

FINAL EVALUATION OF
UNDP ACTIVE LABOUR MARKET PROGRAMMES 2
PROJECT EVALUATION REPORT



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ABBREVIATIONS

ALMM ACTIVE LABOUR MARKET MEASURES

ALMP2 UNDP'S ACTIVE LABOUR MARKET PROGRAMMES 2 PROJECT

DLE DEPARTMENT OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT AT THE MLSW

DRRP DEPARTMENT FOR REINTEGRATION OF REPATRIATED PERSONS

EA EMPLOYMENT AGENCY

EF EMPLOYMENT FUND

EO EMPLOYMENT OFFICES

EMIS EMPLOYMENT MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEM

HDR HUMAN DEVELOPMENT REPORT

HR HUMAN RESOURCES

ILO INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANIZATION

IP INTERNSHIP PROGRAMME

ISCO INTERNATIONAL STANDARD CLASSIFICATION OF OCCUPATIONS

ITF INTERNAL TRAINING FRAMEWORK

KAS KOSOVO AGENCY OF STATISTICS

KJP KOSOVO JOB PORTAL

LMIS LABOUR MARKET INFORMATION SYSTEM

MEST MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

MIA MINISTRY OF INTERNAL AFFAIRS

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

TA TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

OJT ON-THE-JOB TRAINING PROGRAMME

PES PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

PMF PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

SEP SELF-EMPLOYMENT programme

UNDP UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT programme

UNV UNITED NATIONS VOLUNTEERS OFFICE

WS WAGE SUBSIDY PROGRAMME

PBF PEACEBUILDING FUND: EMPOWERING YOUTH FOR A PEACEFUL, PROSPEROUS, AND SUSTAINABLE FUTURE IN KOSOVO

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has commissioned this final evaluation of the Active Labour Market Programmes 2 project in Kosovo (ALMP2), managed and implemented jointly by the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare (MLSW) and UNDP Kosovo. For the purposes of this evaluation, the project ran from March 2014 to December 2022.

A tendering process produced an assessment team comprising two experts: Mrs. Silviya Todorova (international) and Mr. Artan Avdiu (national). The evaluation began on 2 September 2022, and there was a kick-off meeting with the Project Team and the Programme Analyst on 20 September 2022. The Inception Report was submitted on 26 September 2026. Field visits were conducted in the period 10-14 October 2022. The Contract was due to last officially until 15 December 2022; the report was submitted on 23 November 2022.

1.PROJECT AND EVALUATION INFORMATION

1.1 Evaluation information

Table 1 Evaluation information

Evaluation information		
Evaluation type (project/ outcome/thematic/county programme, etc.)	Project evaluation	
Final/midterm review/ other	Final evaluation	
Period under evaluation	Start	End
	2014	2022
Evaluators	Silviya Todorova, Artan Avdiu	
Evaluator email address	s.todorrova@yahoo.com	artanavdiu@gmail.com
Evaluation dates	Start	Completion
	2 September 2022	15 December 2022

1.2 Project information

Table 2 Project Information

Project Information	
Project title	Active Labour Market programme 2
Atlas ID	00080204
Corporate outcome and output	Vulnerable women and men have more economic and livelihood opportunities, and benefit from better public and social services.

	<p>Labour Market Institutions' capacities to design relevant policies at central level and deliver integrated services at local level are improved.</p> <p>Employment and education policies and programmes enable greater access to decent employment opportunities for youth and women.</p> <p>Human resources capacities of MLSW, EARK and PES are improved as regards the delivery of employment services through EOs, VTCs and Labour market research and evidence.</p>	
Country	Kosovo	
Region	Western Balkans	
Date project document signed	27.09.2013	
Project dates	Start	Planned end
	01 March 2014	31 December 2021
Project budget	12,012,441.93 USD	
Project expenditure at the time of evaluation	11,040,673.41 USD	
Funding source	Government of Finland, Government of United Kingdom, Institutions of Kosovo ¹ , UNDP	
Implementing party	United Nations Development Programme	

The programme was implemented in the period 2014-2022, drawing on the previous successful partnership of UNDP and local institutions. It builds on past results while adapting to the changed context and the updated needs assessment. The project comprises both institutional capacity-building measures and direct measures at the local level to affect final beneficiaries (On-the-Job-Training, Wage Subsidy, Self-Employment Programme, Internship Programme). It had to strengthen and ensure the sustainability of links amongst key stakeholders in the Kosovo labour market – employers, jobseekers, policy makers, public employment services and vocational training and educational institutions. The project is focused on priorities outlined in the MLSW's Sector Strategy 2014-2020.

¹ References to Kosovo shall be understood to be in the context of Security Council Resolution 1244 (1999)

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Objectives of the evaluation

The final evaluation of the Active Labour Market Programmes 2 (ALMP2) in Kosovo aims to assess its relevance, impact, effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability and, based on the lessons learned, to offer evidence-based findings, conclusions and recommendations for future interventions of a similar nature. ALMP2 was managed and implemented jointly by the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare (MLSW) and the UNDP in Kosovo in the period 2014-2022. It was focused on capacity-building at national level to develop gender-oriented policies for labour market development, and on delivering specific services at local level for jobseekers from the most vulnerable groups.

Main findings

ALMP2 is content-rich (activity-intensive) and its implementation uses a flexible approach within its overall strategy, involving interactions with an impressive number of stakeholders. Through direct active labour market measures, the programme reached 6191 final beneficiaries (at the time of project evaluation), from the most vulnerable groups in the labour market – young people, women, minorities, repatriated persons – as presented in Fig. 1.

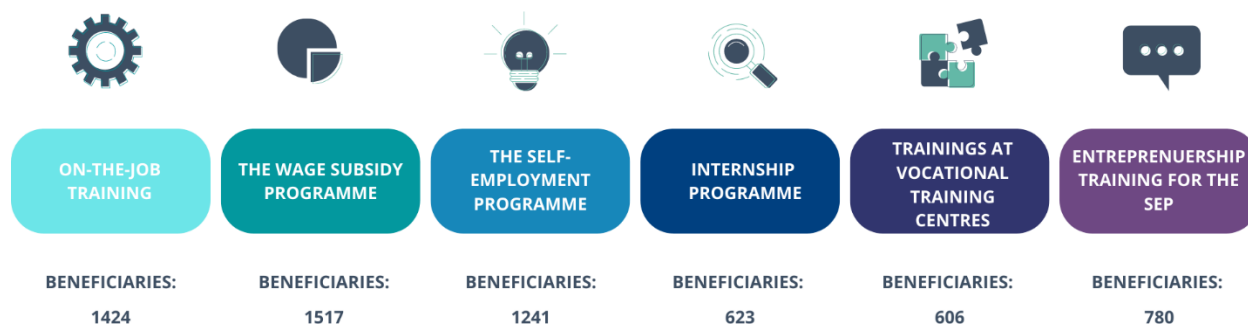


Figure 1 Total number of ALMM participants, by measure

The technical assistance and capacity-building activities enable institutional stakeholders at 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:

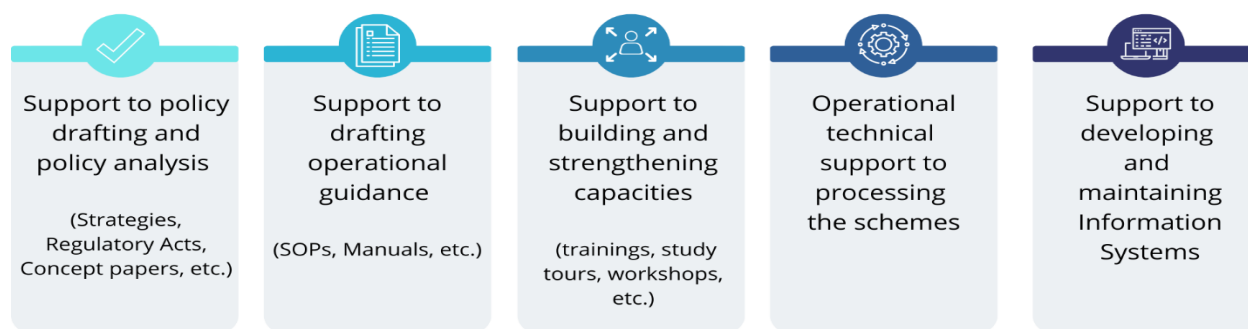


Figure 2 Project interventions

Relevance

The evaluation has confirmed the project's strategic alignment with country priorities and the EU integration agenda (with a focus on Visa Liberalization), as well as with a number of the Sustainable Development Goals.² The project design is based on a customized needs-based approach to individual target group needs, including the heterogeneous groups of returnees. Planned project results are highly relevant at the macroeconomic level, and the project design has been assessed as appropriate to achieving the planned results and expected outcomes.

Effectiveness

Most of the project's target outputs and results have been achieved, apart from some of the indicators related to repatriated women and non-majority groups' involvement (in the period 2019-2022); that was due to external factors, in particular the low number of representatives of those two sectors among the repatriated. The quality of project interventions and results is found to be satisfactory: the Public Employment Services reform supported by ALMP2 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 challenges, by modifying procedures and introducing new methods.

Efficiency

All the activities implemented have a positive effect on the target groups and have been implemented in an efficient manner – within the planned budget, meeting the main project indicators and inside the general project timeframe. Findings suggest that some delays in the implementation of project annual plans and reallocations of resources between budget lines have not influenced overall project implementation. The support provided to the beneficiaries has been efficient, seeking to reach the most vulnerable in the job market and making efforts to actively involve local businesses.

Sustainability

ALMP2 has created conditions for its results and impacts to be sustainable beyond its implementation period. The TA and capacity-building activities have transferred expertise and know-how to the respective institutions at national or local level through training of trainers, wider training, operational manuals and guidelines and upgraded e-systems among other approaches. Final beneficiaries have gained knowledge, skills, work experience and employment opportunities. The findings from the survey of final beneficiaries show an extremely high sustainability rate among the SEP participants – 99% of the established businesses are still active. Currently 62% of wage subsidy participants, 53% of on-job trainees and 57% of interns are legally employed.

Partnership

The results of ALMP2 2014-2021 were achieved in close and effective collaboration with all the partners involved. Evidence shows that the project partnership approach has proved well-structured (both in the design and the implementation phases), whereas multiple key actors are confirmed to have been pro-actively involved, effectively supported, and closely monitored as regards needs, expectations and identification of opportunities for synergies. The project has also further expanded and deepened cooperation with project partners, and new partners have been consistently added based on the evolving needs and changing project context. The positive feedback received from all

² They are also in line with the UNDP Eight Point Agenda (SC 1325) point 6 (Ensure gender-responsive recovery) and the UNDP Gender Equality Strategy Implementation.

stakeholders interviewed emphasizes how the project partnership strategy became a key project success factor.

Theory of Change

The project logic has been found feasible and realistic, even in light of the unprecedented and various challenges brought on by the enduring pandemic. The assumptions, factors and risks foreseen in the project design have been effectively addressed in the implementation phase so that results and outcomes have been secured. The value added by the project is undisputed among the beneficiaries, and the results of interviews confirmed their appreciation.

Human rights

The performance of the project on the cross-cutting issues of human rights – by including non-majority communities, the physically disadvantaged and persons from rural areas in the project design and implementation – has, in spite of the particular challenges during 2019-2021 in meeting targets for participation of non-majority repatriated persons, been exemplary.

Gender The performance of the project on gender equality in design and implementation has been effective. The accomplished reach of 24% among repatriated women beneficiaries in 2018-2022 was positive. This was achieved against a background of a steady decline in the number of repatriated persons, significant imbalance in the number of repatriated men and women³, and particularly negative effects of the pandemic on women. The project has contributed to women's economic empowerment not only directly, by increasing women's access to income and assets, skills developing and training, but also indirectly by all the efforts undertaken to positively influence relevant policy development.

Lessons learned

Collaborative project design and implementation, as well as continuous active learning and flexibility throughout the project, are considered the main success factors for ALMP2. Among the other identified lessons learned are effective monitoring being critical for achieving expected quality of the results; technology and information tools improving the efficiency and sustainability of the ALMMs; institutional commitment and ownership being critical for sustainability of interventions; and simplification of procedures with improved target groups having the potential to increase participation rate and project efficiency.

Recommendations

Follow-up activities in the field of labour market development have been proposed, such as TA for employment strategy development for the next planning period, and for the establishment of the Youth Guarantee Fund under the KEA, and a formalized partnership network with representative business organisations to promote their involvement in design and implementation of effective ALMMs. Future capacity-building measures could also involve piloting of a tailored long-term training programme for the EA and EOs, via e-learning platforms; setting up a decentralised model for business needs assessment at regional level to be linked with VTC curricula updates; developing a model of career guidance and counselling by EOs and piloting an app for the service. Special emphasis on training in digital and soft skills should be considered. The integration of green and

³ Approx. 5 men are repatriated for every 1 woman.

digital transformation challenges would help to align future ALMM interventions with changing labour market conditions and needs. This could be implemented by focusing on green jobs both in traditional sectors such as manufacturing and construction (in terms of automation and digitalisation of industrial processes) and in emerging green sectors such as renewable energy and energy efficiency. Scaling up of SEP by the design and piloting of an acceleration phase, to be supported by a combination of grants and financial instruments, could build on the existing good practice. It should be possible to support the establishment of social enterprises as a tool to address the most vulnerable groups in the labour market e.g. disabled people.

3. INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

3.1 Relevant country/region/sector background

3.1.1. Political and legal

Kosovo's commitment to EU integration and related reforms:

- The prospect and the objective of EU membership, as reflected in the EU Stabilization and Association Agreement (SAA) (in force since April 2016) and the adoption of a second phase of the European Reform Agenda (ERA 2), is to provide an anchor for the country's development strategy⁴.

Long-standing successful cooperation between UNDP and Kosovo Institutions in the areas of intervention

- Projects have largely built on UNDP's extensive experience in labour market issues in Kosovo (Employment Generation Project (2005 – 2006) and, since 2007, the Active Labour Market Programmes (ALMP))⁵. Further valuable know-how has been derived from the successful cooperation of UNDP with the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare (MLSW) and the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA) in the field of sustainable reintegration of repatriated persons (since 2012), with a focus on vulnerable young men and women⁶.

⁴ The Programme of Kosovo Institutions 2021-2025 states a commitment to "strengthening and advancing contractual relations with the EU through the implementation of the Stabilization and Association Agreement and priority reforms that bring the country closer to the EU and contribute to the institutional consolidation and socio-economic development of the country."

⁵ In close partnership with the Kosovo Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare (MLSW), ALMP focused on developing the capacity of the public employment services (PES) to provide individualized and targeted labour market programmes, aimed at increasing the employment opportunities and employment prospects of disadvantaged youth

⁶ www.undp.org/kosovo/projects/active-labour-market-programmes-2

Institutional Commitment to the areas of project interventions

- Kosovo's institutions have restated their determination to support active market measures as well as sustainable reintegration.⁷ Political commitment has been backed up with considerable financial support.⁸

Modernisation and transformation of public administration in progress, though slowed by frequent institutional changes

- Project design and implementation, more specifically the institutional support measures, are also driven by ongoing institutional efforts towards modernisation, transformation, and digitalization of public administration⁹.
- However, progress to date appears limited, as the implementation of public administration reforms, including legislation and institutional restructuring, has been slowed down by political instability and frequent institutional changes.¹⁰

Public employment services and vocational training the focus of reforms

- The MLSW has undertaken considerable reforms to improve the quality and efficiency of the service delivery model of its Public Employment Services (PES), towards client-oriented service delivery based on the specific needs of jobseekers and employers.
- The Employment Agency (EARK) has been made functional with increased capacities to deliver services and active labour market measures through its employment offices and vocational training centres.¹¹
- Vocational training has been stated a priority.¹²

Progress in reintegration ascertained as a success

- The readmission agreements with EU Member States and Schengen associated countries are being implemented satisfactorily and the EU Member States have confirmed that authorities continue to cooperate well on readmission¹³. Statistics demonstrate a drop in the return rate of Kosovo citizens ordered to leave EU territory (58% in 2018, 41% in 2019 and 29% in 2020).

⁷ The Programme of Kosovo Institutions 2021-2025 has stated a focus on the economic and social transformation of the country, with the aim of social inclusion of all citizens of Kosovo. "With intervention measures, we will also support those who were unemployed and have found a job. While the greatest support will be for young people, who enter the labour market for the first time. Through the Youth Guaranteed Employment Scheme, we will pay the minimum wage for 1 year to every young person who is employed for the first time." To support women's economic empowerment and increase employment, with a focus on doing business, we will implement active measures for women's employment and support measures to ensure liquidity for businesses led by women".

⁸ In September 2010, the Reintegration Fund was established to support the sustainable reintegration of repatriated citizens of Kosovo through a dedicated annual budget: €3,170,150.00 for 2013, €2,372,450.04 for 2014, f€2,112,671.00 for 2015, €2,001,719.00 for 2016 and €2,756,719.00 for 2017.

⁹ Strategy for Modernization of Public Administration (SMAP) 2015-2020 (PVSMAP 2021-2022)

¹⁰ Kosovo 2021 Progress report, COM (2021) 644 final, stated "Overall progress on implementing reforms in this area slowed down significantly due to the political situation, elections and frequent changes", at p.13.

¹¹ Law No. 04/L-205 on the Employment Agency of the Republic of Kosovo

¹² The Programme of Kosovo Institutions 2021-2025 states "We will commit to harmonizing education and professional training with the labor market, through linking the curricula with the labor market... We will also commit to creating conditions for the development of practical work and professional practice (practice at the workplace), as well as improving career guidance and counselling by developing a model of career guidance and counselling in VET and carrying out of follow-up studies". Moreover, VET is an important topic in the Stabilization and Association Agreement. To implement reforms and obligations that come out of SAA, NPISAA 2018-2022 has been drafted which sets out medium-term priorities and ERA which sets out short-term priorities for VET.

¹³ Kosovo 2021 Progress report, COM (2021) 644, at p.47

- Progress over the last few years towards more comprehensive policies and practices on return and reintegration of Kosovo nationals has been evident. The European Commission's report on visa liberalization states that "Kosovo fulfilled all three requirements in the area of reintegration"¹⁴.

Policy framework to guide project interventions available, though enforcement a challenge

- The MLSW Sectoral Strategy 2018-2020 and the Action Plan on Increasing Youth Employment 2018-2020 focus on improving the efficiency, availability, and coverage of public employment services. In reintegration, the Strategy on Sustainable Reintegration of Repatriated People 2018-2022 and Action Plan (MIA) focuses one of its pillars on advancing sustainable economic reintegration measures for repatriated persons.
- A key challenge in implementing strategic commitments remains the availability of the necessary human and financial resources. The fostering of an enabling environment continues to rely excessively on donor co-financing.

Regulatory framework to provide the legal basis for project intervention harmonized, though enforcement a challenge

- The legal framework on reintegration of repatriate persons has evolved positively and remains comprehensive and largely harmonised and in line with European standards.¹⁵ As project interventions also focus on women's participation and support to vulnerable persons, the relevant regulatory framework offers protection.
- The progress in alignment notwithstanding, the implementation of legislation related to human rights, minority protection, gender equality, oversight and coordination of existing mechanisms remains a challenge¹⁶.

Civil society continues to play an important role

- As some project interventions envisage collaboration with civil society organisations, these have been affected by the way civil society operates in the country. As assessed by the EC in the 2021 report, "Civil society continue to operate, overall in an enabling environment".

3.1.2. Economic

Economic growth has not yet been sufficient to provide enough formal jobs

- Following the 2020 recession, Kosovo's economy experienced a strong recovery in 2021, supported by a rebound in domestic demand and record export growth. However, Kosovo is still considered "at an early stage of developing a functioning market economy. The long-standing structural problems, such as the lack of economic diversification and the dependence on financial

¹⁴ Fourth report on progress by Kosovo in fulfilling the requirements of the visa liberalization roadmap SWD (2016) 160 final.

¹⁵ Law No. 04/L-219 on foreigners, Regulation (GRK) No. 22/2020 on reintegration of repatriated persons, Regulation (MLSW) Nr.01/2016 on operation and labour in Shelter for Protection and Rehabilitation of Victims of Trafficking, at the medium and high level of hazard, Regulation on Subsidizing Projects that promote the reintegration of repatriated persons in the Republic of Kosovo, Regulation on the Establishment of Municipal Offices for Communities and Returns (MOCR), Regulation on the Functioning of the Centre for Accommodation of Repatriated Persons, Guideline on Readmission and Reintegration of Unaccompanied Children.

¹⁶ Kosovo 2021 Progress report, COM (2021) 644, stating "Institutions continue to perform poorly when it comes to processing and investigating cases of discrimination, including sexual violence and gender discrimination at the working place".

flows from the diaspora made Kosovo very vulnerable to the pandemic-related lockdown and travel restrictions”.¹⁷ According to the World bank, “Although Kosovo’s economic growth in the past decade has outperformed its neighbours and has largely been inclusive, it has not been sufficient to provide enough formal jobs, particularly for women and youth, or to significantly reduce the high rates of unemployment.”¹⁸

Unemployment posing the biggest challenges

- Despite continued economic growth over the last two decades, the rate of unemployment – along with other labour market indicators – remains the weakest in the Western Balkans region, posing one of the biggest challenges for the country.¹⁹

Skills deficits and skills mismatch in the labour market

- Most repatriated persons do not have the skills and experience needed in the labour market, which makes integration into the labour market an even more complex process.²⁰

Level of informality and quality of work pose a challenge

- The Labour Force Survey reports that some 10.5% of employees do not have an employment contract. Even among those with employment contracts, only 38.4% have permanent employment contracts – still a significant increase compared to the same period last year (20%). Only 8.6% of employees have the right to benefit from the social insurance scheme at work. About 18% of employed persons work in unstable jobs.²¹

3.1.3. Social

- Demographically, Kosovo territory has an increasing share of working age population, considered “a demographic bonus that offers opportunities”.²² Almost 40 percent of Kosovo’s population is under the age of 19. The share of working age population will continue increasing in the coming years (from 1.88 in 2011 to 2.24 in 2021) and will not dip below the 2011 level before 2046.

