive market while promoting self-employment as an active labour market measure. The self-employment program is implemented as a competitive program to guarantee the highest possible return on investment. In addition to

providing equipment, the Program also provides business skills training and expert support, helping unemployed people with qualifications and orientation to be successful in their chosen field of operation

The SEP is implemented in close cooperation with KEA in accordance with **operational guidelines (OG)** and in coordination with DRRP. During this reporting period, the ALMP2 project implemented the self-employment program online via email submission. The applicants were informed about the proposal procedures through virtual instructions in two languages (Albanian and Serbian via YouTube at: <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NyzRMorC11g&t=496s">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NyzRMorC11g&t=496s</a>). Furthermore, applicants, to avoid crowding into the employment offices and avoid the risk of spreading the COVID-19 virus, have applied directly by sending all documents to the project email address almp.ks@undp.org.

The project has supported **242** repatriated beneficiaries, who according to their business plans have been provided with tools and technical equipment to start their businesses as repatriated beneficiaries under the Self-Employment Program 2022.

#### <u>Provision of Self-Employment and Entrepreneurship Training for repatriated</u> <u>jobseekers</u>

During the reporting period COVID-19 created restrictions and due to the limited capacities of the VTCs to deliver training modules for repatriated jobseekers, the project has organized trainings on Self-employment. The project has also been engaged actively in identifying, sorting, profiling and training eligible repatriated jobseekers through engaging a private sector development company.



The selection process of the Self Employment Programme consists of two phases: the administrative verification phase and the technical verification phase:

#### Administrative verification phase

In the first phase, the submitted proposals are reviewed by an Administrative Verification Panel consisting of the ALMP2 project team. The main elements examined during this process:

- 1. The business plan is presented in the form defined for 2022 and has sufficient content to enable technical evaluation.
- 2. The applicant is a repatriated jobseeker registered with the local employment office.
- 3. The applicant does not have an active business registered with Kosovo Business Registration Agency (KBRA) and does not administer an informal business.

4. The applicant has not benefited from other employment or training schemes from UNDP and other donor organizations.

#### **Technical verification phase**

In the second phase, the submitted proposals undergo an evaluation by the Technical Evaluation Panel; composed of experts in the field of economics, business, management, and marketing. The evaluation was done in cooperation with the Faculty of Economics of the University of Prishtina. Two industry experts reviewed each submitted business plan independently. In case of large discrepancies between the evaluators (i.e., difference of 15 points of more), the business proposal was sent to a third evaluator.

The technical evaluation of proposals has been conducted with laptops instead of printed proposals. The switch to digital copies has resulted with a drastic reduction of paper usage. In previous evaluations, each proposal was printed out in three separate copies, where each evaluator would receive a copy of a proposal to examine. This year, through scanned proposals, the evaluators received an electronic copy in project owned laptops.

The technical assessment was made based on the following criteria:

- 1. Applicant's knowledge of the applied business (20 points in total);
- 2. Existing resources facilities, equipment, facilities, staff (total 20 points);
- 3. Market analysis and sales forecast (total 20 points);
- 4. Financial viability of the business (total 20 points);
- 5. Additional points offered for priority groups (20 points in total)

The cut-off mark for the ranking was set to 40 points, all proposals that did not reach an average of 40 points from both technical evaluators were dismissed. **242** repatriated jobseekers were selected to receive equipment and tools for their businesses as part of the Self Employment Programme. The equipment packages were delivered in February 2022.



Figure 3 Arton Bytyci - SEP beneficiary, receiving tools for his carpentry start-up.



Figure 4 Ferdane Jakupi - SEP beneficiary, receiving equipment for her tailoring start-up.

Self-employment program 2022	
Plastering	15%
Tailor	8%
Mechanic	8%
Fast food	7%
Metalworks	6%
Ceramic installer	6%
Pastry	5%
Masonry	5%
Greenhouses	5%
Carwash	5%
Hairdresser/nail	5%
General cleaning	4%
Electric installer	4%
Carpentry	4%
Heating installer	3%
Hairdresser/wax	2%
Car paint	2%
Tire repair	2%
IT profile (Website, PC repair)	2%
Barber	1%
TOTAL	100%

Table 3 Distribution of SEP beneficiaries per profile2022.