Repatriated persons heterogeneous, thus requiring a customized approach

- Repatriated persons are heterogeneous in terms of their civil status, age, gender, educational background, social status and economic status. This demands an individualized approach reflected in socio-economic profiling of repatriated persons and needs assessment as a basis of service delivery.²³

¹⁷ Kosovo 2021 Progress report, COM (2021) 644 final.

¹⁸ <https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/kosovo/overview>.

¹⁹ <https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/factsheet/2020/08/11/world-bank-support-for-employment-policy-in-kosovo>.

²⁰ National Strategy for Sustainable Reintegration of Repatriated Persons 2018-2022.

²¹ <https://millenniumkosovo.org/ep-content/uploads/2018/11/MCC-Kosovo-Labor-Force-and-Time-Use-Study-FinalResearch-Report.pdf>

²² Jobs Diagnostic Kosovo, 2017 International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, at p.1 This is seen as an opportunity to build a large and educated workforce that could help attract investments, and support sustained shared prosperity.

²³ National Strategy for Sustainable Reintegration of Repatriated Persons 2018-2022.

Family responsibilities and deficiencies in childcare and elderly care affect women's entering the job market

- Inactivity among women has been found to be mostly family-related, affected by the lack and unaffordability of institutional childcare, limits on eldercare from social norms, low quality and narrow provision, as well as by the design of maternity benefits making it hard for women to enter the job market.²⁴

3.1.4. Technological

Digitalization of the economy is progressing

- Following achievement of the mid-term targets of its 2013-2020 digital agenda, with the penetration of fixed broadband internet exceeding 90% and the number of mobile phone users standing at 115.7% of the population, Kosovo is preparing a new strategy for 2021-2030. Since 2018, implementation of a 5-year project is underway, aiming to bridge the urban-rural digital infrastructure divide, and investing in remote areas which are not attractive for private investors²⁵.

Information Systems to support labour market and reintegration

- Progress is reported in improving the labour market information system, through the launch of the Kosovo Labour Market Barometer as a tool for planning of VET and determining priority sectors in targeted regions (May 2021). The Labour Market Information System (LMIS) has been set up within the MLSW, supported by UNDP. In reintegration, the Case Management System (CMS) allows the reintegration process of repatriated persons to be fully managed from the moment of entry into Kosovo until the completion of the case, in accordance with the procedures defined in legislation and policies.

3.2 Present state of the labour market in Kosovo and current challenges

The labour market situation in Kosovo, already a concern (see key characteristics in Fig. 3), deteriorated further with the outbreak of COVID-19 in 2020 and the economic recession which was largely a result of the related restrictions. But this trend was reversed in 2021 when Kosovo's economy experienced a strong recovery.

²⁴ Jobs Diagnostic Kosovo, 2017 International Bank for Reconstruction and Development.

²⁵ Kosovo 2021 Progress report, COM (2021) 644 final.

KOSOVO LABOUR MARKET DATA 2014 - 2020

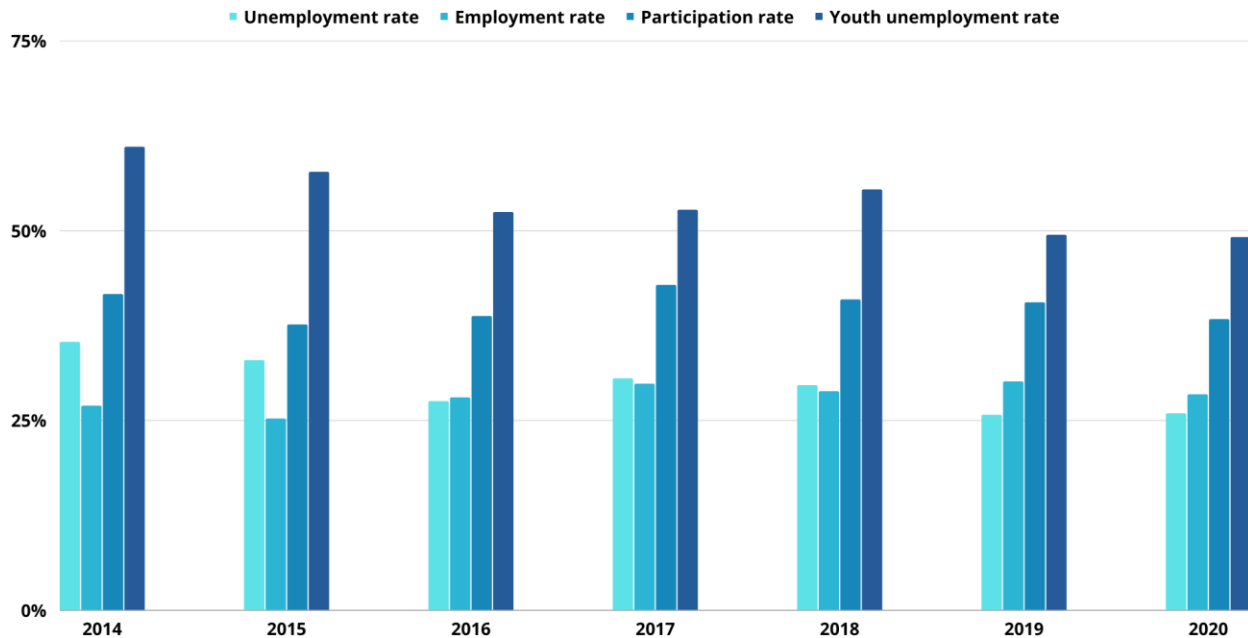


Figure 3 Kosovo Labour Market Data Survey (2014-2020)

The current global inflationary pressures have interrupted Kosovo's buoyant recovery, and according to the World Bank real GDP growth is expected to decelerate to 3.1 percent in 2022, following a slowdown in investment and private consumption²⁶.

The current state of the labour market in Kosovo is characterized by the following key determinants:

- Demographically, Kosovo remains a country with an exceptionally high working age population (15-64) – according to the latest Labour Force Survey (LFS) for the third quarter of 2022 (Q3 2022, some two-thirds of the population).
- Despite the overall economic growth in the past decade, Kosovo's economy has not been sufficient to provide enough formal jobs, particularly for women and young people, as well as for those with limited education and/or no prior work experience, including people with disabilities and non-majority communities.
- According to the Labour Force Survey (LFS)²⁷ for the third quarter of 2021, the employment rate is 33.4%. Employment is higher among men (49.9%). The leading employment sectors are: trade (17.1%); construction (12.1%); education (9.3%); and manufacturing (9.2%). Among those contractually employed, 42.8% only have a permanent contract in their main job, while 57.2% have a temporary contract.
- High unemployment is considered a major impediment to inclusive growth. According to the results of the LFS, in Q3 2021 the unemployment rate was 17.7%. Only 2 in 5 people of working age are participating in the labour market and 1 in 4 people can't find a job.
- There are very high rates of inactivity (59.4%), for women (77.5%) according to the results of the LFS, in Q3 2021.

²⁶ <https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/kosovo/overview>, Oct.12,2022.

²⁷ <https://ask.rks-gov.net/en/kosovo-agency-of-statistics/add-news/labour-force-survey-lfs-in-kosovo-q3-2021>

- Gender gaps in access to economic opportunities remain a key challenge. According to the results of the LFS, in Q3 2021 the employment rate among women was 17.1%, mainly in education, trade and healthcare (51.8%). The unemployment rate among women is 23.9% (compared to men 15.3%). Another gender dimension is the very low rate of female labour force participation - the number of women who are economically active (i.e. employed or seeking employment) – at only 22.5%. The inactive workforce among women is 77.5%, compared to 41.1% for men.
- Young people are particularly disadvantaged in employment, often lacking practical experience. According to the LFS for the third quarter of 2022 (Q3 2021) the highest unemployment rate is among the 15-24 age group (29.0%).

Particular persistent challenges can be seen behind the statistics: the limited progress made towards developing a functioning market economy; the inability so far of Kosovo's industrial sector – especially the most intensive work elements – to expand at such a rapid pace as to be able to create jobs and absorb the large number of people entering the labour market; lack of skilled labour force hampering business development, linked with the misalignment between education outcomes and labour market needs; the implied structural problems such as the widespread informal economy of undeclared work; the inadequate system of social assistance to create incentives to join formal employment; the lack of childcare and eldercare facilities to hindering women's participation.²⁸

In this context, current declared priorities²⁹ regarding the labour market and social inclusion include:

- Promoting stable employment through the design of a scheme for the return to work of persons who have lost their jobs during the pandemic.
- Supporting new employees for the period of economic recovery, creating a scheme for guaranteed employment for young people.
- Linking further the labour market and professional education, through the information system for the labour market, expansion of employment services and professional training with new services, as well as through cooperation with unions.
- Harmonization of education and professional training with the requirements of the labour market, through linking curricula with the labour market.
- Creating conditions for the development of practical work and professional practice /practice in the workplace, as well as improving career guidance and counselling by developing a model of career guidance and counselling in VET and carrying out follow-up studies.
- Working to increase the employment of women, with a focus on doing business, creating favourable conditions for doing business and simplifying procedures for export and import.
- Review of current fiscal policies and implementation through the redesign of fiscal policies and the financial system, which ensures accountability.
- Social inclusion and integration of minority communities in Kosovo, supporting economic development and cultural and social integration through projects that serve return, reintegration, and stabilization, to create income and employment opportunities among minority communities in all regions, with financial support of civil society to foster trust between communities.

²⁸ Kosovo 2021 Progress report, COM (2021) 644 final

²⁹ Programme of Kosovo Institutions 2021-2025

3.3 Development cooperation context

At the 2008 Donors' Conference for Kosovo in Brussels hosted by the European Commission, Kosovo received pledges for some 1.2 billion Euros from 37 countries and 16 international donor organizations. The latest publicly available report on donor coordination notes that in 2015 there were 22 active donors.³⁰ The largest donor in terms of commitments and disbursements is the European Commission.³¹

To facilitate management of donor funding, an online system (Aid Management Platform – AMP) has been established for managing external aid, specifically projects, programs and other modes of assistance offered by donors³². In the above development cooperation context, UNDP has extensive work experience on labour market issues in Kosovo, successfully implementing the Employment Generation Project (2005-2006) and the current ALMP 2.

4. DESCRIPTION OF THE INTERVENTION BEING EVALUATED

4.1 Logic and evaluability analysis result

4.1.1. Description of the intervention

ALMP2 is a multi-year project, designed together with the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare (MLSW) in line with the strategic priorities outlined in the Ministry's Sector Strategy 2016 –2020. At the beginning of 2016, the Ministry of Internal Affairs approved the second phase of the joint UNDP/MLSW project component on reintegration of repatriated persons, using the collaboration platforms established by ALMP.

In 2018 UNDP signed a new partnership project on the reintegration of repatriated persons, to be implemented during 2019-2021, the competences for reintegration of repatriated persons having been transferred from MIA to MLSW.

ALMP2 is implemented according to three main project documents. The first two focused on strengthening the capacity of national institutions to develop gender-oriented policies for labour market development and to deliver specific services at the local level for general jobseekers from the most vulnerable groups (youth, minorities, women). The third project document focused on the reintegration of repatriated women and men specifically.

The project logic is presented below, with the specific outputs and planned activities.

³⁰ Annual report on donor activities in Kosovo 2015, issued by the Ministry for European Integration, 2016.

³¹ As mentioned in the Programme of Kosovo Institutions 2021-2025 "For the period 2021-2027, Kosovo will benefit from Instrument for Pre-Accession (IPA), which in total will offer over 14 billion euros for all the countries of the region. From IPA II (2014-2020), the EU originally planned to allocate 645 million euros to Kosovo, but allocated only 602 million euros in 2018, due to the poor performance of the country. In 2019, Kosovo lost another 12 million euros."

³² Institutionally, the Ministry of European Integration administers the Aid Management Platform (AMP), and manages, monitors and reports on the deliverables of the sector and sub-sector working groups on donor coordination. The Ministry of European Integration also coordinates the assistance received through the Instrument of Pre-accession (EU), TAIEX and Twinning program as the leading institution in the EU integration process. Further to Regulation (GRK) - No.09/2015 on Coordination of Foreign Donors' assistance, the institutional structure for donor coordination has been formalized. A High-Level Forum has been mandated to oversee the flow of external aid in Kosovo, identify top priorities for external assistance, review the progress of development assistance and monitor the overall effectiveness of the external aid based on the aid management principles established in the 2005 Paris Declaration 2005. <https://www.mei-ks.net/en/amp#sthash.TOJxxwjz.dpuf>.

ALMP2 2014-2017

Output 1. Vulnerable youth across Kosovo – with a particular focus on women – receive integrated employment services

Activity 1. Improve HR capacities of MLSW, PES and VTC	Activity 2. Improve the business processes for integrated service delivery in offices where physical infrastructure allows
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Activity 3. Provide training and employment opportunities to unemployed jobseekers. Equal opportunities are provided to women and men. Inclusion of vulnerable groups is ensured through carefully designed selection criteria	Activity 4. Increase awareness of PES and VTC services among PES and VTC services (spot visits, social media, innovative ICT tools, etc.)
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Output 2. Knowledge base regarding labour market is enhanced, leading to evidence-based, gender sensitive decision making

Activity 1. Support Kosovo institutions in producing gender disaggregated qualitative labour market data and analytical reports
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Output 3. Feasible modalities to establish an Employment Fund are developed

Activity 1. Feasible modalities to establish an Employment Fund are developed
--

ALMP2 2018-2021

Output 1. HR capacities of MLSW, EA and PES are improved for the delivery of employment services through EOs, VTCs and labour market research and evidence

Activity 1. Provision of technical expertise for MLSW and EA and VTC to deliver training and employment services for registered jobseekers	Activity 2. Strengthen the capacity of institutional structure within the MLSW and EA by organizing policy development workshops and study-visits to exchange best practices with other countries and development research knowledge on the labour market
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Output 2. Sustainable economic integration for unemployed young men and women registered in PES through active labour market measures (WS, SEP, IP, OJT) (amended)

Activity 3 Provision of employment and skills development services for jobseekers through WS, SEP, IP, OJT	Activity 4 Public information activities on provision of employment services by PES and other integrated services with MLSW
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ALMP 2 2019-2021 Sustainable economic reintegration for repatriated women and men

Project objective: Through a comprehensive approach and proportional growth to advance skills and provide employment opportunities for repatriated persons, working closely with labour market institutions and in partnership with private sector enterprises. In this way, the intervention is to strengthen the capacity of local municipal structures to provide support to integration for repatriated persons, focusing on labour market integration.

Outcome 1. Sustainable economic reintegration for repatriated women and men

Activity 1. Increase awareness and public information activities about public employment services and opportunities to benefit from active labour market programs	Activity 2. Developing skills and training opportunities in line with labour market needs
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Activity 3. Employment opportunities through stimulation of private sector enterprises and support of employment initiatives through the Wage Subsidies Program	Activity 4. Developing entrepreneurship skills and providing opportunities for self-employment by financing the business plan through the self-employment program
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4.1.2. Evaluability analysis

A good repository of information and data and an indicator tracking system are available in the annual project reports 2014-2022, and in external evaluations of different measures at different periods during project implementation.

The results framework of the ALMP 2 has clear output indicators, which are assessed on a yearly basis with the relevant data presented in the annual reports. Information on progress against expected results/ outputs and proposed activities is also presented in the reports. Risks to project implementation have been analysed and are reflected in the annual reports. The external evaluations provided additional data on the effectiveness and efficiency of the ALMMs – part of the evaluated intervention. Given that the project consists of technical assistance and capacity-building measures for policy making at the central institutional level, qualitative methods have been applied in the form of interviews with institutional stakeholders.

4.2 Overview of the evaluation methodology and applicability of the evaluation results

The applied methodology deploys both qualitative and quantitative methods. Information gathering is based on primary sources (survey, interviews) and secondary sources (project documents, reports, evaluations, etc.). The evaluation process consisted of three consecutive phases (Fig. 4): 1) data collection and processing; 2) analysis; 3) report drafting (findings, conclusions and recommendations for future actions).

THE EVALUATION PROCESS WILL CONSIST OF 3 CONSECUTIVE PHASES:

The following principles will be addressed during the evaluation: **Utility, Credibility, Independence, Impartiality, Ethics, Transparency, Professionalism.**

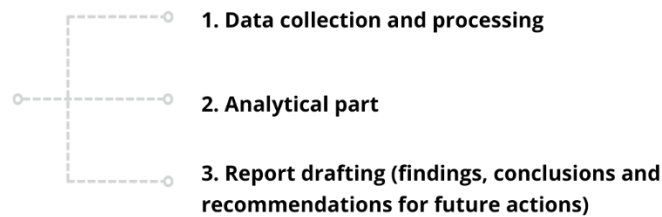


Figure 4 Evaluation processes

5. EVALUATION SCOPE AND OBJECTIVES

5.1 Evaluation scope and objectives

The overall objective is to conduct a final evaluation of ALMP2 – in terms of project design & contextual relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, stakeholder and partnership strategy, Theory of Change, human rights, and gender – and propose evidence-based findings, conclusions and recommendations for future interventions of similar nature. Recommendations also reflect general socio-economic and labour-market trends, and horizontal principles such as green jobs transmission and digital transformation.

5.2 Evaluation questions

The evaluation analyses and assesses the level of achievement of the expected results of ALMP2 by examining the results chain, processes, contextual factors, and causality, using the criteria mentioned in 5.1. Main and sub-questions were defined in the ToR and the Evaluation Matrix. **The Evaluation Matrix**, detailing the approach to the evaluation criteria and questions in terms of methods of data collection and analysis and sources of information, is presented in [Appendix 1](#).

5.3 Evaluation Approach

The following basic principles have been applied during the evaluation process: **compliance with needs; appropriateness of scope; openness of the process; data reliability; logical analysis; reliability of the results; independent conclusions; applicability of recommendations.**

5.4 Detailed Evaluation Methodology

The evaluation methodology deploys the following evaluation logic: data gathering through desk review, a survey of final beneficiaries and interviews with stakeholders; data processing and data and information analysis according to the main evaluation criteria; identification of main findings, leading to conclusions and recommendations. To obtain the highest level of credibility, the data and

the conclusions have been checked against diverse sources of information. The approach implemented evidence-based (i.e. quantitative, data-based) and opinion-based (i.e. subjective interviews, surveys, focus groups) approaches to **triangulate** the results and the conclusions for all evaluation questions (Fig. 5).



Figure 5 Methodological approach

6. DATA ANALYSIS

6.1 Procedures used to analyse the data collected to answer the evaluation questions

A **desk review and analysis of relevant sources of information (documentary and statistical) and data processing** formed the basis for the survey and the subsequent evaluation activities.

Quantitative and qualitative methods of gathering information have been applied: questionnaire-based telephone interviews of final beneficiaries; semi-structured interviews; and a debriefing seminar involving institutional stakeholders.

The following sources have been used: programme & project documents; project fiches; annual reports; midterm evaluations; financing agreement; programme/measure operational manuals; questionnaires; semi-structured interviews; state statistics and labour market statistics; EC progress reports.

The methods of data collection and processing attempt to ensure the credibility and reliability of the evaluation and to apply the principle of triangulation. The questionnaire for final beneficiaries is in [Appendix 4. Interview questions](#) are in [Appendix 5](#). The **list of stakeholders and the schedule for field site visits** is in [Appendix 3](#).

The survey was implemented among 148 final beneficiaries, distributed as follows: OJT – 15, WSP – 14, SEP – 103, IP – 16 (Fig. 6). The profile of the respondents is presented in the text and figures below, while the survey findings and their interpretation are reported in Section. 8 Findings and Conclusions.

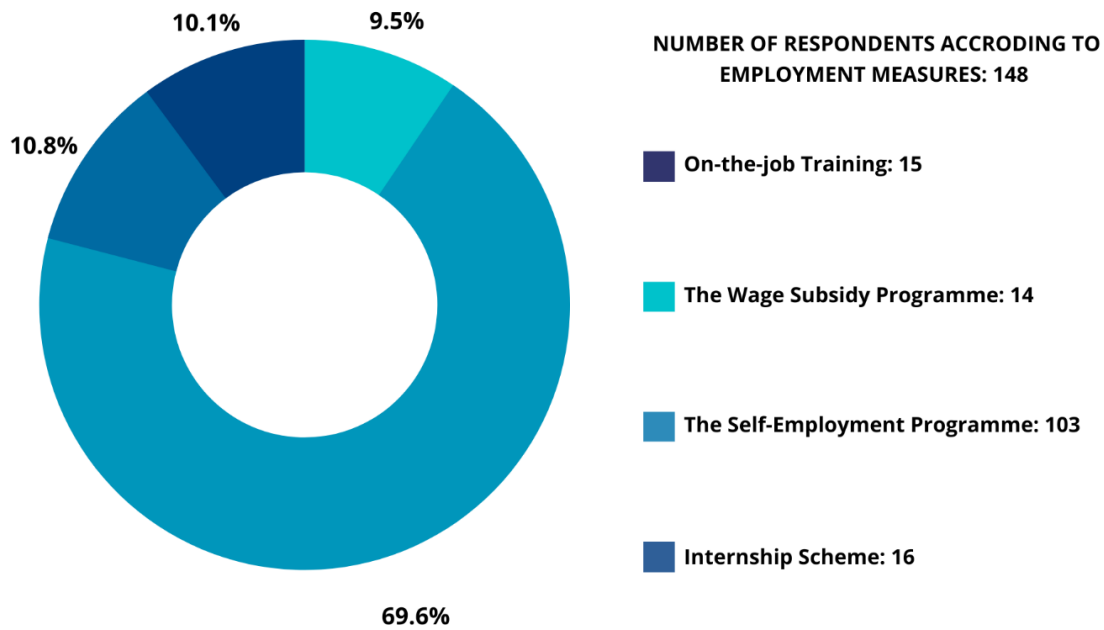


Figure 6 Participants in the survey among final beneficiaries

The distribution of respondents by year is presented in the figures below. As expected, a larger number of respondents are from the later years – 2018-2021 (Fig. 7).

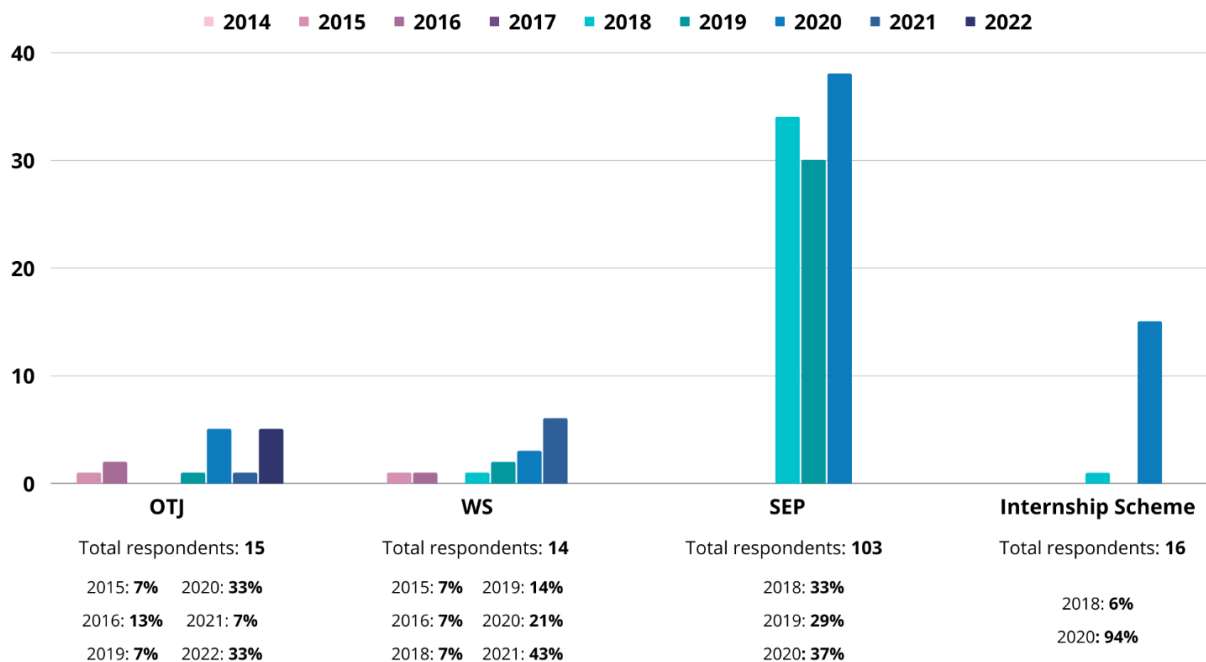


Figure 7 Participants in the survey by year

The percentage of women respondents by measure was as follows: 40% for OJT, 36% for WSP, 15% for SEP and 38% for IP (Fig. 8).

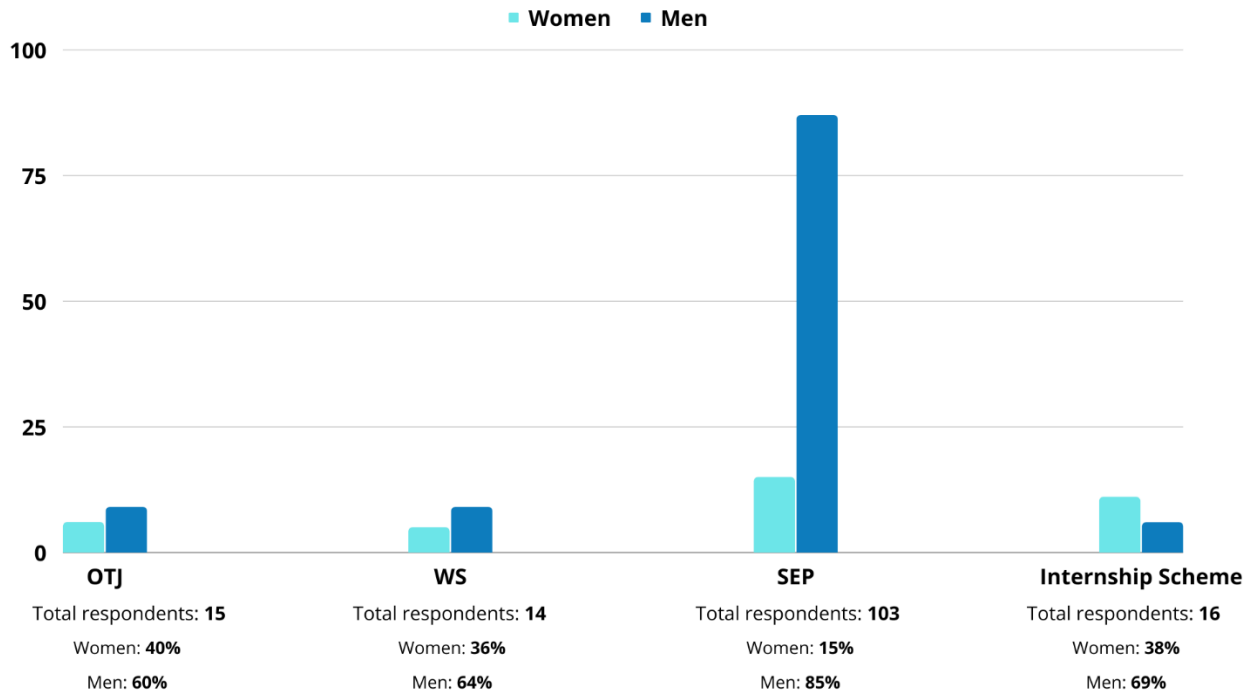


Figure 8 Participants in the survey by gender

The response from non-majority communities was: 8% for OJT, 29 % for WSP, 23% for SEP and 6% for IP (Fig. 9). Rural respondents were: 40% for OJT, 29 % for WSP, 29% for SEP and 50% for IP (Fig. 10).

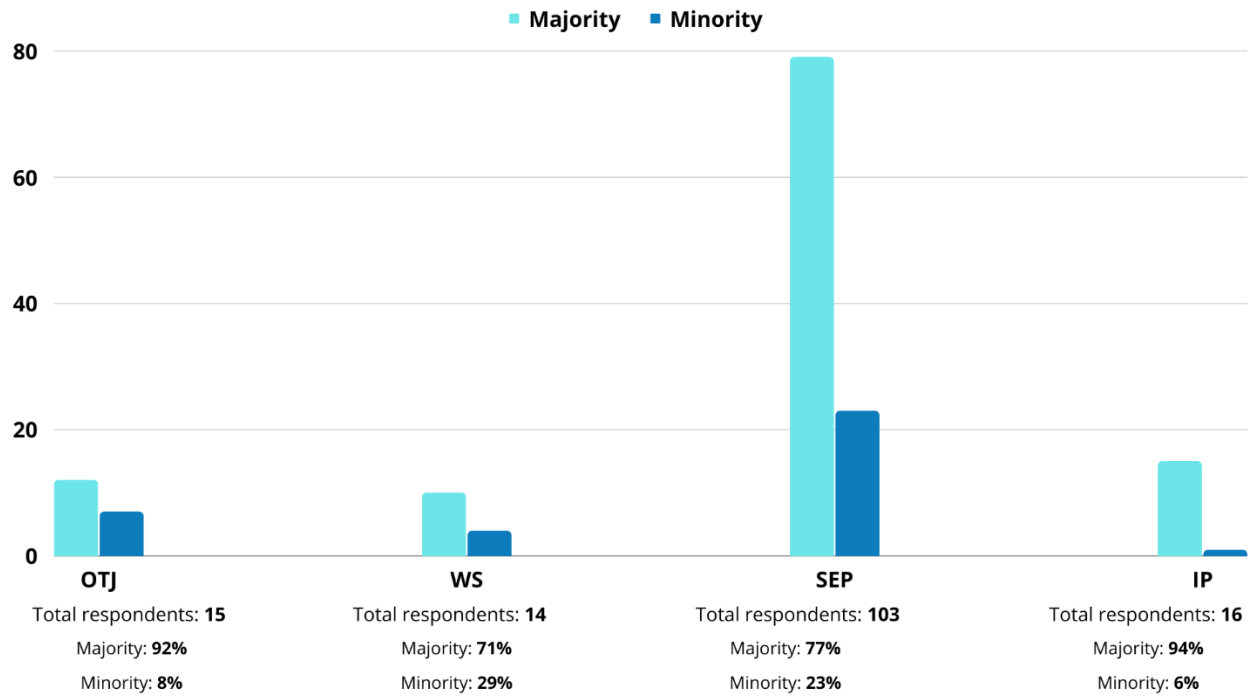


Figure 9 Participants in the survey by ethnicity

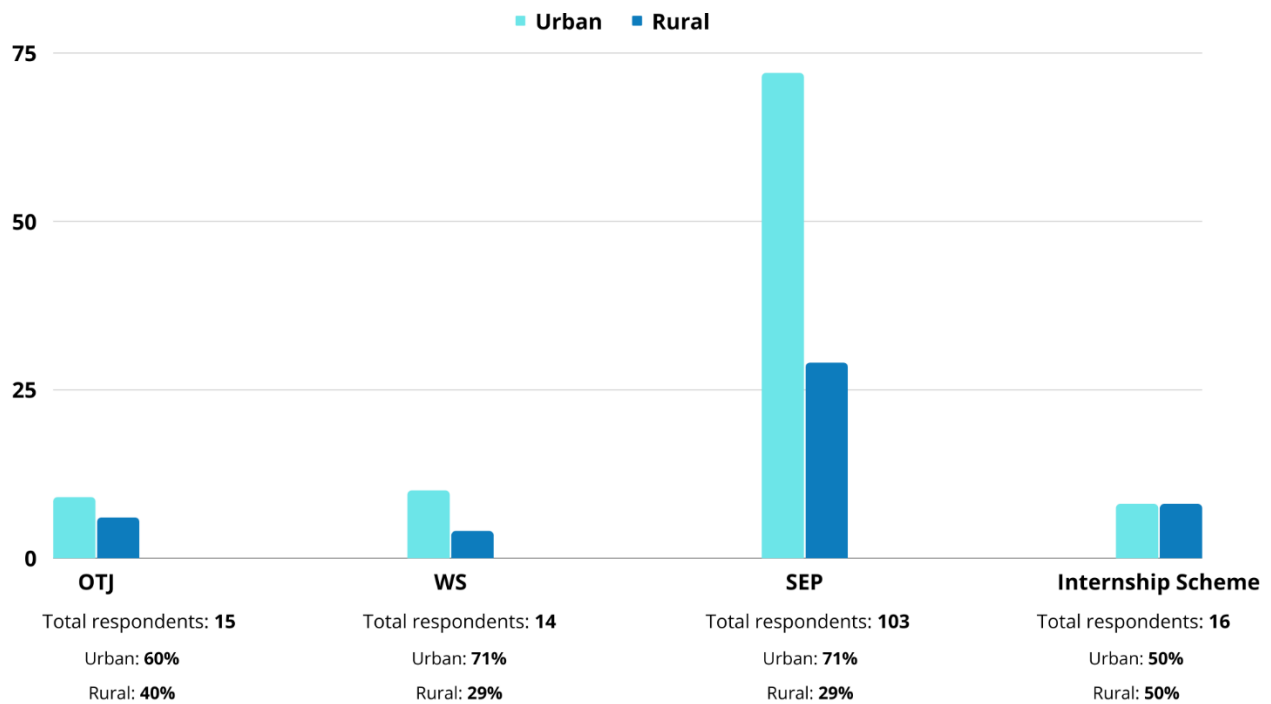


Figure 10 Participants in the survey by area of residence

6.2 Analytical methods implemented

The sources of information and the progress and impact assessment methods used are presented in Fig. 11.

DATA COLLECTION AND EVALUATION METHODS:

- Desk review
- Stakeholder interviews
- Analysis of statistical data
- Analysis of the reports
- Descriptive analysis
- Survey for final beneficiaries
- GAP analysis
- Contribution analysis
- Analysis of indicators
- Stakeholder analysis



SOURCES OF INFORMATION:

- Programme and Project Documents
(Project reports, Annual reports, External Mid-term evaluation, Monitoring documents, etc.)
- Programme Operational Manuals
- Government & sectorial strategic documents
- Questionnaires
- Semi-structured Interviews
- Statistics on labour market
- State statistics
- EU Progress reports

Figure 11 Evaluation methods

7. FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

7.1 Project design & contextual relevance

This section aims to assess the project design and conceptual relevance by exploring the extent to which the intervention objectives and design respond to the needs, policies and priorities of beneficiaries and partner institutions and continue to do under changing circumstances. The main questions addressed are:

- Is the project relevant to the needs of the identified target groups and beneficiaries and the Kosovo context in general?
- Were the areas of intervention appropriately chosen for reaching the results and outcomes?
- Were coordination, management, and financing arrangements supportive to institutional strengthening and local ownership?

The contextual relevance has been evaluated from the perspectives of: validity of project objectives as regards the relevant priorities, policies, and action plans, as well as the overall context; the extent to which the needs of identified target groups and beneficiaries are considered and addressed; the appropriateness of the initial design for reaching the planned objectives and targets; and the changes made in response to circumstances. For more clarity, the analysis follows the key areas of intervention.

Objective 1: *Improving the HR capacities and provision of continued direct implementation of ALMMs for vulnerable groups – with a particular focus on youth and women – and further technical support for the capacities of implementing institutions*³³ has been assessed as highly relevant. It is strategically aligned with the following horizontal and sectoral strategies: Strategy for Youth 2013 – 2017³⁴; Sectoral Strategy for Employment and Social Welfare 2014 – 2020 and its Action Plan 2015 – 2017;³⁵ the MLSW Sectoral Strategy 2018-2020 and the Action Plan on Increasing Youth Employment 2018-2020, focusing on improving the efficiency, availability, and coverage of PES. ALMP2 supports the implementation of the above strategies by helping the labour market institutions to develop and strengthen their capacities in policy-making and operations, as well as by providing direct support to jobseekers and private sector companies to increase employability and job creation. The project is implemented in compliance with Kosovo’s Gender Equality Law³⁶. Objective 1 is still valid and fully in line with the relevant priorities in the current Programme of Kosovo Institutions 2021-2025 (p.2.5 Ensuring gender equality through women’s empowerment³⁷, p.2.6 Promotion and protection of

³³ Output 1 Vulnerable youth across Kosovo – with a particular focus on women – receive integrated employment services.

³⁴ Obj. 3.3. “Establishment of opportunities for employment of young people through training programs and financial support for young entrepreneurs”.

³⁵ ALMP2 supports this strategy specifically in its four main intervention areas, namely (1) helping the labour market institutions develop and strengthen their capacities in policy-making, operational and business processes; (2) direct support to jobseekers and private sector companies to increase the employability and job creation; (3) enhancing the quality and availability of reliable data to create the space for evidence-based policy making; (4) and ensuring the sustainability of active labour market measures through feasible financing mechanisms.

³⁶ The Law on Gender Equality no 2004/02, Section 13 and Section 14, addressing Employment and Education.

³⁷ Programme of Kosovo Institutions 2021-2025: “To support women’s economic empowerment and increase employment, with a focus on doing business, we will implement active measures for women’s employment and support measures to ensure liquidity for businesses led by women”...“The new policies that we will draft will also be subject to gender impact assessment, so that we can have an informed decision-making regarding the advancement of gender policies, as well as we will advance the gender budgeting policy. Also, we to engage in the economic empowerment of women in society and economy, through financial support”.

rights of communities³⁸, social inclusion and general stabilization of communities,³⁹ 2.16.4 empowerment of all young people in the economic and social life of the country.) Helping labour market institutions develop and strengthen their capacities in policy-making, operational and business processes is also part of the broader platform of the modernization of public administration, stated to be a key priority.⁴⁰ The commitment to harmonizing professional training with labour market needs, clearly demonstrated in project design and implementation, is also well aligned with current policies⁴¹. Objective 1 has been designed to serve the needs of the identified target groups and beneficiaries (covered extensively also in the Section 8.7 Human rights and 8.8 Gender)⁴².

Objective 2: *The enhancement of the labour market knowledge base in order to ensure evidence-based decision making among labour-market actors*⁴³ has been assessed as relevant. It is strategically aligned with the following central and sectoral strategies: MLSW Sectoral Strategy 2014 – 2020 and its Action Plan 2015 – 2017,⁴⁴ as well as with the MLSW Sectoral Strategy 2018-2020 and its Action Plan. ALMP2 aims to support their implementation by enhancing the quality and availability of reliable data to create the space for evidence-based policy making. It is tailored to effectively addressing the lack of policy analysis and briefs in the labour market to guide relevant decision making. From the perspective of the current Programme of Kosovo Institutions 2021-2025, the project objectives appear valid and in line with stated priorities.⁴⁵

³⁸ Programme of Kosovo Institutions 2021-2025: “there will be no place for discrimination in employment, education or support for entrepreneurs, for non-majority communities. We will open all the ways and opportunities to non-majority communities to feel and be, not only equal to every other citizen, but also co-owners of our progress in economy and society.”

³⁹ Programme of Kosovo Institutions 2021-2025: “We will support communities for economic development and cultural and social integration through projects that are in function of the return, reintegration and stabilization of communities, financial support of civil society in order to create mutual trust between communities”.

⁴⁰ The key priority is the reform of the public administration, which aims to fundamentally change the quality of services to citizens, businesses and institutions and to create the creation of a modern and capable administration for the successful completion of the integration into the European Union.

⁴¹ Programme of Kosovo Institutions 2021-2025, p. 2.15.2 Harmonization of education and professional training with the requirements of the labour market, focuses on “creating conditions for the development of practical work and professional practice (practice at the workplace), as well as on improving career guidance and counselling by developing a model of career guidance and counselling in VET and carrying out of follow-up studies.

⁴² The Labour Force Survey 2015 (LFS) indicates that the main labour market indicators correspond to the challenges the labour market in Kosovo continues to face. The unemployment rate has been around 30-35% and has been on the rise, which is twice as high as other countries in the region, and four times higher than the average of the European Union. Similarly, the inactivity rate and the employment rate remain to be the lowest in the Western Balkans, (62.4% and 25.2%), respectively. The labour market indicators for women are especially low. The employment structure shows that 25.2% of the working age population was employed in 2015, around 296,940 persons. The biggest employer in Kosovo remains to be the service sector (69%), while the industry has only 11% of employment share. Additional complexities come from the growing are brought by the number of readmitted persons: during 2015 alone some, about 17,000 persons were readmitted to Kosovo. Most of the readmitted persons do not possess the skills and the experience needed in the labour market, which makes the integration to in the labour market an even more challenging process. Reintegration of readmitted persons is one of the key milestones in the process of visa liberalization and EU integration process. The line ministries are shifting the focus more and more towards sustainable reintegration of readmitted persons.

⁴³. Output 2 Enhanced knowledge base on labour market leading to evidence-based gender sensitive decision making

⁴⁴ ALMP2 supports this strategy specifically in its four main intervention areas, namely (1) helping the labour market institutions develop and strengthen their capacities in policy-making, operational and business processes; (2) direct support to the jobseekers and private sector companies to increase the employability and job creation; (3) enhancing the quality and availability of reliable data to create the space for evidence-based policy making; (4) and ensuring the sustainability of active labour market measures through feasible financing mechanisms.

⁴⁵ Programme of Kosovo Institutions 2021-2025 “We will produce statistics in accordance with international standards for this field and we will link research work in universities with industry, through the approach of smart specializations”. “Likewise, we will work to link the labor market and professional education, through the creation of an information system for the labor market”.

Objective 3: *Through identifying feasible ways for Kosovo to establish an Employment Fund, in order to ensure sustainability in the financing and implementation of active employment measures*⁴⁶ has been assessed as relevant. It corresponds to the MLSW Sectoral Strategy 2014-2020 and its Action Plan 2015 – 2017,⁴⁷ as well as the MLSW Sectoral Strategy 2018-2020 and its Action Plan. Through Objective 3 ALMP2 aims to support these by ensuring the sustainability of active labour market measures through feasible financing mechanisms. It is customized to address the needs of moving from donor-funded alms to sustainable solutions. From today's perspective, establishing feasible ways for Kosovo to ensure sustainability in the financing and implementation of active employment measures constitutes a valid and challenging objective, as reflected in the measures and spirit of the Programme of Kosovo Institutions 2021-2025.⁴⁸

The project objectives related to **“Sustainable economic reintegration for repatriated women and men”**, through the development of skills and the provision of employment opportunities for repatriated persons in cooperation with labour market institutions and private sector enterprises, have been assessed as highly relevant. Through self-employment the goal is to provide long-term employment to repatriated persons by providing tools and equipment and integrating them into Kosovo's economic life.

Strategically, these objectives remain among the key priorities of the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA)⁴⁹, linked with the Strategy For Sustainable Reintegration of Repatriated Persons 2018-2022,⁵⁰ and are also well framed in the EU integration agenda⁵¹ and the National Program for the Implementation of the SAA. They correspond closely with the current programme of Kosovo Institutions 2021-2025 regarding “Social inclusion and general stabilization of communities”.⁵²

The project's concentration on continued direct implementation of ALMMs for vulnerable groups – with a particular focus on young people and women, as well as on sustainable economic reintegration

⁴⁶ Output 3 Feasible modalities to establish an Employment Fund are developed:

⁴⁷ ALMP2 supports this strategy specifically in its four main intervention areas, namely (1) helping/supporting the labour market institutions develop and strengthen their capacities in policy-making, operational and business processes; (2) direct support to the jobseekers and private sector companies to increase the employability and job creation; (3) enhancing the quality and availability of reliable data to create the space for evidence-based policy making; (4) and ensuring the sustainability of active labour market measures through feasible financing mechanisms

⁴⁸ Programme of Kosovo Institutions 2021-2025: “Our vision is to build a sustainable public finance system in accordance with the highest international standards, which ensures economic growth and development, as well as better welfare for all citizens”. It remains to be seen, however, how stated political commitments towards “redesign of the redesign of fiscal policies and the financial system” regarding inclusive economic growth will be further operationalized with concrete measures.

⁴⁹ Priority field in the Statement of Priorities Policy (2012-2020) – Statement of Priorities Policy (2012-2020) and Mid-Term Expenditure Framework for the period 2018-2020. Sustainable reintegration comes set under the second objective of the Medium-Term Policy Statement, called “Advancing the European Integration Process and Strengthening International Cooperation”.