#### 2.b) Gender Mainstreaming, Governance and Environment

#### • Governance

The implementation of the ALMP2 project is based on utilizing the best practices and lessons learned from the implementation of the previous iterations of the project, such as assisting the establishing of the Employment Agency, improving the service delivery model, technical expertise via consultancies, upgrading of the Employment Management Information System, as well as delivering assistance on labour market policymaking as well as proposing modalities for the establishment of an employment fund to finance the implementation of active labour market programmes.

Due to the project interventions, the PES have increased the efficiency and effectiveness of its service delivery. Additionally, municipalities have improved their capacities to integrate the repatriated persons in the labour market at a local level.

There has been improvements in service delivery stemming from the various tools, approaches, and systems put in place with UNDP's support.

A positive trend is seen in the yearly absolute number of women participants in the programmes for the regular jobseekers, and the yearly share of women beneficiaries in total, is evidencing a greater access to employment & skills development opportunities for women.

#### • Environment

In light of the post-COVID-19 situation, people who are socially, economically, or culturally marginalized are particularly vulnerable to the effects of environmental degradation, climate change and viral pandemics, thus, indicating the need for creating sustainable "future proof" jobs. Furthermore, people not covered by social protection systems which include, to a large extent workers in the informal sector, do not have access to a safety net in the wake of disasters, therefore, creating the necessity for environmentally responsive activities. The ALMP2 project works directly in creating sustainable jobs and addressing the pressing issue of informality within the labour market, thus, mitigating part of the social challenges stemming from environmental degradation and climate change. ALMP2 foresees considerable transformation within the scope of its activities in relation to climate change and environmental sustainability. The project, in response to the 4<sup>th</sup> industrial revolution, is examining pathways to digitalizing services within the public employment services, providing online modular based trainings, as well as integrating new ICT-based profiles within the scope of labour market measures. The transformation is sought to create inclusive learning opportunities and employment for marginalized groups, without the environmental cost of traditional profiles.

#### • Gender

Women in Kosovo face challenges in joining the labour market, resulting in heavy unemployment rates and high inactivity rates. Interventions that provide women with opportunities to become economically active, gain marketable skills, work experience, or find employment are of utmost importance.

The project component addressing the needs of the repatriated jobseekers reports a relatively lower participation of women, attributed to the fact that migration in the context of Kosovo is primarily men-driven and most people seeking reintegration services are men. Whilst the total number of repatriated jobseekers is in a steady decline (see figure 4), the pool of jobseekers and the specified target group of the project, becomes increasingly male dominated, thus creating a challenge that is demographic in nature. Additionally, based on recommendations from the DRRP, only repatriated persons that have returned to Kosovo within the last 5 years are considered eligible for repatriation measures, thus reducing the scope of the target group.

Quotas have not been used for this target group as a form of increasing the inclusion of women in the measures, due to the priorities linked to economically empowering repatriated persons and families first. However, to mitigate the gender discrepancy in future employment schemes, the project will implement a quota-based system. Further, the project is in continuous consultation with the UNDP Kosovo Gender Programme Officer in order to further examine

potential pathways to enhancing the participation of repatriated women into the labour market measures and services offered by the PES.

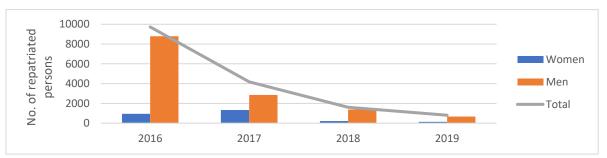


Figure 5 Number of repatriated persons by gender (Source: Ministry of Internal Affairs, Department for repatriation)

#### 3.b) Project Management

#### Organizational structure

The day-to-day management is the responsibility of the UNDP ALP 2 Project Team consisting of the Project Manager, 2 Project Associates, a Finance and Admin Associate, and a Project Officer. The ALMP team works under the direct supervision of the Project Manager. The line supervisor of the ALMP team is the Programme Analyst/ for the Inclusive Growth and Climate Resilience portfolio. The Project Board (PB) is facilitated by the UNDP Deputy Resident Representative<sup>11</sup>, comprising of one or more from Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare. The Board extended its membership to the Ministry of Internal Affairs since 2015 The Project Board role includes:

- Responsibility for making strategic decisions by consensus, including the approval of project revisions (i.e., changes in the project document).
- Approval of Annual Work Plans, Annual Reviews, and mid-term reports.
- Meetings at least twice a year to review management risks and most relevant issues; meetings can be held virtually (i.e., teleconference, videoconference, etc.).
- Consultations with the Project Manager for decisions when management tolerances (in terms
  of time and budget as per work plan) have been exceeded (the Project Board defines
  tolerances).