⁵⁰ Strategic objective 2: Sustainable socio-economic reintegration of reintegrated persons; Specific Objective 1.2: Advancing sustainable economic reintegration measures and Specific Objective 1.4: Improving the access for repatriated persons to early and lifelong learning and vocational training).

⁵¹ Within the European Agenda, the criteria of the Roadmap for Visa Liberalization include integrating repatriated persons into socio-economic life and lowering the possibility of re-emigration through long-term employment.

⁵² Programme of Kosovo Institutions 2021-2025 “We will support communities for economic development and cultural and social integration through projects that are in function of the return, reintegration and stabilization of communities,t to create income generation and employment opportunities among minority communities in all regions, and through social inclusion and overall stabilization of communities.”

– is customized to national needs. All three schemes (OJT, WS and SEP) follow a needs-customized approach, serving the unique needs of beneficiaries identified at individual level. At macro level, the needs assessment considers Kosovo's macroeconomic situation, particularly the importance of a skilled labour force to increase private enterprises' productivity. The stakeholder interviews, as well as the results of the questionnaire, demonstrate full coverage of beneficiaries (100% of respondents confirm their needs have been assessed) and the effectiveness of the implemented needs assessment to link individual needs with the schemes. To further ensure that individual needs are properly addressed, the project has referred extensively to career guidance and soft skills development. The added value has been largely confirmed by the stakeholder interviews, and by the results of the questionnaire: 100% of respondents confirm they have been further consulted and guided and 100% confirm the success of this intervention. The evaluation data confirm that not only has the SEP been appropriate to needs and context, but also that most beneficiaries have shown entrepreneurial abilities and have even succeeded in employing others in their businesses. This success is also evident in related evaluation findings – such as the design of the scheme, the number of beneficiaries who benefited from the scheme, the impact and sustainability – and has been reconfirmed by the two external evaluations.⁵³

Overall, the project is well linked with the Kosovo Programme Action Plans. This is made explicit in project design as well as in implementation. The project contributes towards achieving the outcomes of the Kosovo Programme Action Plan 2011 – 2015⁵⁴, as well as those of the Common Development Plan 2016-2020⁵⁵. Through its well-planned and -implemented interventions, the project contributes to several 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. It is in line with the UNDP Eight Point Agenda (SC 1325)'s Point 6 (Ensure gender-responsive recovery) and with the UNDP Gender Equality Strategy implementation⁵⁶.

The project has continued to maintain its contextual relevance during the Covid-19 pandemic. Similar to most other countries around the world, Kosovo's restrictions on individual movements, 'lockdown' measures, periodic remote mode of public offices, etc. have affected routine project management, as well as the activities of partner institutions, in particular the MLSW, DRRP, EO and EA. Despite this challenge, EARK, DRRP (MIA), and UNDP staff have continued implementing the programme and effectively working towards achievement of planned targets. The effects of the pandemic on project implementation should be considered not merely in terms of overcoming operational difficulties (switching to remote mode for implementing certain activities, etc.): by working directly towards creating sustainable jobs and addressing the pressing issue of informality within the labour market, the project has also tried to mitigate negative effects by addressing economic challenges, social issues related to insufficient social protection of jobseekers, and

⁵³ "The Implementation and Impact of the Self-Employment Programme (SEP) in Kosovo (2015-2016)" and the "Sustainable reintegration of repatriated persons into the labour market through UNDP's labour market measures 2019-2020".

⁵⁴ By 2015, vulnerable women and men (returnees, IDP, minority groups, PWD, youth) have more economic and livelihood opportunities, and benefit from better public and social services.

⁵⁵ 2.1: Education and employment policies and programmes enable greater access to decent employment opportunities for youth and women.

⁵⁶ Through 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.

environmental problems. As noted in the 2020 annual progress report, “people who are socially, economically, or culturally marginalized [have been made] 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 a disasters thus creating the necessity for environmentally responsive activities”.⁵⁷ To better respond to these significant contextual changes, the project has been declared to work towards mitigating some of the social challenges stemming from environmental degradation and climate change. Interviews with the ALMP2 project team indicate that a considerable transformation within the scope of its activities in relation to climate change and environmental sustainability is to be expected in the future. In response to the current worldwide risks and priorities, it is further stated that the project is “examining pathways to digitalizing services within the public employment services, providing on-line modular based training, as well as integrating new ICT-based profiles within the scope of labour market measures. That transformation is sought to create inclusive learning opportunities and employment for marginalized groups, without the environmental cost of traditional profiles.”⁵⁸

All cross-cutting issues (such as gender equality, women empowerment, human rights-based approach, social standards, and the environment) have been appropriately addressed in the project design and further reflected in implementation⁵⁹.

Evidence shows out that the design of the project has proven appropriate for reaching its results and outcomes.⁶⁰ The project has progressed over several years (from April 2014 to the end of 2022), its implementation following three project documents. This evolution of project design to better respond to changing context, and to the needs of repatriated persons, whose sustainable economic reintegration has been deemed a strategic priority relative to the visa liberalisation process, has been discussed in detail in the Section 8.6 Theory of Change/Results and Outcomes Map.

The review of the project documents⁶¹ and the evaluation interviews make it evident that the intended results of the project were well-defined, measurable and verifiable. Coordination, management, and financing arrangements have been clearly defined and supportive of institutional strengthening and local ownership. Relevant procedures have been properly executed, and beneficiaries respected and mainstreamed within implementation. Monitoring and risk management have been exceptionally well-organised, with periodic monitoring visits properly recorded.⁶² Stakeholder interviews have reconfirmed direct close contact with the UNDP team under all circumstances, including when emerging needs have called for urgent involvement. In the eyes of the stakeholders interviewed, the project team has proven itself committed to monitoring, coaching, mentoring and other support actions as necessary. The comprehensive documentation provides for

⁵⁷ Annual progress report 2020

⁵⁸ Annual progress report 2020

⁵⁹ For more information, see the analysis in the sections on gender and human rights.

⁶⁰ Comprehensive analysis has been made in the Section 8.6 Theory of Change

⁶¹ Annual progress reports, monitoring reports, financial reports, mentoring and coaching reports, etc.

⁶² 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 joint monitoring with the employment counsellors. The project is also monitored through administrative data of EMIS and the project database.

traceability and to a great extent has also enabled this evaluation. Quality assurance has been given a high evaluation by the stakeholders interviewed. The mechanisms for quality assurance have been developed at policy as well as technical level. While the UNDP Kosovo office Programme Coordinator, Programme Analyst and Programme Officer have provided specialist quality assurance, mostly of a technical nature, the UNDP's programme team has been involved in the quality assurance of the related policy development initiatives. The Project Board (PB) has received advice from project assurance team, which raised any issues that may not have been addressed and offered advice on quality issues. Project assurance team has also highlighted areas of concern to the Project Management Unit. Additional quality assurance has been provided through the periodic monitoring reports. Where activities have been implemented in partnership, joint quality assurance mechanisms have been applied (integrated planning, integrated monitoring, and acceptance of project deliverables through joint working groups, including with participation of beneficiary institutions; for more information, see Section 8.5, Stakeholders, and partnership strategy).

Conclusion:

The objectives of the project have been assessed as directly and closely linked with the relevant priorities and strategic documents, including the current Programme of Kosovo Institutions 2021-2025, and as well framed in the context of the EU agenda, with a focus on the visa liberalization process. Through its well-planned and -implemented interventions, the project contributes towards achieving the outcomes of the Kosovo Programme Action Plan 2011–2015 and those of the Common Development Plan 2016-2020 as well as several Sustainable Development Goals. It has provided a customized needs-based approach to the individual needs of the target groups, including the heterogeneous category of returnees. Addressing the low access of women to the labour market – particularly striking in Kosovo – is of strategic importance. Planned results are highly relevant at macroeconomic level. Project design has been found appropriate to achieving the planned results and expected outcomes. The project team has demonstrated commitment, creativity, flexibility, and professionalism in adapting project implementation to changing circumstances and to the adverse effects of the Covid-19 pandemic. Beneficiaries in Kosovo restated the relevance of the project to strategic priorities, macro-economic context and individual and institutional needs, and have firmly expressed their satisfaction with the project.

7.2 Effectiveness

This section assesses to what extent the objectives of the development intervention have been achieved. Additionally, it includes an assessment of the effectiveness of the project against to the planned objectives (comparison: results vs. plans).

This section addresses the following Evaluation Questions:

- To what extent have the programme outputs and outcomes been achieved? Are they on track to be achieved as presented in the initial plan of the programme?
- What factors contributed to progress or delay in the achievement of products and results?
- Can we identify good practices, successful experiences or transferable examples?
- What is the quality of interventions and results achieved with the main stakeholders in the Project?
- Have any changes in the context in Kosovo affected the implementation of the Project and the overall results?

A summary of key project achievements is presented in this part of the report as well as the extent to

which the planned project activities have been implemented. The evaluation measures not just implementation but whether implementation was effective.

Each project activity encompasses a number of sub-activities, planned on an annual basis within the overall project strategy and addressing the specific needs of institutional stakeholders and final beneficiaries. The project logic incorporates two main types of interventions: TA and capacity-building for institutional stakeholders, and support for ALMM delivery for final beneficiaries, targeting the most vulnerable groups. The first part consists of:

- support to policy drafting and policy analysis, including all activities related to TA and ALMP2 representatives' participation in the working groups for drafting regulations, strategic documents, concept papers, labour-market related analysis and surveys;
- support to drafting operational guidance on integrated and client-oriented PES delivery, and manuals on ALMM implementation, and design, implementation and management of SEP with supporting manuals and procedures;
- capacity-building through train-the-trainer, training for institutional stakeholders, workshops and study visits;
- support to the development, upgrade, deployment and support of e-systems such as Employment Management Information System, Labour Market Information System, KosovoJobPortal, etc.;
- operational technical support to deliver the ALMMs and the complementary awareness-raising activities.

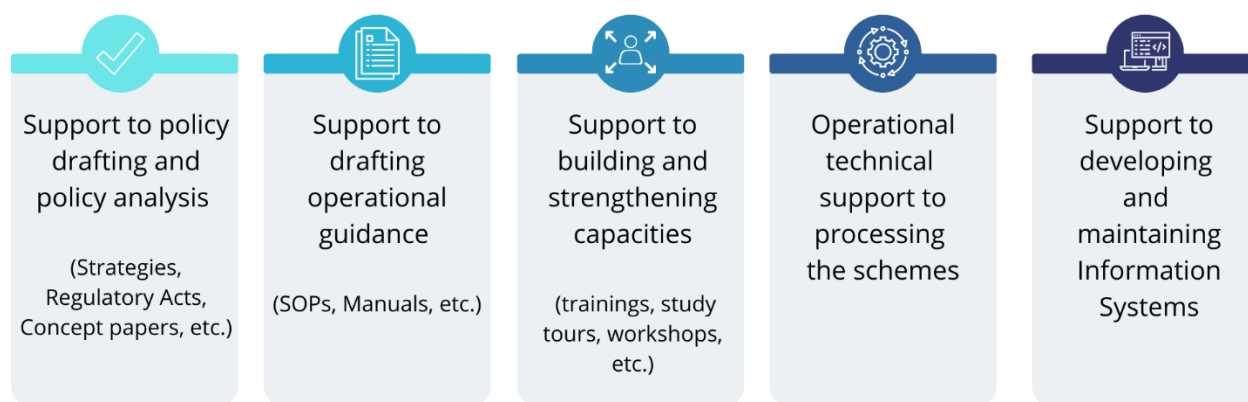


Figure 12 Project interventions

The ALMMs supported by ALMP2 are On-the-job Training, Wage Subsidy programme, internships, Self-Employment Programme (SEP), training at VTCs, and entrepreneurship training for SEP. These have encompassed 6191 final beneficiaries. The measures that have engaged the most beneficiaries are WSP (24.5% of beneficiaries), OJT (23%) and SEP (20%) – see Fig. 13 and Fig. 14.

NUMBER OF ALMP2 BENEFICIARIES: 6191

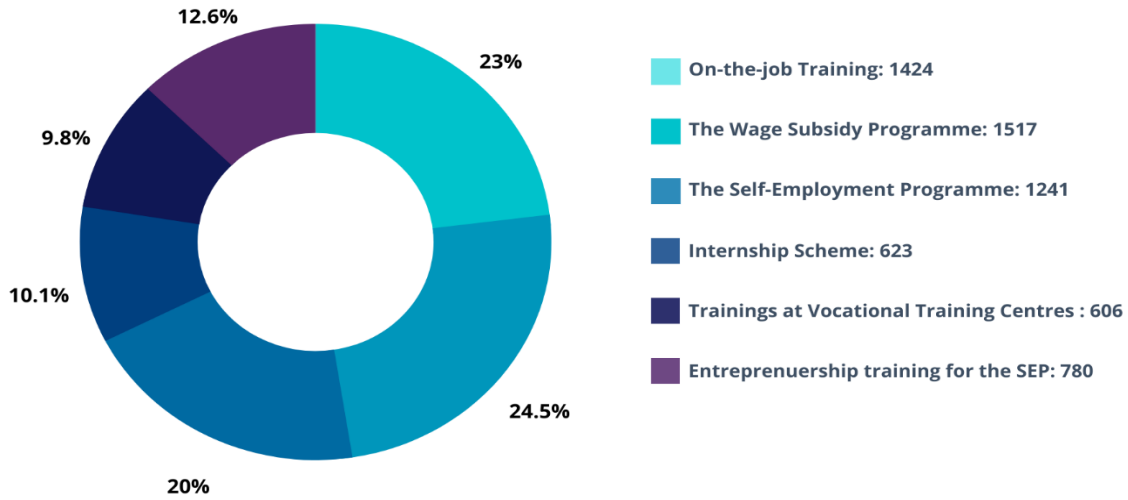


Figure 13 ALMM participants, by measure

The ALMMs delivered to final beneficiaries under the project are according to the PES model in place in Kosovo, which has been enhanced by ALMP2’s support to an integrated and unified client-oriented model focusing on the quality and effect of the proposed services. SEP was launched in 2015 as a new measure for the established PES model, designed with the support of ALMP2 based on the relevant and successful experience of FYROM (now the Republic of North Macedonia). ALMP2 has played a key role in its design, deployment, and monitoring.

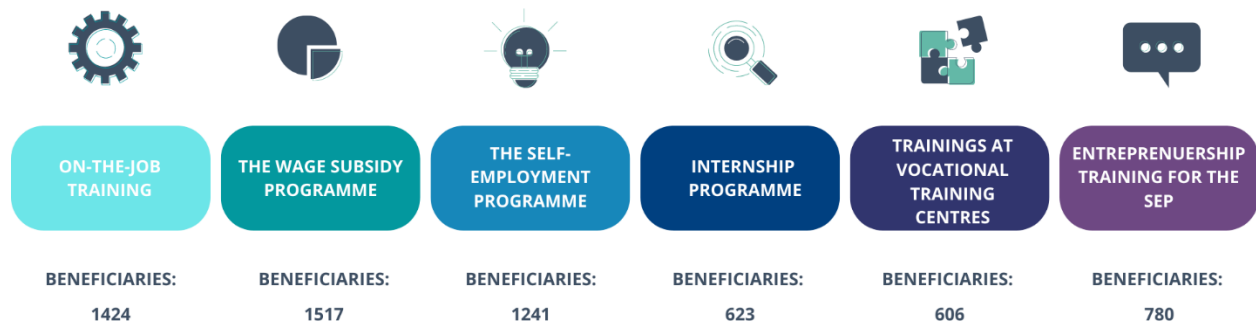


Figure 14 Total number of ALMM participants, by year

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

WSP is a one-year employment programme, which subsidizes up to 50% of the employee’s wage for a twelve-month period, based on the profile of the jobseeker (those with a higher risk of becoming long-term unemployed are subsidized for a longer period).

The **Internship programme** is a three-month training programme targeting recent graduates (not more than 1 year), to get them integrated into the labour market in a sector consistent with their degree.

SEP – Self Employment programme supports the creation of viable businesses capable of surviving in the competitive market, while promoting self-employment as an active labour market measure. Apart from providing equipment packages, the programme also delivers training on business skills and expert support, helping unemployed jobseekers with qualification and orientation to be successful in their chosen field. Additional measures supported by ALMP2 during the COVID-19 pandemic and outside the PES model are the UNV Community Volunteer Placement and Voucher Schemes.

UNV Community Volunteer Placement – The “Empowering Youth for a Peaceful, Prosperous, and Sustainable Future in Kosovo” (EYPPSFK) project, funded by the UN Secretary-General’s Peacebuilding Fund, offered technical assistance in the placement of UN Volunteers within Municipal Employment Offices in order to coordinate the promotion of services offered by the office and reach out to young people so that they benefit from active labour market measures. The duration of service for each Volunteer has been 6 months.

The **Voucher Scheme** supports families in difficult socio-economic conditions who are beneficiaries of the social assistance scheme within the Centres for Social Work (CSW). The programme provided support to 2,500 beneficiary families in different municipalities through vouchers for basic/primary care products.⁶³

Given the project’s specific focus on vulnerable groups, the main outputs and results indicators set in the three project documents differ in terms of their targets according to the proposed logic of intervention.

ALMP2 2014-2017

Output 1. Vulnerable youth across Kosovo – with a particular focus on women – receive integrated employment services.

The output indicators in the Output and Resource Framework are related to project target groups, with a focus on the most vulnerable: young people, women and minorities benefitting from ALMP2. The target and achieved parameters are presented in Fig. 15 below.

⁶³ Annual project progress report 2020.

ALMP2 2014-2017

RESULT & RESOURCES FRAMEWORK

Output 1: Vulnerable youth across Kosovo – with a particular focus on women – receive integrated employment services

ACHIEVED 1:

38% for 15-24 age group

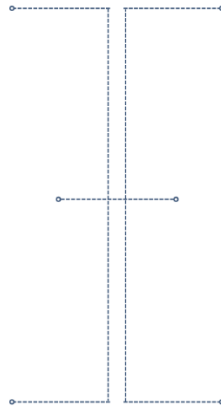
55% for 15-29 age group

ACHIEVED 2:

40% women beneficiaries

ACHIEVED 3:

15% minorities



BASELINE 1:

35% of unemployed youth (15-24 age group) benefit from ALMPs (total beneficiaries in 2012 - 10,922)

BASELINE 2:

30% of ALMPs beneficiaries are women (2012)

BASELINE 3:

10% of ALMPs beneficiaries are from minority communities

TARGET 1:

% youth (15-24) benefiting from ALMPs is increased at least for 5%

TARGET 2:

% women benefiting from ALMPs is increased at least for 10%

TARGET 3:

% ALMPs beneficiaries is increased at least for 3%

Figure 15 ALMP2 2014-2017: result and resources framework

During 2014-2017 the targets of the output indicators were fully met, as follows:

- 38% of unemployed young people aged 15-24 have been involved in ALMP2. During implementation the age group was expanded to 15-29 year-olds, and 55% of this target group benefited. The target of 40% is thus fully met.
- The target of 40% of women beneficiaries is fully met – 40% women benefited from ALMP2 during this period.
- 15% of beneficiaries were from ethnic minorities exceeding the target of 13%.

Exceeding the targets of two of the output indicators seems to reflect proper design of support measures delivered to the EOs, and the commitment of ALMP2 to reach the most vulnerable groups with ALMMs. It is notable that during the first phase of ALMP2 the age group was expanded from 15-25 to 15-29 to address needs more effectively. Meeting targets is highly dependent on the results of TA activities, as they have contributed to the enhancement of the institutional framework, capacity and technical tools to deploy the ALMMs effectively and reach the targeted vulnerable groups.

ALMP2 support to ALMMs delivery in the period 2014-2017

ALMP2 has assisted the counsellors in EOs and VTCs at every stage of the implementation of ALMMs (OJT, WS, SEP and IP) aimed at integrating in the labour market the most vulnerable groups – young people, women, and people from minority communities. ALMP2 support has been focused to ensure ALMM implementation according to the optimised procedures outlined in the manuals, and guaranteeing a unified standard of PES delivery throughout Kosovo by providing mentoring and technical assistance to Employment Offices and Vocational Training Centres staff, including on using EMIS effectively (e.g. profiling of the jobseekers, etc.).

The Self-Employment programme (SEP) launched in 2015 has been designed, implemented, and monitored with the active support of ALMP2. It has been designed to support start-ups in six sectors with potential for growth, as defined by the Ministry of Trade and Industry. Based on the lessons learned from its pilot phase the SEP has been gradually optimised with updated scope and procedures to activate participants and more effectively support the target group to get involved, to shorten and ease the project application and evaluation phase, to improve mentoring and coaching, and to enhance monitoring processes. ALMP2 has been actively involved in the entire project cycle of SEP. The external evaluation of SEP (its first two calls – 2015, 2016) conducted in September 2018 pointed out its effectiveness as it has been empowered by “*well-designed operational guidelines and model that are based on a successful model adopted in Macedonia*” and with “*extensive and in-depth beneficiary application and selection processes*”⁶⁴.

During the period 2014-2017, the project has supported measures for TA and capacity-building towards reforming the Public Employment Services in Kosovo and enhancing the legal, institutional and HR framework for implementation. The interventions have been delivered according to the activities defined in the project annual plans and following the needs of the stakeholder institutions of specific ad hoc TA to be provided:

- Participation in a working group mandated by the MLSW Permanent Secretary to work mainly on secondary legislation as part of the PES reform;
- Support to structuring and functionalizing the EA;
- Development of MLSW annual work plans to better coordinate and monitor the work towards improvement of PES;
- Activating the Self-Employment programme;
- Establishing a unit responsible for delivering continuous training programmes for PES within MLSW;
- Designing an online training system to ensure continuous delivery of training programmes to PES and VTC in collaboration with the Swiss Development Cooperation (SDC)-funded project – Enhancing Youth Employment (EYE);
- Study visits to the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM, now North Macedonia) and Albania to share knowledge and know-how for establishing the Employment Agency and designing the Self-Employment programme;
- Provision of Integrated Service Delivery and Client Profiling and update of EMIS to integrate all the channels informed by the new service delivery model, with functionality for initial profiling of clients;
- Designing Performance Management Framework (PMF) for PES and integrating it into the Employment Management Information System;
- Support to update nomenclature of professions and its adaptation to International Standard Classification of Occupations ISCO 08 of ILO.

ALMP2 support to structural reform in the labour market is crucial as this reform not only follows best practices across Europe (policy-making and policy-implementing bodies in the public administration are separated with clearly distinguished functions). This structural re-modelling is a prerequisite for PES optimisation via integrated, unified and client-oriented approach, also supported by the project.

⁶⁴ The Implementation and Impact of the Self-Employment programme (SEP) in Kosovo (2015-2016)

In terms of *Activity 4. Increase awareness on PES and VTC services among PES and VTC services (spot visits, social media, innovative ICT tools, etc.)* the project has enhanced visibility of ALMMs through various communication measures based on an developed strategy.

Output 2 Knowledge of labour market is enhanced, leading to evidence-based, gender-sensitive decision-making

The set target for this outcome is: at least six policy analysis and briefs are produced. **The target is fully met.**

With the support of the ALMP2 during the period 2014-2017, several activities related to the implementation of Output 2 have been accomplished. Some of them are directly focused on improving the quality of labour data in Kosovo and enhancing evidence-based policy-making. During this period the Kosovo Agency of Statistics has been supported with technical assistance in ensuring higher quality of analysis in the Labour Force Surveys of 2014, 2015 and 2016. Training has been provided to increase KAS's capacity to prepare the database and indicators and collect and analyse the data for the LFS. A methodology for an Employment Skills Survey was developed focused on six selected economic sectors with growth potential defined by the Ministry of Trade and Industry. The Employer survey has been implemented with a focus on assessing skill gaps in the six sectors, with the idea to use the results for curricula development for VTCs and future short and medium-term training programmes from MLSP, MEST or private sector training providers. The project has also provided direct assistance to developing several policy documents. A collaboration between the University of Prishtina/Priština and the Kosovo Institutions has been established to equip the relevant institutions with evidence during the process of policy development.

Output 3 Feasible modalities to establish an Employment Fund are developed

The set target for this outcome is: By Q4 2014 the feasibility study including proposed modalities implementable in Kosovo is developed and endorsed by the relevant institution. The target has not been met within the set timeframe.

The rationale behind the activity is that ALMM funding has not been sustainable: donor support exceeds national budget expenditures on employment policy, and, despite the relatively developed system of donor coordination, there has been a large potential for increasing the effectiveness of ALMMs through better coordination and streamlining of donor support through one agency. The delay in implementation of the activity has related to another main challenge in the period – the timely establishment and functionalization of the Employment Agency as part of the ongoing PES reform. However, in 2017 a feasibility study with modalities for the establishment of an Employment Fund to support the implementation of ALMMs was prepared and proposed to Kosovo institutions. Thus, the Output 3 indicator target of feasible modalities to establish an Employment Fund being developed has been met with delay, albeit still within the general period of phase 1 (2014-2017) of ALMP2.

Overall, all target results and outputs of ALMP2 2014-2017 have been achieved as planned, apart from the one related to the endorsement by relevant institutions of feasible modalities to establish an Employment Fund. The reason is external to the project, mainly deriving from the lack of political commitment to proceed with the proposed model. The envisaged feasibility study on the modalities for the establishment of an Employment Fund have been developed within the general project timeframe (2014-2017), *but the lack of "buy-in" at political and institutional level prevents from impacting the general unemployment policy implementation in Kosovo in a systematic and sustainable*

*manner*⁶⁵ as stated in the annual project report for 2017.

ALMP2 2018-2021

Output 1 HR capacities of MLSW, EA and PES are improved for delivering employment services through EOs, VTCs and Labour market research and evidence

The set target for this outcome is: The performance of PES in the provision of Employment Services is improved through technical expertise interventions. Desk review and stakeholder interviews demonstrated that the target is met.

The annual project reports provide considerable information about the implementation of the activities, to support capacity development and the technical assistance provided to the institutions responsible for the development and implementation of ALMMs, and these have cumulatively increased the quality of the PES provided. This statement was confirmed by the interviews with representatives of MFLT (former MLSW), EA, EOs and VTCs.

Diverse activities for capacity-building and technical assistance to the project's institutional partners have been deployed during the 2018-2021 period. The key activities have been:

- Provision of support in organizing workshops for drafting labour market-related strategic documents such as the Employment Agency Working Plan.
- Exploration of first-hand experiences and good practices by MLSW and other institutional stakeholders through a study visit to different countries.
- Provision of external expertise to address specific stakeholder needs.

The project has taken a flexible and demand-driven approach in the quality implementation of employment measures, based on identified gaps in service delivery. ALMP2 has conducted regular meetings with the MLSW, EA and EOs, to identify the challenges faced in PES delivery and to enable direct assistance via hands-on coaching to EOs across Kosovo. To stimulate service provision improvements, it has monitored beneficiaries through jointly arranged visits in the employment offices. The project has initiated direct technical assistance through trainers throughout VTCs. Within the scope of providing technical expertise, the project has continuously engaged a substantial number of experts, addressing institutional challenges in central and local level.

TA has been provided on drafting guidelines on the "Implementation of social security rights under international agreements" and on evaluating the legal framework of the MLSW. Sectoral reports have been developed after providing the MLSW with data and analyses for its decision-making processes: "Analytical Report on Implementation of the Employment and Social Welfare Strategy 2018-2022"; "Employment policy for the Employment Agency 2019-2021 (revised 2020)"; "Research analysis on satisfaction for the provision of employment services for jobseekers and employers by the Employment Agency"; and "Research inclusion of marginalized groups in the labour market in Kosovo". A Labour Cost Survey has been conducted to provide accurate, detailed, and harmonised data on enterprise labour costs. Existing cooperation with academia has continued. The capacities of the PES have been continuously strengthened, especially in terms of offering all clients the same type of services, according to their needs.

The project has facilitated exchanges of best practice and study visits for MLSW and PES to Albania, Austria, Portugal, Belgium, Montenegro, Germany and Singapore.

Complementary to the above activities, the project has contributed to upgrading the existing labour

⁶⁵ Annual project progress report 2017

market e-tools and enhancing their interoperability. Support to information systems is crucial for optimising business processes and thus the resources allocated for their implementation. Such measures and tools have the potential to equip the responsible institutions with the capacity to properly explore the parameters of the labour market, forecast key trends, and improve policy decision-making and implementation. The support of the project has contributed to the upgrade and interoperability of two of the main information systems of the EA: the Labour Market Information System (LMIS) and the Employment Management Information System (EMIS).

Additionally, targeting the key recommendations from the business sector in the *Research analysis on satisfaction for the provision of employment services for jobseekers and employers by Employment Agency* and in order for the cooperation between businesses and the Employment Agency to be further enhanced, the project has contributed to the optimisation of communication between the private sector, jobseekers and the agency through the *Web application platform “Kosovo Job Portal” for EA*.

The deployment of these systems has been followed by specific training for appropriate institutional end users on how to effectively manage and use them.

As part of its component on improving institutional capacities, the project has worked closely with the Department of Social Policy Families to help increase the efficiency of its service delivery to the community, through the newly developed platform for integrated management of social services digitalizing processes, providing efficient and safe delivery. The platform enhances the coordination between offices as well as data exchange between institutions, upgrades capacities and enables digitalized collaboration.

Output 2 Sustainable economic integration for unemployed young men and women registered in PES through active labour market measures (WS, SEP, IP, OJT) (amended)

The targets are fully met as presented on Fig. 16 below⁶⁶:

⁶⁶ Data provided by the Project team and for the period 2014-2017 derived from the annual project progress reports

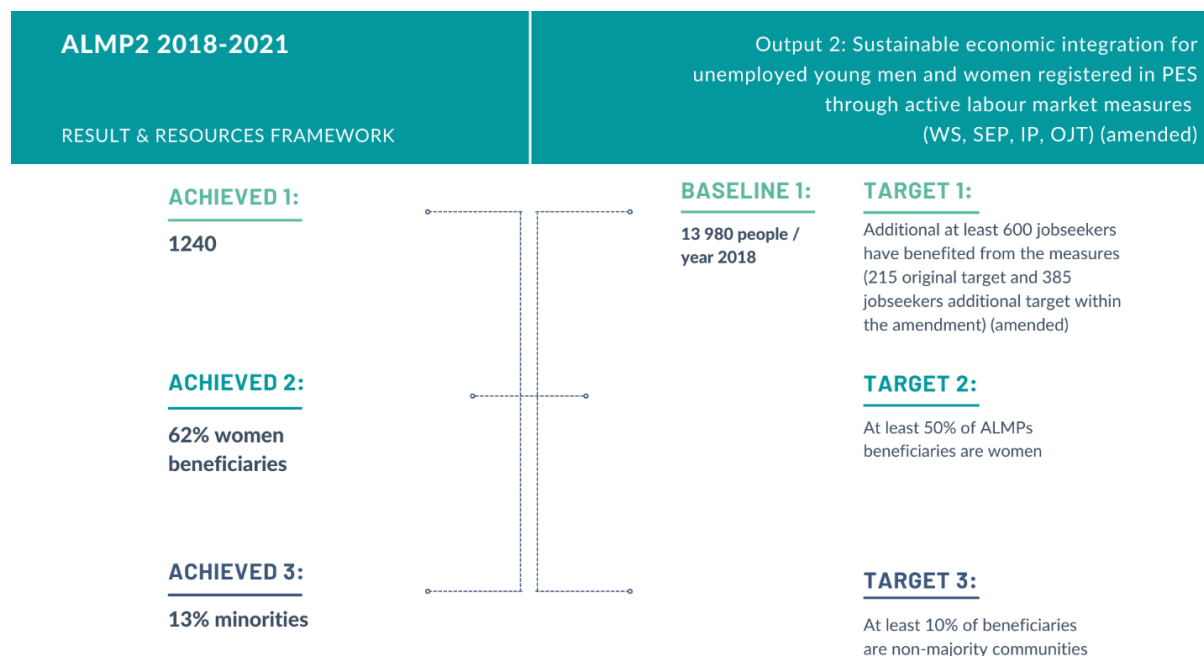


Figure 16 ALMP2 2018-2021: result and resources framework

The output indicators set in the Output and Resource Framework of ALMP 2 2018-2021 are related to the project target groups as follows: additional jobseekers, women, and minorities. For the period 2018-2021, all output indicators were exceeded:

- 1240 additional jobseekers benefited from the ALM against a target of 600
- 62% beneficiaries are women against a target of 50%
- 13% beneficiaries are from minority communities against a target of 10%

The project has supported sustainable economic integration for unemployed young men and women registered in the PES through continuous ALMMs (WSP, SEP, OJT and IP), and for repatriated women and men. The OJT, WS and SEP have been provided to regular and repatriated jobseekers.

As part of the successful collaboration with EOs and VTCs around Kosovo, those in the most northern municipalities of Kosovo have been included. The project has worked closely with diverse elements of the private sector, to increase their awareness of the benefit to them of the ALMMs and to enhance the match between labour market demand and supply.

The SEP has continued its evolution, following necessary changes and improvements to programme design and implementation, including changed occupation profiles consistent with market potential and trends. The EOs have been supported in providing mentoring and coaching. In 2018, ALMP2 reached an agreement with GIZ for the mentoring of SEP beneficiaries by a local consulting company according to individual requirements.

In the survey of final beneficiaries, almost all respondents that have participated in SEP confirmed that implementation could continue with the entirely online application and consultation, which were introduced during the Covid-19 pandemic (Fig. 17 and Fig. 18). This provides an opportunity to further optimise SEP project cycle procedures by incorporating digitalisation measures and digital skills training for EO staff.

THE SELF-EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMME: DO YOU THINK IT WOULD BE EFFECTIVE TO APPLY ONLINE FOR SEP?

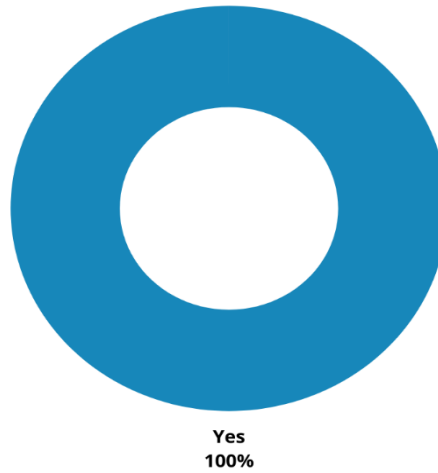


Figure 17 Online application for SEP approval rate

THE SELF-EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMME: DO YOU THINK IT WOULD BE EFFECTIVE TO RECEIVE ONLINE TRAINING CONSULTATIONS?

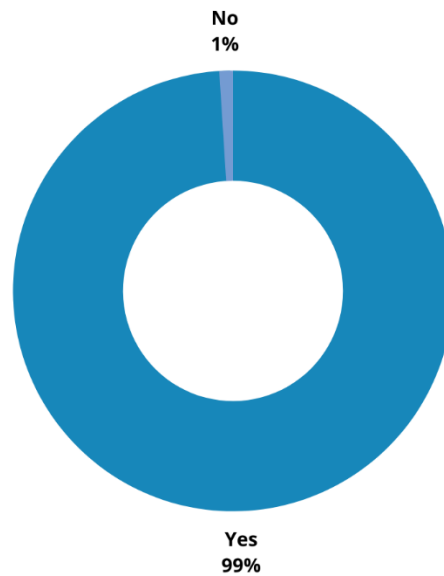


Figure 18 Online consultation for SEP approval rate

Annual reports and external evaluations have reported difficulty in efficiently integrating the environmental approach to SEP, though attempts have been made within the restrictions imposed by the grant size and the profile of the targeted sectors (except for ICT). Survey respondents are open to an enhanced environmental approach in SEP implementation, helping to generate green jobs (Fig. 19).

THE SELF-EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMME: DO YOU THINK A MORE ENVIRONMENTAL APPROACH CAN BE MADE OR ASKED (ENERGY EFFICIENCY, ETC.)?

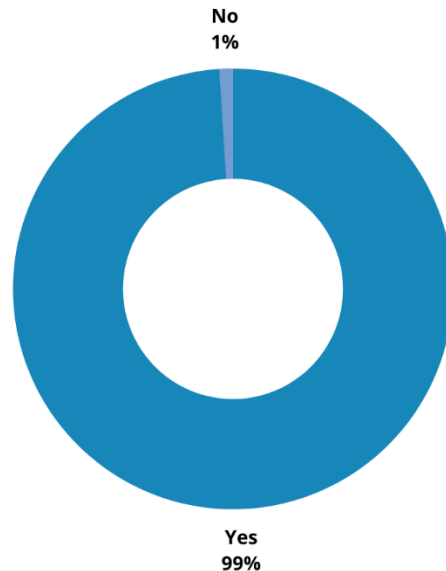


Figure 19 Approval rate for an environmental approach in SEP

During the reporting period, the ALMP2 project has helped UNDP successfully to impement the “*Response to COVID-19 Mitigation of Impact of Health and Humanitarian Crisis Basic social protection to the most vulnerables groups*” project, supported by the Government of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg – specifically the component to support marginalized families receiving social assistance through direct financial support, a voucher scheme implemented for the first time in Kosovo.

The project has had synergy with the “Empowering Youth for a Peaceful, Prosperous, and Sustainable Future in Kosovo” – a multi-agency project involving UNV, UNICEF, UN Women and UNDP in Kosovo. ALMP2, in cooperation with the UNV office, has selected and placed UN Volunteers in employment offices in the regions of Prishtina/Priština and Mitrovica. The volunteers provided support to employment counsellors and the municipal employment office under the supervision of project officers. They promoted active labour market measures within the community.

The project has also helped institutional stakeholders in implementing their functions in a COVID-19 environment, including through an IT solution for the Employment Agency to functionalize virtual working and online application and monitoring for SEP.

ALMP 2 2019-2021 Sustainable economic reintegration for repatriated women and men

The project document has a separate Output and Result Framework; its targets are presented below.⁶⁷

⁶⁷ Data provided by the pProject team and for the period 2014-2017 derived from the annual project progress reports.

ALMP2 2018-2022
 SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC REINTEGRATION
 OF REPATRIATED WOMEN AND MEN
 RESULT & RESOURCES FRAMEWORK

Outcome 1. Sustainable economic reintegration for repatriated women and men (WS, SEP, IP, OJT) (amended)

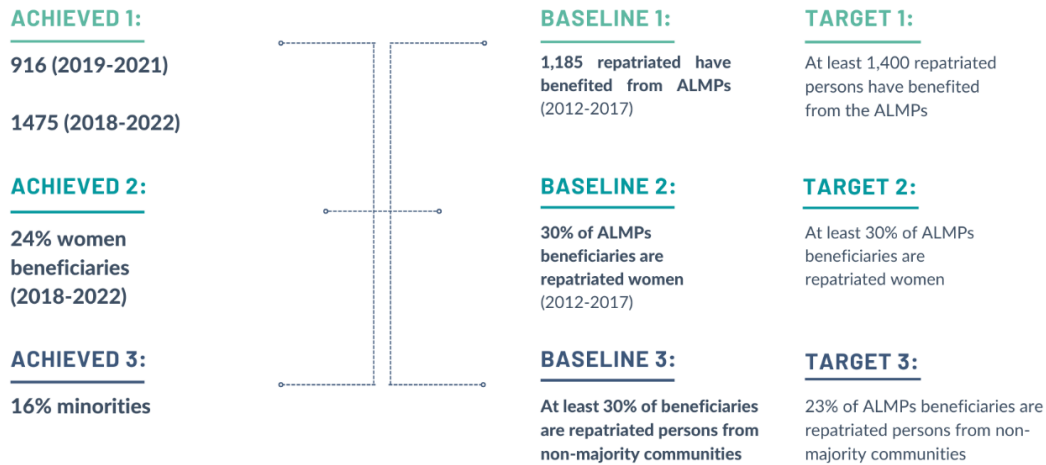


Figure 20 ALMP2 2018-2022: result and resources framework (repatriated women and men)

Progress towards achieving the output indicators set in the Output and Resource Framework is as follows:

- 1475 repatriated persons, benefited from the ALMM against a target of 1400;
- 24% beneficiaries are women against target of 30%;
- 16% beneficiaries are minorities against a target of 30%.

The findings from the interview with the project team emphasized that two indicators – participation of women and non-majority representatives – would not be achieved by the end of 2022.

Women are only 24% of the target group of repatriated beneficiaries, because of the cultural trend of men predominating in migration. The project has worked actively in promoting gender inclusive measures within the activities related to repatriated jobseekers. The inconsistent flow of repatriated persons has not helped reliable forecasting, and limited information about the repatriated persons (their gender, ethnicity, etc.) has been available, making it especially difficult to set realistic targets and indicators.

One annual report states that *a clear disproportion between the number of repatriated men and women (approx. 5 men are repatriated for every 1 woman) has become obvious based on the data received from the MIA – the department of reintegration and repatriation to the ALMP2, therefore creating a challenge in implementing gender inclusive measures. The SEP is an employment scheme with the greatest number of beneficiaries, however, it itself, the SEP accounts for a low participation of women, this being attributed to the fact that migration in this context is primarily male-driven and most people seeking reintegration services are men. 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. Until 2020, women represented 40% of project beneficiaries, being on track for the targeted forecasts, the project has been working actively in promoting gender inclusive measures, for each vacant spot in employment schemes preference is given*

to female candidates.⁶⁸

The project has supported public information activities about PES employment services, to mitigate the risk identified in the annual reports of lack of interest in ALMMs among repatriated persons.

Apart from intensive assistance in service delivery for the employment institutions, ALMP2 has organized regular meetings with the employment offices to identify and promote inclusive employment measures for repatriated persons. EO counsellors have been mentored in methods for implementing labour market measures for repatriated persons. During the mentoring process, ALMP2 worked with EO staff to generate detailed lists of repatriated persons as well as their professional capacities, thus creating profiles for each candidate and easing the training and counselling process for each specific employment scheme. The lists have been compiled using EMIS. The project has also given the MIA's Department for Reintegration of Repatriated Persons (DRRP) technical expertise for the drafting of several strategic documents, including the 2018-2019 Strategy for the Reintegration of Repatriated Persons in Kosovo, and key documents and modules on Standard Reintegration Services.

Relative progress and delay in the achievement of project's results depended on both internal and external factors:

Table 3 Internal and external factors

Internal factors	External factors
<p>Leading to the timely achievement of project results:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● well-established monitoring and reporting framework, allowing progress monitoring on annual basis and deployment of relevant risk management and mitigation measures ● persistent effort to actively communicate and involve institutional stakeholders ● targeted effort, following the project design, to provide TA and capacity-building measures for policy development centrally, and parallel work locally for welfare support ● committed activities to provide tools (such as surveys, E-Systems) for evidence-based policy-making in the field of labour market development ● hands-on technical assistance provided to EOs in ALMMs implementation ● efforts to establish partnership with business and academia ● awareness-raising measures among project target groups 	<p>Leading to the timely achievement of project results:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● sectoral strategic documents in place defining the policy in support of labour market development <p>Delaying the timely achievement of project results:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● insufficient financial resources committed by Kosovo institutions to ensure sustainability in implementation of ALMMs ● policy decisions affected by frequent political changes (EA functionalizing as part of PES reform, EF feasibility study) ● Institutional restructuring: delay on project implementation and scheme delivery ● COVID-19 and related restrictive measures hindered the operational capacities of most of EOs, thus creating bottlenecks of fund delivery. With a limited number of staff available across the employment agency, many activities have been delayed and needed repeated prompting for proper implementation

⁶⁸ Annual project progress report for 2020.

The good practices identified encompass several project elements. The design and implementation of SEP has high sustainability: 95% of business established under SEP were still operational at the time of the external evaluation implemented in 2020.⁶⁹ The upgrade and simplification of SEP procedures following the lessons learned from its previous phases – in terms of the application and monitoring process as well as the consultancy process, by integrating mentoring and coaching in cooperation with DIMAK GIZ – has resulted in high interest among repatriated jobseekers, who are a crucial yet difficult group to involve in ALMMs. The survey of final beneficiaries suggests an even higher sustainability rate – 99% – and a predominantly good level of satisfaction (4 out of 5) with the business consulting services provided and with the process of application and implementation. (More details on the survey are presented in Section 8.3 Efficiency.)