The PB approves all major plans and authorises any deviation from agreed plans. It is the authority that signs off the completion of each stage as well as authorises the start of the next stage of project implementation. It ensures that required resources are committed and arbitrates on any conflicts within the Project or negotiates a solution to any problems between the Project and external bodies. The PB is ultimately responsible for assurance that the Project

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> UNDP shall make efforts to transfer the facilitation role to the project's main beneficiary MLSW

remains on course to deliver the desired outcome of the required quality to meet the project's objectives defined in the project.

#### Monitoring

At every stage of the project, all indicators have been monitored, and the impact measured through data collection. Regular reporting and monitoring were carried out by the Project Team, including spot check and joint monitoring with the employment counsellors. The project is also monitored through administrative data of EMIS and the project database

### **PART C Quality Assurance**

Risks	Mitigation measures	Responsible party	Response
Repatriated jobseekers prefer only the SEP as an employment measure	On-going consultations with the employment offices indicate that more and more repatriated jobseekers prefer only the self-employment programme, the prospect of receiving tools and equipment for their own businesses appears more attractive.	MFLT Employment Agency UNDP	Due to continuously declining interest in employment measures such as WS, OJT, the project has allocated funds to the SEP as a main driver for employment for repatriated jobseekers by informing MFLT and Employment Agency.
PES logistics hinders outreach to rural areas: some of the main challenges continue to be the within consolidation and full functioning of the Employment Agency, the limited logistical capacities of the municipal employment offices, which cause difficulties in labour market research, especially integrating hard to reach regions.	In consultation with employment offices, the staff have arranged travels and regular monitoring visits.	Employment Agency UNDP	The project staff has often travelled through rural regions and provided logistical support to employment office staff.

The UNDP Kosovo Programme Coordinator, Programme Analyst and Programme Officer have provided specialist quality assurance, mostly of a technical nature. UNDP's Programme team has been involved in the quality assurance of the related policy development initiatives. The Project Board has received advice from project assurance, which raised any issues that may not have been addressed and adviced on quality issues. Project assurance has also highlighted areas of concern to the Project Management Unit. Additional Quality assurance has been provided through monitoring reports.

#### (3.c) Partnerships and Cooperation

The results of the ALMP2 project during the reporting period were achieved in close and effective collaboration with all the partners involved. The main partners of the project are the Ministry of Finance, Labour and Transfers, the Employment Agency and its local Employment Offices and Vocational Training Centres. The project has also collaborated with the Division for Social Welfare, when beneficiaries of social assistance category 2 have participated in different types of ALMP, as well as the Kosovar Business Alliance in identifying and incorporating new private sector companies within the PES. In the implementation of labour market measures, the partnership with private sector companies have been crucial.

In regard to the reintegration of repatriated persons, the project partners effectively with the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Department for Reintegration of Repatriated Persons, and the Municipal Offices of Communities and Returns.

**Institutional commitment and ownership is critical for efficiency in implementation and a sustainable capacity building**. No project can achieve optimal success or become sustainable if there is no strong and continued commitment and ownership throughout the structure of local authorities. There continues to be a significant buy-in for the project as the issue of youth unemployment is a public policy priority. Ultimately, the greatest challenge in sustaining and empowering the achievements of the project will be the sustained financial and political commitment by higher level institutions, especially having in mind the wide range of actors involved in implementation.

# **Financial Report**

Donors	Total Budget Planned for 2022	Committed	Disbursed	Total Expenditures	Balance	UTL
Gov. MLSW	€ 97,414	€	€	€	€ 2,349	98%
Gov. MIA	€ 13,857	€	€ 12,340	€ 12,340	€ 1,517	89%
Gov. MIA- MLSW	€ 1,290,100	€	€ 1,239,110	€ 1,239,110	€ 52,990	96%
MCYS	€ 22,767	€	€ 21,779	€ 21,779	€ 987	96%
TOTALS	€ 1,424,137	€	€ 21,779	€ 1,366,295	€ 57,843	95%