ALMP2 has demonstrated an experiential learning process in redesigning the call and simplifying application guidelines ahead of the second and third SEP calls, in order to attract a wider range of applicants. As mentioned in the 2018 Annual Report, the simplification of SEP has led *“to reduction of application expenses for repatriated jobseekers such as printing, travel expenses and other individual costs, as well as the reduction of administrative costs, as most jobseekers registered throughout employment offices are in poor social conditions and every additional cost/hurdle comes at great personal expense”*. Focusing on priority profiles, identified by the Ministry of Trade and Industry, has eased procurement procedures in purchasing packages of equipment for each profile, and allowed better information for applicants on the nature and technical capacities of grants applied for.

An example of good practice turning into a success is the extensive cooperation with MIA, MLWS, EA and other donor partners to design and implement the *Sustainable reintegration of repatriated women and men sub-project* as an evolving part of ALMP2, responding to a critical challenge by ensuring adequate and sustainable service provision to repatriated persons in the field of employment, skills development, and self-employment. The EU Commission’s 2021 progress report acknowledges *“important progress made towards more comprehensive policies and practices on return and reintegration of Kosovo nationals.”* Interview data shows that development partners, particularly UNDP and GIZ, have substantially contributed to the above achievements in reintegration.

A good practice to ensure that objectives and outcomes are consistent and supportive of horizontal and sectoral policies has been the involvement of the ALMP2 team in the working group mandated by the MLSW Permanent Secretary to work mainly on secondary legislation as part of PES reform⁷⁰. There was similar direct involvement in working groups to establish sectoral priorities in the field of reintegration – for example the support given to developing the Strategy on Sustainable Reintegration of Repatriated Persons 2018-2022. When policy developments have been supported, the process has been mostly guided by the inputs of the final beneficiaries, i.e. the DLE at MLSW and the staff of EOs and VTCs.⁷¹

The quality of the interventions relates directly to the satisfaction of the main stakeholders and final beneficiaries – and to their sustainability, in the absence of any critical changes in project context. The TA provided by ALMP2 to implement structural reform – the division of policy-making and

⁶⁹ Evaluation of the implementation and impact of the project “Sustainable Reintegration of Repatriated Persons 2019-2020”.

⁷⁰ Annual Progress Report April-December 2014.

⁷¹ Annual Progress Report 2017.

implementing functions concerning the labour market development by establishing, functionalising and further strengthening the EA – has been noted by the EC in its 2021 report: *The Employment Agency, the key body implementing employment policy, continued to consolidate its management and operational procedures and data management, and to refine the portfolio of active labour market programmes. However, further work is still needed to improve its operational capacity, including as regards monitoring, evaluation, as well as employment counselling, including for priority groups such as youth or long-term unemployed.*⁷²

The Commission acknowledged the progress in e-systems for Kosovo's labour market; ALMP2 supported some of their upgrade, development, and deployment (mainly EMIS and LMIS). Its 2021 report states: *Further progress was achieved in improving the labour market information system, by launching the Kosovo Labour Market Barometer, to support evidence-based policy making and planning. In May 2021 Kosovo launched the Skills Barometer, as a tool for planning of VET and determining priority sectors in targeted regions.*⁷³

The capacity of the Kosovo Agency of Statistics has been enhanced by ALMP2's technical assistance. In its 2021 Progress Report the European Commission states that *an annual and quarterly labour force survey is carried out regularly and its publication timeframe has improved.*⁷⁴

2020 EC report recommendations *to support the economic recovery, improve competitiveness and sustain long-term growth in Kosovo, in particular to improve the quality of vocational training and education at all levels and align the curricula with labour market needs has not been fulfilled and remain valid.*⁷⁵ The findings from the interviews conducted reveal further need to enhance regular business needs analysis and skills needs assessment, taking into account regional specifics and linking demand with VTC training curricula, with practical training implemented in companies and theoretical training delivered via e-learning platforms.

The positive feedback received from all stakeholders interviewed indicates satisfaction with the TA, capacity-building and direct support to ALMMs. The survey of final beneficiaries likewise gives evidence of considerable satisfaction, with no significant difference between the responses of women and men, as shown in Fig. 21:

⁷² Kosovo 2021 Progress report, COM (2021) 644 final.

⁷³ Kosovo 2021 Progress report, COM (2021) 644 final.

⁷⁴ Kosovo 2021 Progress report, COM (2021) 644 final.

⁷⁵ COMMISSION STAFF WORKING DOCUMENT Kosovo* 2021 Report.

ON-THE-JOB TRAINING: HOW WOULD YOU RATE THE TRAINING RECEIVED, IN A SCALE FROM 1 TO 5?

(where 1 is very dissatisfied and 5 is very satisfied)

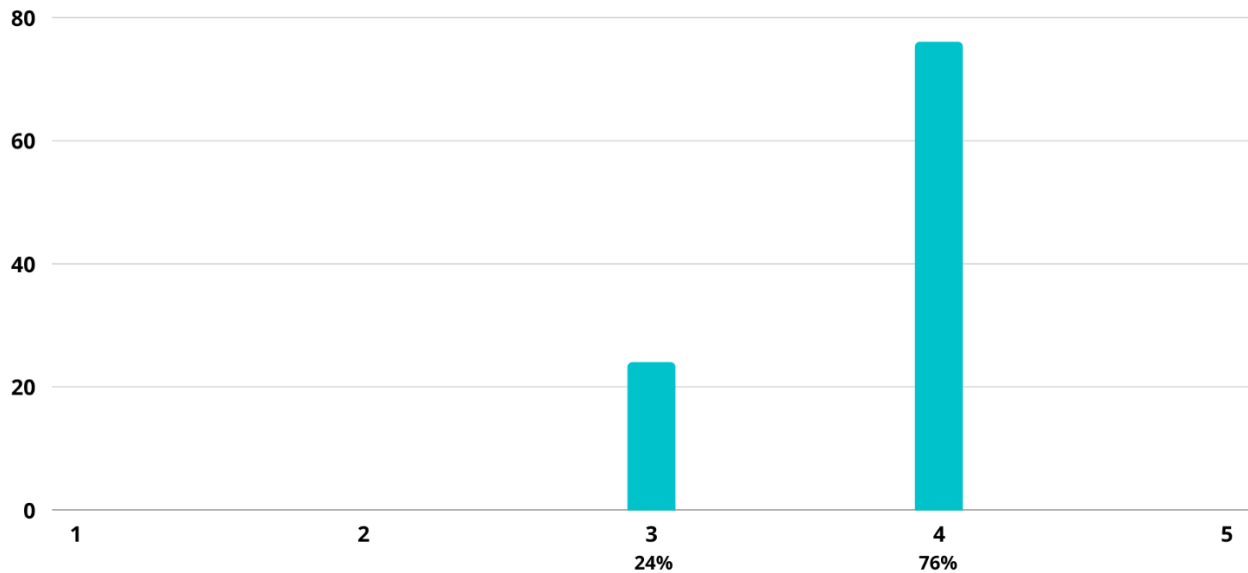


Figure 21 Satisfaction rate of OJT participants

76% of the respondents who participated in the OJT report being very satisfied while only 24% are neutral. 71% of the respondents find the OJT application procedure easy. 47% find the EO mediation procedure easy to participate in, while 53% are neutral. 53% are satisfied with the general assistance received from the EO. 59% of respondents had to wait until after the OJT to find a job; 35% did so immediately, while 6% waited a further 3 months. 59% of the respondents feel that the OJT has had an impact in their attaining employment. 100% find that the career guidance sessions were successful. Most find the training itself as well as the counselling to be the most important elements of the provision.

50% of WSP participants expressed their satisfaction with the assistance from the EOs, 44% are neutral and only 2% are unsatisfied (Fig. 22).

THE WAGE SUBSIDY PROGRAMME: PLEASE RATE THE ASSISTANCE (EMPLOYMENT AGENCY ASSISTANCE), IN A SCALE FROM 1 TO 5

(where 1 is very dissatisfied and 5 is very satisfied)

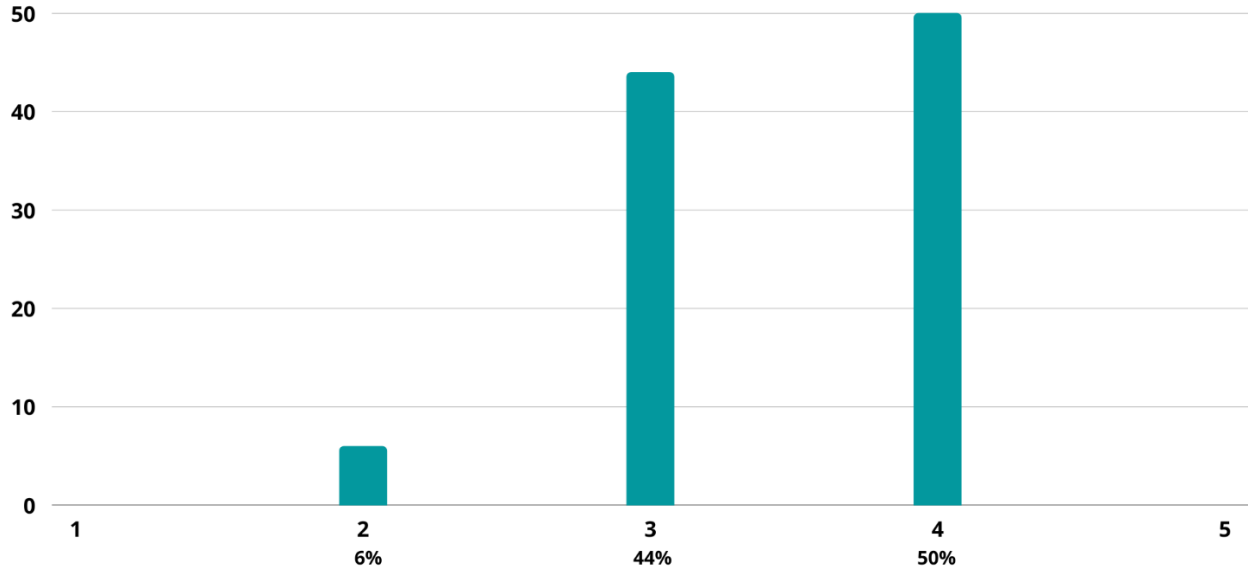


Figure 22 Satisfaction rate of WSP participants with the assistance received from EA/EOs

60% of SEP participants are satisfied with the assistance from the EOs, and only 2% dissatisfied. 74% of participants rate the WS application procedure as easy. 57% find the business consultancy services very useful (Fig. 23).

THE SELF-EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMME: PLEASE RATE THE ASSISTANCE (EMPLOYMENT AGENCY ASSISTANCE), IN A SCALE FROM 1 TO 5.

(where 1 is very dissatisfied and 5 is very satisfied)

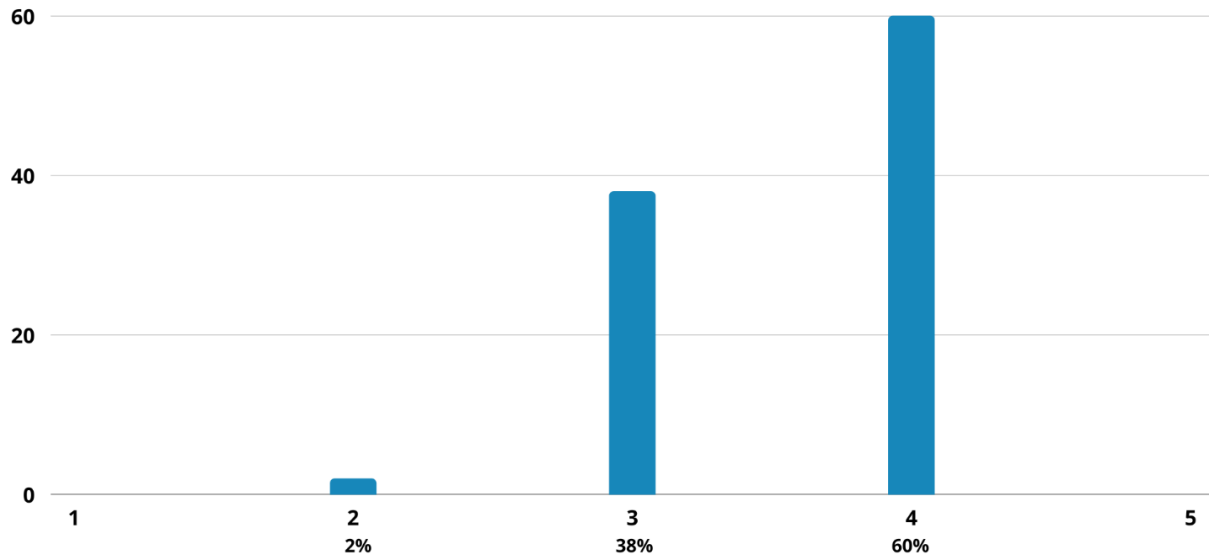


Figure 23 Satisfaction rate of SEP participants with the assistance received from EA/EOs

79% of the participants in the internship programme find it useful, and a further 7% extremely useful

(Fig. 24). While 29% of participants have stayed with the same employer upon the completion of the programme, 21% have started with another employer and 50% remain unemployed (Fig. 25). 71% of respondents feel the main benefit from participation in the scheme is work experience, 21% skills development and 7% increased self-confidence. This tracks respondents' stated reasons for participating: 64% to gain experience, 29% to develop skills and only 7% to earn income. The results are in harmony with the overall purpose of the programme and confirm its effectiveness.

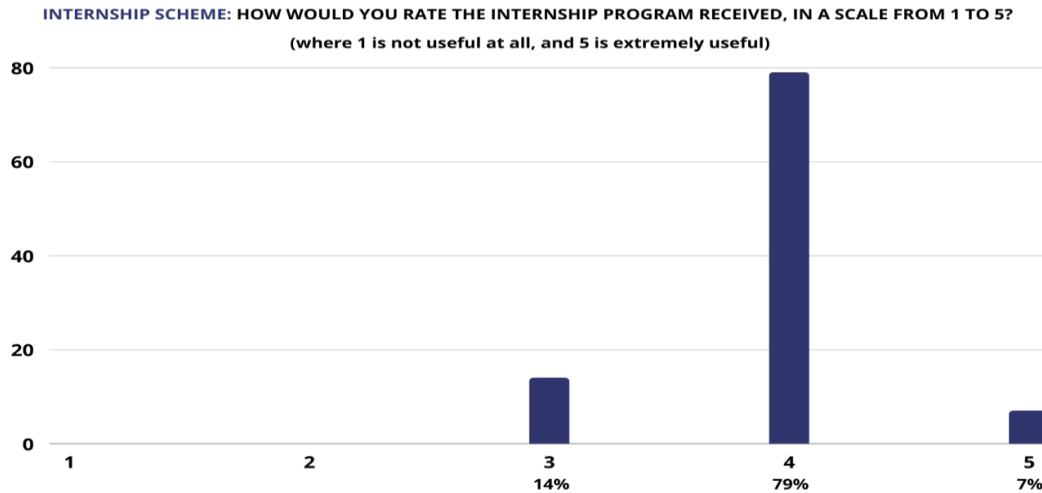


Figure 24 Usefulness of the IP according to participants

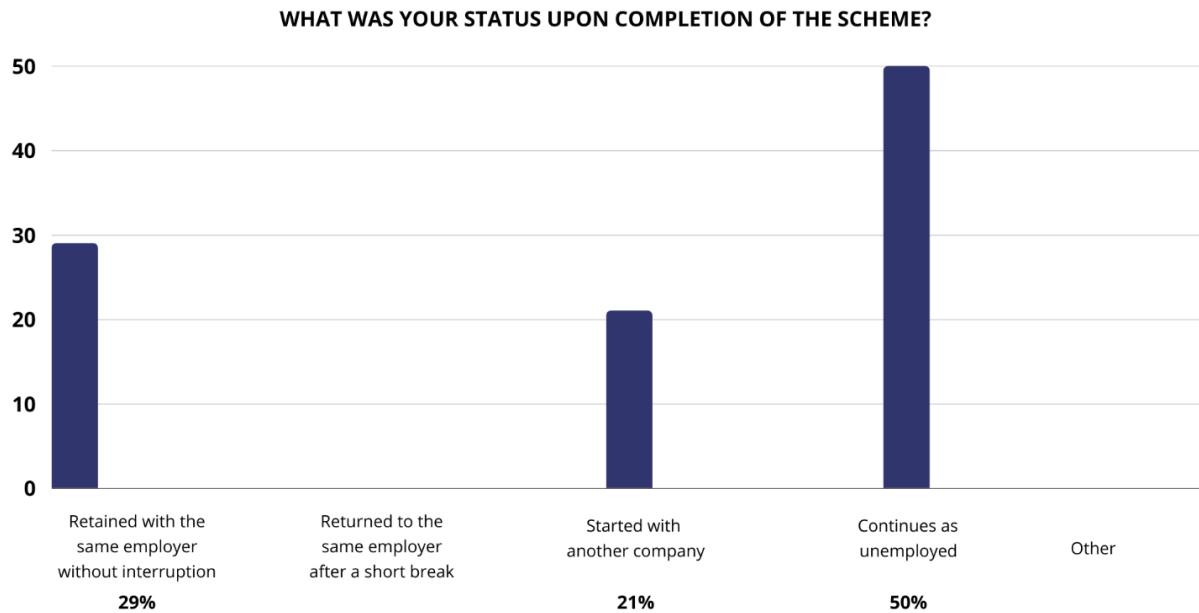


Figure 25 Status of the participants in the IP upon its completion

Project implementation was affected by the following changes to the overall context:

- **COVID-19 pandemic**

Economic activity across Europe, and therefore the labour market, suffered because of the lockdown prompted by the pandemic. This affected employment, but people also changed from being unemployed to being outside the labour force because their availability to work or their ability to seek work was affected.

ALMP2 demonstrated flexibility in effectively responding to pandemic-related implementation challenges, by modifying procedures and introducing new methods (i.e. remote activities), and introducing and training for digital tools in EA, EOs and VTCs to enable ALMMs to continue. The pandemic thus prompted more than merely palliative measures for project implementation: it increased digitalization in work organization and the office. Online opportunities for providing ALMMs have been introduced: the application process for the 2020 internship scheme has been launched online with forms for both jobseekers and potential employers (businesses/NGO). As an additional advantage, companies that were previously not registered with employment services have now been integrated within the PES systems, providing opportunities for the future.

- **Green and digital agenda**

Countries are currently experiencing a disruptive change in the Digital and Green Economies, and Kosovo is not immune. Businesses are being prompted to move to new business models – low carbon, resource efficient, technology innovative – while struggling to preserve and increase competitiveness. This affects the private and public sectors, including agencies and institutions, changing the job profiles needed.⁷⁶

To better respond to these significant contextual changes, follow-up project activities must also work towards mitigating some of the social challenges stemming from environmental degradation and climate change. Considerable transformation should be expected in the scope of future programme activities.

- **Political changes**

The period was marked by political changes in Kosovo, affecting decision-making processes and slowing implementation of reforms. This caused certain delays in planned activities – for example, although the technical assistance and feasibility study for the Employment Fund which would finance ALMMs was delivered.⁷⁷ Its full functionalization awaits commitment from the institutions to develop the necessary legislative framework.

Although the project has reached most of its targets, and the results have supported the implementation of objectives, the Kosovo labour market remains unsteady – as stated in EC Progress Report 2021.⁷⁸

At the same time, the 2021 Progress Report acknowledges “important progress made towards more comprehensive policies and practices on return and reintegration of Kosovo nationals.” Interviews reflect the fact that development partners have contributed significantly to the above achievements in reintegration, particularly UNDP and GIZ.

The flexible and consultative project approach, from the design phase onwards, has been important in adjusting to change. The flexibility demonstrated by the project is a clear result of the project

⁷⁶ As an illustration: Kosovo made some progress in improving road infrastructure and increasing investment in renewables, but the coal-based, outdated, and unreliable energy supply remains a concern. Kosovo made some progress as regards the digitalisation of the economy. (Kosovo 2021 Progress report, COM (2021) 644 final).

⁷⁷ Annual Progress Report for 2016 and 2017.

⁷⁸ Kosovo Progress report.

approach (stakeholder consultation process and demand-driven project scope) and project team dedication.

Conclusion: As ALMP2 is content-rich (activity-intensive), its implementation adopts a flexible approach within its overall strategy, incorporating interactions with an impressive number of stakeholders and reaching 6191 (at the time of project evaluation) final beneficiaries from the most vulnerable groups on the labour market – youth, women, minorities and repatriated persons. Most of the project’s target outputs and results have been achieved, apart from some related to participation of repatriated women and minorities, due to external factors. Within its strategic framework, the project has demonstrated a flexible, demand-driven approach to implementing TA and capacity-building measures with institutional stakeholders (policy drafting and policy analysis; operational guidance and manuals drafting; development, update and deployment of labour market-related e-systems) and delivering ALMMs (OJT, WSP, IP, SEP, training at VTCs, etc.) to jobseekers. The quality of project interventions and results is satisfactory: the PES reform implemented with ALMP2 support has led to improvements in the PES delivery model, in terms of client orientation and increased capacity of EO and VTC staff to deliver in a legally- and institutionally- enhanced legal and institutional framework with clear division between administrative bodies with policy making and implementation functions. The project has demonstrated flexibility to effectively respond to COVID-19-related challenges, through modified procedures and new methods (i.e. remote activities).

7.3 Efficiency

This section assesses the extent to which project activities have been implemented according to the planned schedule, quality and budget (comparison: time and budget implementation vs plan). It addresses the following Evaluation Questions:

- To what extent have the project activities been implemented according to the planned schedule, quality and budget?
- How efficient is the method of supporting project beneficiaries?
- To what extent have the intended beneficiaries taken an active role in implementation? How have they participated?
- Was there any duplication of effort by any stakeholders? How effectively was any overlap coordinated between stakeholders?
- What factors contributed to effectiveness or ineffectiveness?

Multiannual and complex, ALMP2 has involved multiple activities, multiple levels of intervention, multiple actors and engagement in central and local spheres. It has required considerable fine-tuning in the face of emerging challenges in the labour market during its three phases: *ALMP2 2014-2017*, *ALMP2 2018-2021* and *Sustainable reintegration of repatriated women and men 2019-2021*.

Activities were in general delivered efficiently on time and as planned, within the framework of the programme and its three phases. Costs were mostly proportionate to the results achieved. Some annual plans were not realized as intended, and implementation of activities was postponed to subsequent year/s. External factors such as COVID-19 and the political environment caused some of the delays, e.g. the establishment and functionalization of EA, and the conduct of feasibility studies exploring how to establish the Employment Fund. The implementation of activities within *Sustainable reintegration of repatriated women and men 2019-2021* has been extended in 2022, and the project continues to support ALMMs for repatriated people, especially women and minorities, in an attempt to increase performance against those indicators. ALMP2 support for delivery of ALMMs

by decentralized institutions is crucial for the financial absorption rate.

The three project phases of ALMP2 have been implemented within the planned annual budgets. Some allocations have been made between budget lines and the implemented ALMMs, according to particular annual needs and challenges, without changing the target groups and the overall strategy and objectives (Fig. 26).

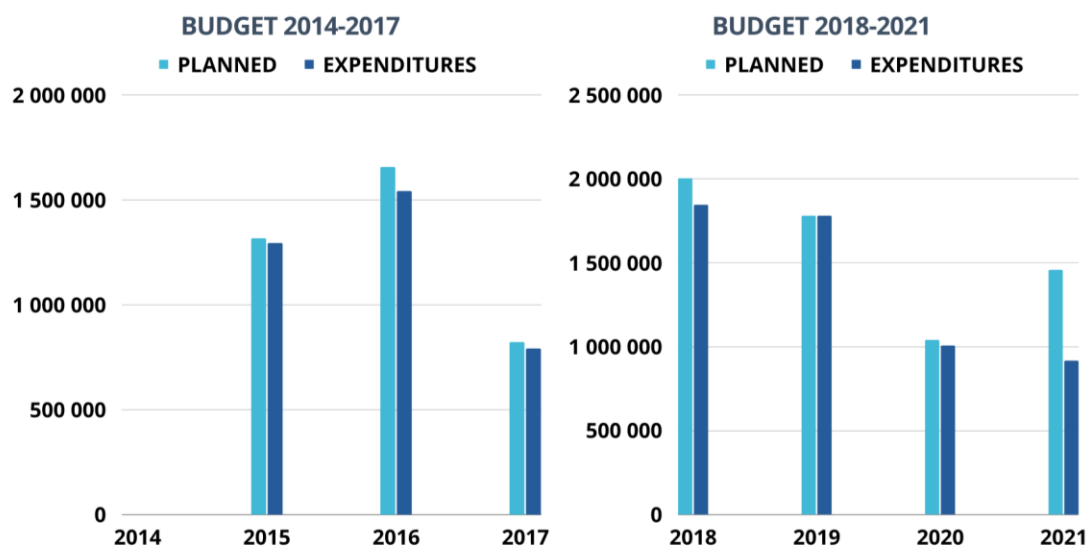


Figure 26 Planned budget vs expenditures 2014-2021

The evidence demonstrates that the project has further expanded and deepened cooperation with project partners. New partners that were not initially identified have been continuously added according to evolving needs and project context. The delivery of outputs has been implemented within the resources allocated by each donor. Target indicators for number of regular and repatriated jobseekers benefiting from ALMP2 have been met or even exceeded, as discussed in Section 8.2 Effectiveness.

Following the project logic, a part of the budget has been directly allocated to TA and capacity-building measures for institutional stakeholders, and the other part to activities supporting direct delivery of ALMMs. 3% of the budget has been allocated to project management, and this proved adequate despite the persistent need for project adaptations.

COVID-19 obliged ALMP2 to respond to challenges while continuing to deliver activities and results. Resources have been allocated to remote activities, personal health protection and support to the most vulnerable parts of the society. To mitigate the socio-economic impact of the pandemic, project staff have offered assistance and implemented measures such as OJT for 102 beneficiaries and the placement of 57 UN Volunteers (from the PBF Project “Empowering Youth for a Peaceful, Prosperous, and Sustainable Future in Kosovo” – a multi-agency project involving UNV, UNICEF, UN Women and UNDP in Kosovo). ALMP2 staff also delivered vouchers to Centres for Social Work across Kosovo, benefiting some 2500 families.

The participatory nature of ALMP2 has involved significant work verifying and encouraging stakeholder and participant interest and availability, recruiting external expertise, planning and implementing ALMMs, and monitoring the quality of outputs and how broadly they reached. The

project demonstrates strong value for money in terms of cost per activity and the number, nature, and scope of the sub-activities relative to Kosovo's labour market challenges. Value for money is also strong when comparing budget size to number of beneficiaries. Value for money could likewise be seen as strong in terms of the project's lasting results, mainly through equipping institutional stakeholders with the framework and tools to effectively design, implement and monitor labour market policy and offer final beneficiaries skills, work experience and sustainable employment opportunities, as further detailed in Section 8.4 Sustainability.

The project's decentralised approach to delivering ALMMs has had efficient results. Interviews show that the project's support has been crucial for proper and adequate implementation of the services provided by EOs and VTCs.

ALMP2's activities to support the delivery of ALMMs comprises the larger part of the project budget, because it involves their direct financing; this approach is justified by the project logic.

The activities related to TA and capacity-building measures are nevertheless prerequisites for effective ALMMs. The project has seen strong efforts to establish an up-to-date and demand-driven legal and administrative basis for integrated modern PES delivery, which has involved exploring foreign experience and know-how, amending legislation, enabling diverse surveys, developing and integrating e-systems and platforms, and producing operational guidelines and manuals concerning the labour market in Kosovo.

The overall project strategy and approach, involving both TA and capacity-building measures and direct support to ALMMs, has been very positively evaluated by stakeholders. Strategy and approach are considered an efficient way of facing the challenges of Kosovo's labour market, by mobilizing multiple actors on different levels to address employment inclusiveness with a specific focus on the most vulnerable groups.

In addition, the project's support to instruments such as electronic systems and e-platforms for the labour market (EMIS, LMIS), train-the-trainer and training systems, and surveys has helped to create the prerequisites for optimisation of institutional stakeholders' resources for labour market development.

The size of each ALMM intervention for final beneficiaries has been consistent with the statutory threshold. Interviews show that to enable the creation of sustainable jobs, the financial support under each ALMM should be updated and increased, especially IP, WS, internship, and the grant component for SEP.

A proper cost-benefit analysis of the project interventions could not be performed with the data available. The limitations of the evaluation method in terms of representativeness of the sample of final beneficiaries (148 final beneficiaries from more than 6000 ALMP2 participants) prevents reliable calculation of specific impact of the ALMMs. In addition, survey participants have proved reluctant to provide information about their annual income. Moreover, some benefits from ALMMs cannot be measured as they consist of 'soft' indicators such as skills and motivation.

Though no cost benefit has been calculated for the ALMMs supported during the project, respondents' employment status at the time of the survey (October 2020) show benefits: among SEP participants, 99% of the established businesses are still active; 62% of the WS, 53% of OJT and 57% of IP participants are currently legally employed.

69% of the respondents that have participated in SEP report that their businesses generate profit, and 78% have employees. This includes more than half of the participants from vulnerable groups –

women, minorities and those from rural areas – having viable businesses generating profit. Some two-thirds of male respondents reported their business has generated profit.

Roughly 65% of the 2018 beneficiaries of SEP and 80% of 2020 beneficiaries have generated profit. 2019 beneficiaries had to start operating in a pandemic year and this perhaps explains why only some 50% reported their business having generated profit (Fig. 27).

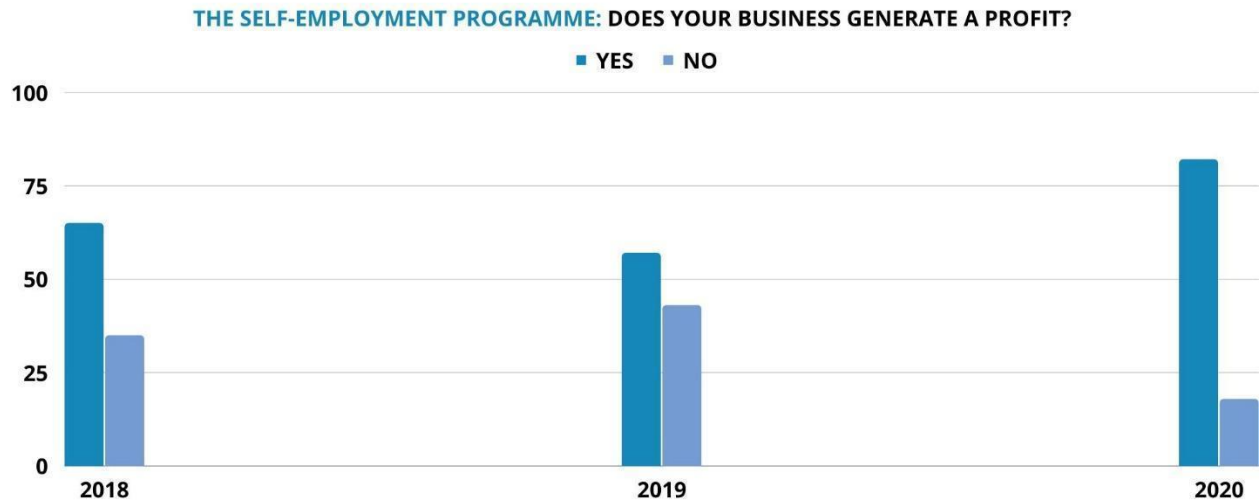


Figure 27 SEP – profile of the participants generating profit

Similarly, most participants from the different groups (men, women, representatives of minorities, those from rural areas) reported having employees – which means that they have either sustained the business plan with which they have applied for SEP, or succeeded in growing their business (Fig. 28).

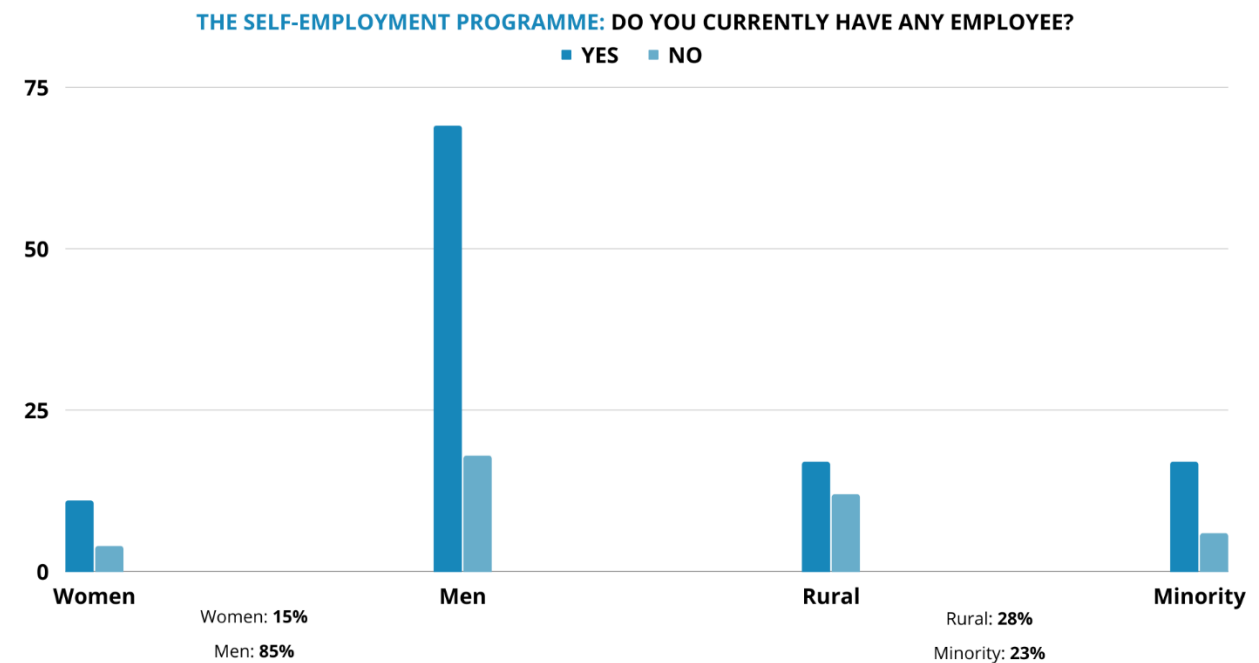


Figure 28 SEP – profile of the participants having employee/s

Responses against the other three measures have not been explored in detail, as the sample size would not offer reliable results for cross tabulation.

*Three measures: self-employment, wage subsidy and On-the-Job-Training, have a positive impact, and all measures have favourable cost-benefit ratios.*⁷⁹ (With additional assumptions, estimations could be extrapolated across the entire project duration and to all SEP and WSP participants in an attempt to calculate cost-benefit, but this would still not demonstrate the cost-effectiveness of the overall project.) ALMP2's high delivery rate against targets, presented in Section 8.2 Effectiveness, is an indicator of efficient project management and coordination mechanisms. Information on how much each measure influenced beneficiaries is presented in Section 8.4 Sustainability.

The project partnership approach has proven well-structured, in both the design and implementation phases. Many key actors are said to have been actively involved, effectively supported and closely monitored as regards needs, expectations, and identification of opportunities for synergy.

Technical assistance and capacity-building activities have responded to the needs of institutional partners, enabling them to efficiently fulfil their functions in labour market development. They have been consulted and coordinated with on a regular basis. MLSW and MIA have representatives on the Project Board. During the course of project implementation numerous meetings have been held with regional and local project stakeholders, such as EOs and VTCs, to adapt proposed sub-activities to specific emerging needs and to propose tailored technical assistance and hands-on expertise in the planning, implementation and monitoring of ALMMs.

Feedback from final beneficiaries and representatives of EOs and VTCs has been taken into consideration when adapting measures and PES procedures, thus making them more beneficial to the target group. This was shown in the adaptation and simplification of the SEP.

As presented in detail in Section 8.1 Relevance of the current report, ALMP2 has followed a needs-customized approach, serving the unique needs of beneficiaries as individually assessed. Stakeholder interviews and the survey show that beneficiaries have received needs assessment and consultancy sessions in career development and in how to link individual needs with the concrete measures offered by the project.

According to its annual progress reports, ALMP2 has integrated the key recommendations from the 2019 analysis on satisfaction for the provision of employment services for jobseekers and employers by EA. The project has stimulated communication between the private sector, jobseekers and the EA by means of the Kosovo Job Portal. On the platform, businesses and jobseekers can enter a professional profile and find matching profiles. The platform aims to facilitate cooperation and will reduce the bureaucratic obstacles reported by both jobseekers and businesses.

The project's efficiency appears the result of intense and regular exchange between ALMP2, MLSP, MIA, EA and other donors at local and national level. There has been an intelligent and efficient integration of ALMP2 with Kosovo's existing labour market policy, aimed at enhancing it according to local needs and identified good practices. The results of ALMP2 2014-2021 have been achieved in close and effective collaboration with all the partners involved.

Though the coordination between the donors, relevant projects and partners as well as institutions

⁷⁹ External Evaluation of the Implementation and Impact of the Project: ALM2 Sustainable reintegration of repatriated persons into labour market through UNDP's ALMM during 2019-2020.

is confirmed as effective, efforts to avoid duplication at an institutional level of measures and resources targeting the active labour market involvement of different groups could be further enhanced, through a horizontal functional review of all institutions in the sector, situating and integrating them in the sectoral administration. For example, it has been noted in the document review that the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sport (MCYS) has been involved in the implementation of the 2020 internship scheme in partnership with ALMP2, MLSW and EA. Although there is no evidence that this has led to duplication in terms of final beneficiaries, the process and resources could have been optimised by structuring all related activities in one sectoral policy making institution – in the current context MFLT – and one implementing institution – EA.

The main factors leading to the intended outcomes are mostly internal to the project and they include:

- The right alignment of project objectives with vision and strategic priorities of key institutional partners (MLSW and MIA) in project design (shared vision, aligned plan, objectives, governance, metrics);
- The well-structured and comprehensive partnership approach, involving all the main actors;
- The multi-dimensional, needs-responsive, flexible support to the needs of key partners (in particular MLSW and MIA);
- The targeted efforts to work at decentralized/local level, in partnership with municipalities and MOCR;
- The collaborative partnership with a diverse range of external development partners, where synergies have been sought and effectively established;
- The demonstrated flexibility to effectively respond to COVID-19 challenges, through modified procedures and new approaches (i.e. remote activities);
- The outreach networks to the private sector building on previous experience but also generating new partnerships;
- The close partnership with non-governmental organisations, in particular in gender and human rights;
- The institutionalized investment in developing and supporting implementation of tools such as manuals, guidelines and SOPs based on good practice (operational guidelines and model (SEP), MLSW/EA service delivery model, profiling mechanism and SOPs, DRRP Risk management model and SOPs, etc.);
- The ownership and buy-in of the MLSW and MIA to the extent that some guidance/manuals/procedures are now the standard documents for the establishment of self-employment programmes in Kosovo and the sustainable economic reintegration of repatriated persons.;
- The clear and transparent procedures and protocols for placing beneficiaries, and the extensive and in-depth beneficiary application and selection processes;
- The continuous, large-scale monitoring during project implementation to manage risks of abuse and optimize results;
- The high levels of awareness among ALMM beneficiaries fostered through information campaigns;
- The visibility achieved regarding project objectives, activities, and results, including by targeted information campaigns, use of social media and partnerships with media.

Elements of ineffectiveness came mostly from external factors.

Interviews have endorsed the concern, stated in annual reports, that the staff shortage in EOs and lack of logistical capacities (e.g. labour market research tools, modern communication tools, technical equipment such as printers, scanners and photocopiers) have limited the scope of service provision and the possibility of reaching the targets foreseen for various employment measures. PES staff are reported to be hesitant or indifferent about new measures and tailored services, especially in terms of offering all clients the same service according to their needs.

The targets defined in the project document for female and non-majority participants have not been achieved. Insufficient data and weak data analysis in key areas may have created barriers to realistic and consistent planning of targets, indicators and activities. In addition, all interviewed stakeholders asserted that repatriated jobseekers are an extremely difficult group to deal with when it comes to their involvement in ALMMs; they tend to be most interested in the SEP, but here women and minorities frequently struggle with the appropriate skills profile.

Lack of political and institutional buy-in to the Employment Fund concept, as developed under the project, could also be taken as an ineffectiveness. (Apart from its potential to support the sustainability of the project and labour market measures in general, an established and functioning EF could have influenced the coordination of ALMMs to optimize efforts and resources.)

Conclusion:

All the activities implemented have a positive effect 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 delays in the implementation of project annual plans and reallocations of resources between budget lines have not affected overall project implementation. The support provided to the beneficiaries has been implemented efficiently, both seeking to reach the most vulnerable and actively involving local business in ALMM implementation. The same efficient approach has been applied to institutional stakeholders: the general framework of policy-making and PES delivery has been improved, and tools and instruments are in place to sustain the results. The evidence confirms that the project has implemented its commitments to promote local ownership, alignment, harmonization, management for development results and mutual accountability.

7.4 Sustainability

This section assesses the extent to which the project created conditions for its results and impacts (i.e. strengthened capacities, continuity of use of knowledge, improved practices) to be sustainable beyond their implementation periods.

This section addresses answering the following Evaluation Questions:

- Has the project created conditions for its results and impacts (i.e. strengthened capacities, continuity of use of knowledge, improved practices) to be sustainable beyond their implementation periods?
- Has the project created conditions to ensure that benefits continue beyond the Project activities?
- How has the project institutionalized overall capacity development efforts so far?
- Has an approach/model been developed that can be further disseminated throughout Kosovo?
- Is the duration of the current project sufficient to ensure sustainability of the interventions?

- Which recommendations can be made to inform future strategies and programmes?
- Has the project used modern/innovative approaches to unemployment?
- How is the project ensuring sustainability?
- Do the legal framework, policies and governance structures and processes within which the project operates pose risks that may jeopardize sustainability of project benefits?
- What is the risk that the level of stakeholder ownership will not be sufficient for the project benefits to be sustained?

The extent to which the project effects or impacts are sustainable is explored in two aspects:

1. The conditions created to ensure that project results and impact continue beyond the project activities in terms of TA and capacity-building activities delivered to institutional stakeholders at central and regional level; and
2. The conditions created to ensure that benefits continue beyond the project activities through the tangible and intangible assets provided to final beneficiaries allowing them to be more flexible and adaptable to the challenges of the labour market.

As discussed in detail in Section 8.1 Relevance, ALMP2 is aligned with the main national and sectoral strategic documents and focused on assisting the relevant institutional stakeholders to enhance their capacity to provide evidence-based policy-making at central level and effectively to deliver ALMMs to the most vulnerable groups in the labour market at local level. Consequently, the project design may be assumed a prerequisite for its sustainability. Documents and interviewees confirm that the involvement of institutional partners in project design has helped to transfer ownership of project results and foster sustainability. For example, the evaluation report “The Implementation and Impact of the Self-Employment programme (SEP) in Kosovo (2015-2016)” restates that the “Project Board and Working Group approach at the SEP design phase ensured that MLSW felt complete ownership of SEP, and in particular the operational guidelines” and considers this critical for the overall support and buy-in from all actors.

The evidence – some of it discussed in other sections of this evaluation – demonstrates that the project has designed and implemented a range of capacity-building and -strengthening activities (training, study tours, conferences, etc.) for recipient institutions to increase their ability to implement their mandates, and also to and sustain the project’s results. The project’s policy development and implementation processes, needs-based training for MLSW, MIA, EOs and VET and train-the-trainer sessions for VTCs have developed the human capacities to deliver responsibilities in changing institutional and operational contexts and to high standards.

However, interviewees identify the further need for an overall training programme for EOs to enhance the implementation of their duties and efficiently exploit the available e-systems (mainly EMIS). The VTCs assert the need for a robust train-the-trainer approach and programme to enhance the quality of training provided. Depending on the future strategy and budget of the Kosovo Institute of Public Administration, it could buy in and implement the training concepts and thus provide mechanisms of institutionalization for skills development. Considering the experience gained and the lessons learned, measures to update the training needs assessment (TNA) and unified and integrated approach to EOs and VTCs’ HR development should be undertaken, with regular internal TNA and fine-tuning of training programmes.

Besides investment in HR development, a horizontal labour market knowledge management system covering all relevant institutions would be a sustainable follow-up.

The upgraded and interconnected e-systems supported by ALMP2 and in place (EMIS, LMIS, Kosovo

Job Portal, Kosovo Labour Market Barometer) will enhance labour market policy development and implementation in a sustainable way, in the face of the evolving digital transformation agenda. Interviews suggest further work with e-systems in terms of user capacity, despite the project's existing efforts to support digitalisation. Interviews also suggest further measures for the interoperability of existing systems, to support the implemented processes and data exchange in the PES delivery (Kosovo Civil Registry for verification during the registration process, Kosovo Agency of Statistics systems (Census and LFS), Business Registration Agency, Tax Administration, Ministry of Education, etc.).

ALMP2 has aimed to support the establishment of a sustainable model for ALMMs through feasible financing mechanisms. The feasibility study has explored the working modalities and has been customized to address the needs of moving from donor-funded ALMMs to sustainable solutions. Within the general project duration, no concrete political commitment has been demonstrated for establishing feasible ways for Kosovo to ensure sustainability in the financing and implementation of active employment measures by means of an Employment Fund.

The extensive nature of the project's partnerships promises an outstanding legacy. The document review and interviews to date have shown enough to confirm the key pre-conditions for the continuation of the process towards sustainability: not only strong awareness, interest and commitment of institutional stakeholders, but the consistent request for future follow-up assistance from UNDP.

The conditions to ensure that benefits for final beneficiaries endure beyond the project activities are reflected in the tangible and intangible assets – knowledge and skills development, work experience and employment opportunities – provided through the ALMMs, making recipients more prepared and adaptable to the challenges of the labour market.

As of October 2022, **the total number of final beneficiaries** who have benefited from ALMP2 is **6191**. The distribution by measure is: OJT – 1424, WSP – 1517, SEP 1241, IP – 623, training at VTCs – 606 and entrepreneurship training for SEP – 780. All beneficiaries have been equipped with a certain level of specific and relevant skills to enter the labour market. Most of the beneficiaries (OJT, WS, IP and SEP) have gained work experience, the lack of which was previously determined a key constraint for the project target groups to integrate effectively in the labour market. SEP beneficiaries received grants for equipment to establish a viable start-up business.

SEP

The survey of final beneficiaries shows an extremely high sustainability rate among SEP participants – 99% of the established businesses are still active. Currently 62% of WS, 53% of OJT and 57% of IP participants are legally employed.

The respondents that have participated in SEP are predominantly men (85%); all project documents clearly state that cultural specifics make the measure better fitted to men. Only 29% of the respondents are from rural areas and 23% representative of non-majority communities (Fig. 29).

THE SELF-EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMME:

TOTAL RESPONDENTS: 103

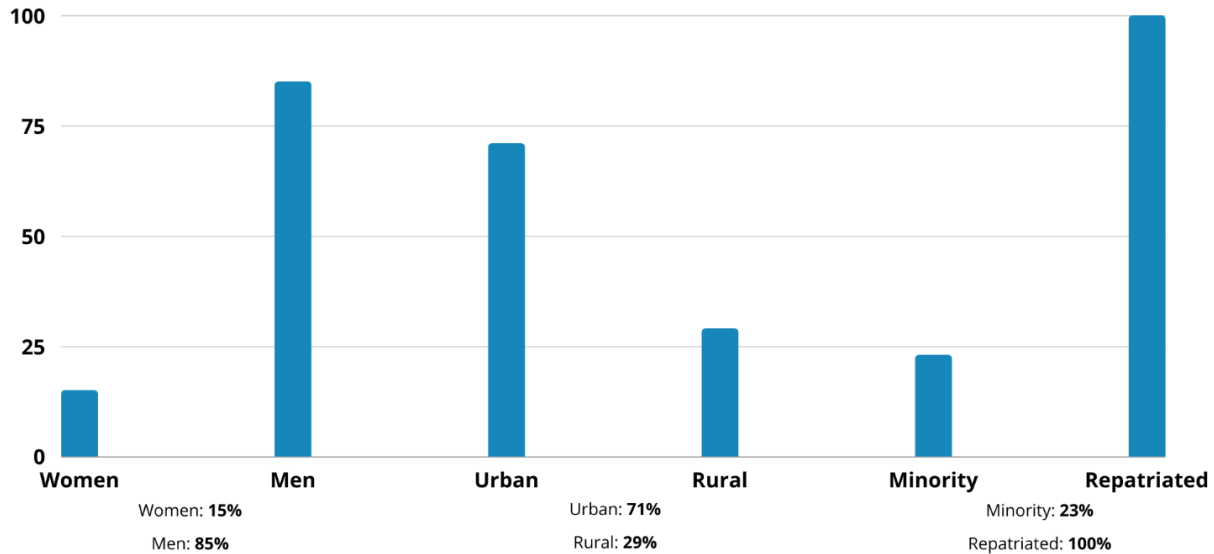


Figure 29 Profile of participants in SEP

The self-employment programme's sustainability is a challenge, having endured the pandemic and the administrative burden for start-ups. But the survey shows that beneficiaries have managed to keep their business active, generate profit and hire employees.

The respondents were not open to discuss or disclose their revenue.

99% of respondents state that currently their business is still operational (Fig. 30). 100% conduct their business in an office/workshop and still possess the tools or equipment they were given. 69% of the businesses claim that they generate profit and 78% have employees. Considering that they have participated in SEP in 2018, 2019 and 2020 it could be concluded that the programme is highly sustainable for participants with different profiles. These results may have been helped by the programme's needs-based and consistently optimised design, the operational guidance developed, the hands-on assistance provided to EOs, and the proper mix of components – grants for equipment, mentoring and coaching, and business consultancy for application/business plan development.

THE SELF-EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMME: IS YOUR BUSINESS STILL OPERATIONAL?

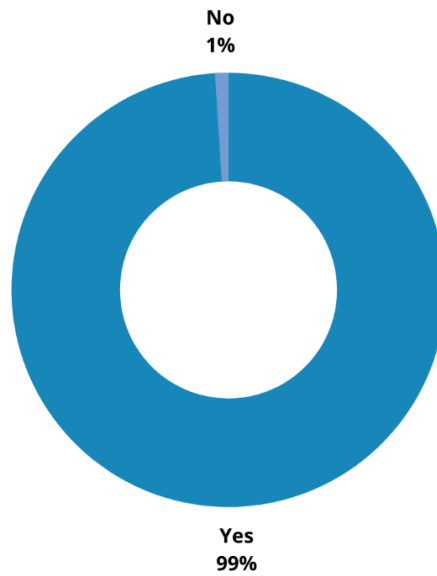


Figure 30 Active business of the participants in SEP

The 2021 *External Evaluation of the Implementation and Impact of the Project: ALMP2 Sustainable reintegration of repatriated persons into labour market through UNDP's ALMM during 2019-2020* notes that 95% of businesses are active (although with lower revenues), and other businesses are temporarily in pause due to the Covid-19 lockdown. The success of the SEP, restated by interviewees, implies the benefit of scaling it up, adapting to current market analysis and profiling sectors with growth potential. Interviews suggest it is worth considering both a further expansion of the SEP's coaching and mentoring activities, based on appropriate needs assessment and through online modules, and also the design and piloting of an acceleration phase for SEP to be supported by combined funding from grants and financial instruments.

WSP

64% of the respondents that have participated in WSP are men. 71% are from urban areas. 29% are from non-majority communities. (See Fig. 31.)

THE WAGE SUBSIDY PROGRAMME

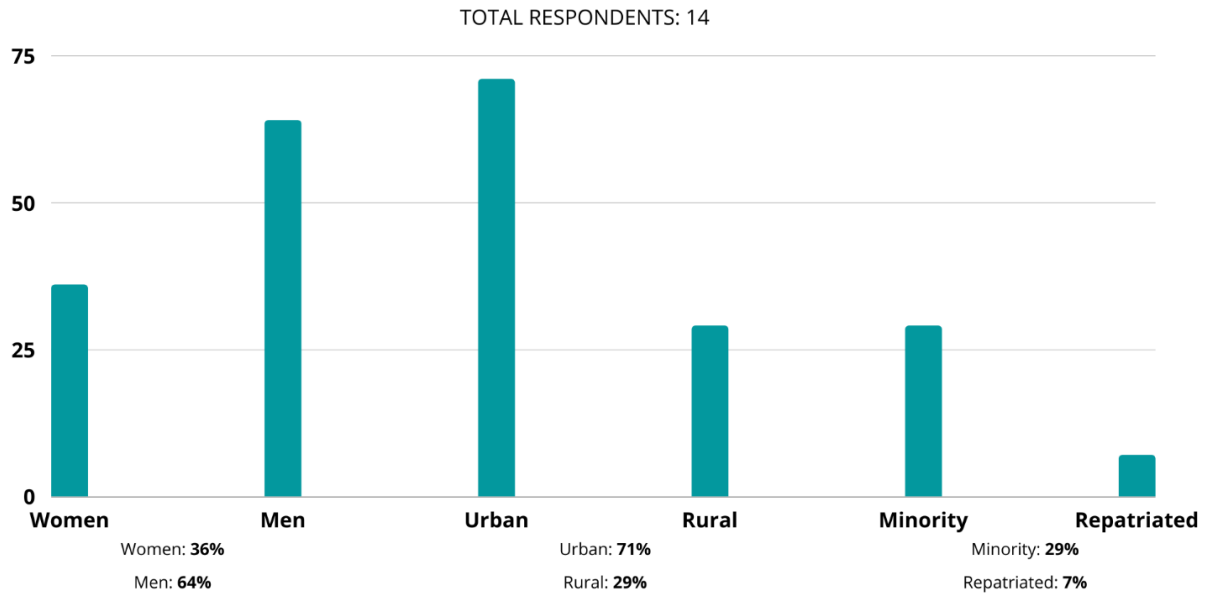


Figure 31 Profiles of the participants in WSP

The benefits of the WSP were felt mainly in 2019 (when 14% of its beneficiaries participated), 2020 (21%) and 2021 (43%).

At the time of the survey 62% of beneficiaries declared themselves officially employed (Fig. 32). Given that 100% finished the WSP and 94% declared it successful, it might be assumed that the WSP contributed to their current employment – and this in turn would suggest satisfactory sustainability. Additionally, the WSP has been defined by institutional interviewees as one of the most effective benefits for the sustainable employment of participants. The results are an improvement on those registered in the previous evaluation of the WSP – *Process Evaluation Report on Wage Subsidy Scheme, period covered by the evaluation (2015-2016), conducted in December 2016/January 2017* – when 53% declared themselves employed and, of those, only 59% had an employment contract

THE WAGE SUBSIDY PROGRAMME: DO YOU HAVE A CONTRACT NOW WITH YOUR EMPLOYER?

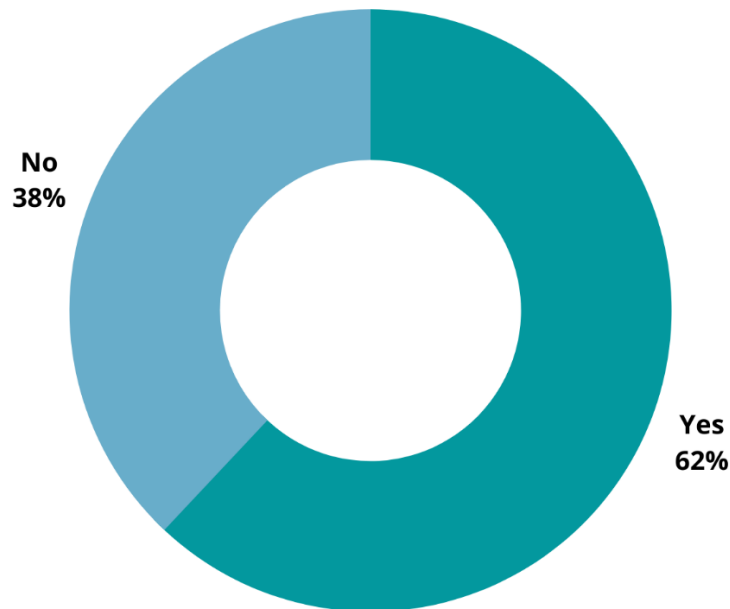


Figure 32 Employment rate of participants in WSP

However, the findings were not as positive as some had predicted. The *External Evaluation of the Implementation and Impact of the Project: ALM2 Sustainable reintegration of repatriated persons into labour market through UNDP's ALMM during 2019-2020* noted that "On average, 75% of beneficiaries had secured employment after or before the measure ended. The employment of beneficiaries is expected to be higher when the measure ends and after the Covid-19 lockdown". The changed economic situation in Kosovo, weakened labour market demand after the pandemic, and the international security situation might account for the relatively less favourable result.

OJT

40% of respondents who participated in OJT. 40% are from rural areas. Only 5% are from non-majority communities.

ON-THE-JOB TRAINING

TOTAL RESPONDENTS: 15

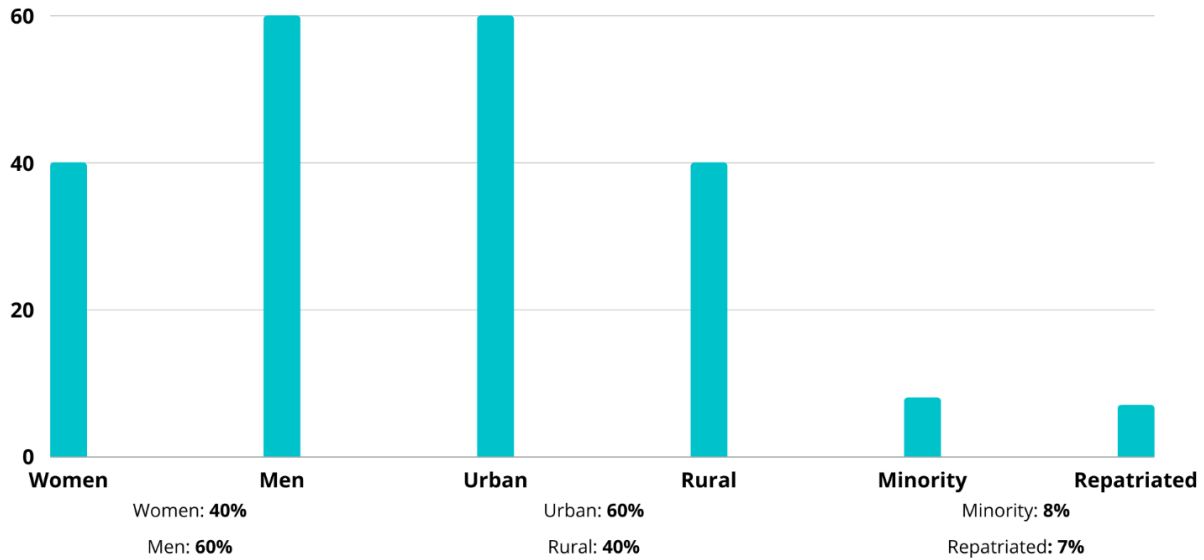


Figure 33 Profiles of the participants in OJT

Of OJT respondents 7% participated in 2015, 13% in 2016, 7% in 2019, 33% in 2020, 7% in 2021 and 33% in 2022. At the time of the survey 53% of them reported being officially employed (Fig. 34) and 59% that the OJT has had an impact on their attaining employment.

ON-THE-JOB TRAINING: DO YOU HAVE A CONTRACT NOW WITH YOUR EMPLOYER?



Figure 34 Employment rate of participants in OJT

That finding echoes the *External Evaluation of the Implementation, and Impact of the Project: ALM2 Sustainable reintegration of repatriated persons into labour market through UNDP's ALMM during 2019-2020*, which notes that "80.2% of beneficiaries report that the scheme has had an impact in their search for employment". The findings suggest that the sustainability rate of the OJT can be evaluated

as satisfactory.

Internship programme

94% of intern respondents participated in 2020, and 6% in 2019. 69% are men, 50% are from rural areas and 6% are from non-majority groups (Fig. 35).

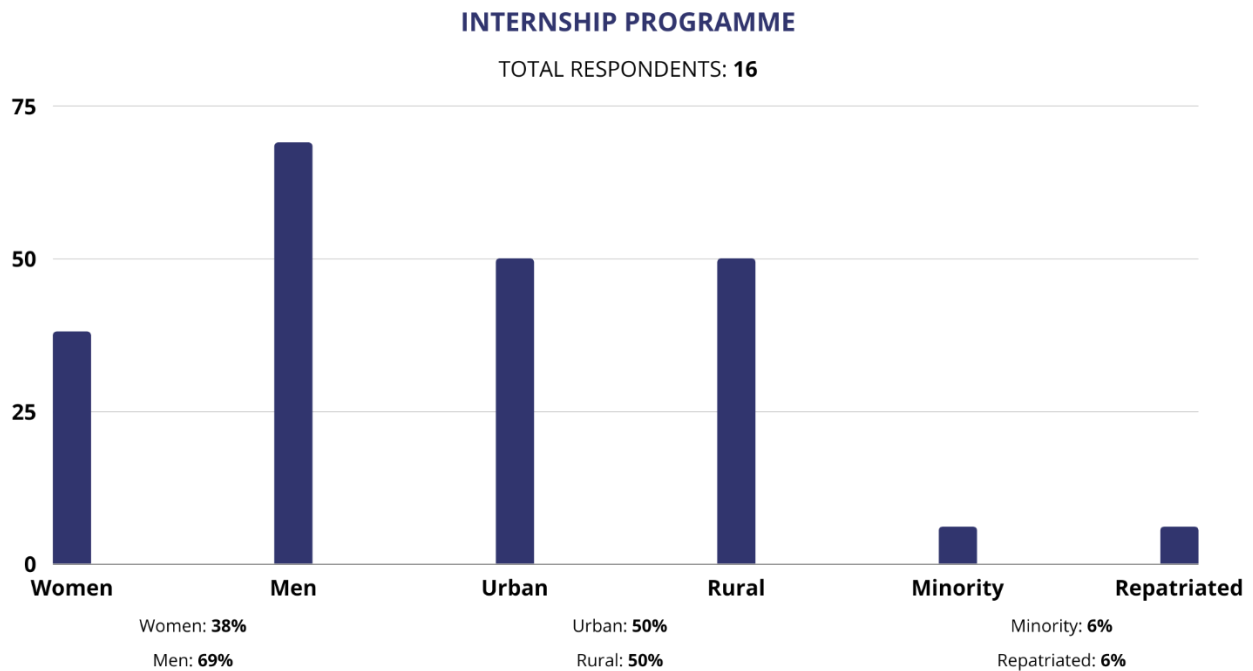


Figure 35 Profiles of the participants in Internship programme

Most of the respondents (79%) have assessed their participation in the IP as very useful, though upon completion of the programme only 29% stayed at the same employer, 21% started with another company and 50% became unemployed. At the time of the survey, 50% of the respondents declared themselves employed full time, 7% employed part time and 43% employed as seasonal workers (Fig. 36).

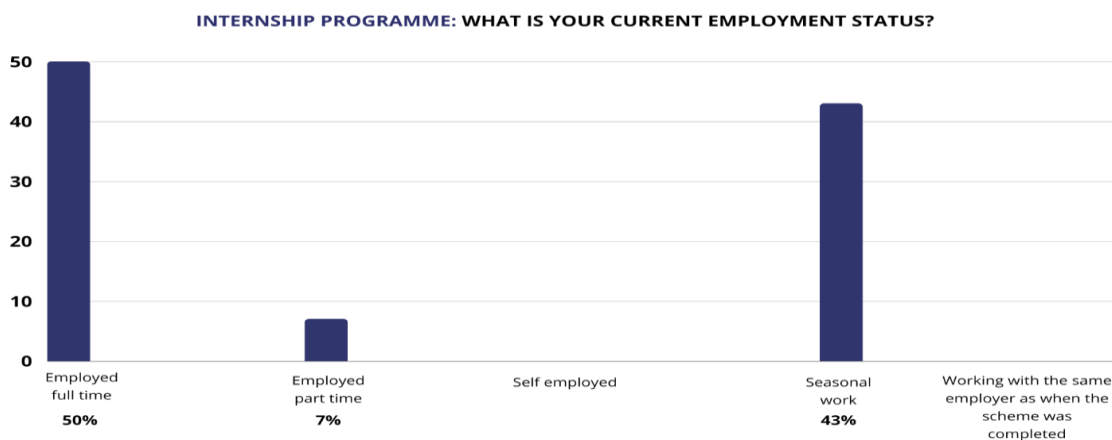


Figure 36 Employment status of the participants after IP

Only 57% of respondents reported having an employment contract. 71% considered that the main benefit from the programme was the work experience gained. It is worth noting that none of the

respondents have continued working with the same employer as when the scheme was conducted. To enhance the impact of ALMMs on sustainable employment, a combined approach to implementation could be considered: OJT or IP followed directly by WS with the same employer. (On the other hand, within the same budget fewer jobseekers would benefit.)

Sustainability prospects appear to be good for those outcomes that are linked to procedures, policies, and tools which by their nature would not require substantial funds to be available. This category of outcomes is approved and endorsed by the institutions; some indeed are now operational e.g. structured and functioning EA, integrated and unified operational manual and procedure for PES delivery, functioning upgraded EMIS, LMIS and Kosovo Job Portal, and a design for the SEP. There are no concerns about the viability of the documents and e-systems which have been revised and/or drafted by the project.

Interviews and document review offer firm evidence that the results and the outputs have been actively used by the intended beneficiaries – e-systems upgraded, operational manuals and guidance developed, and so on.

Interviews suggest that all envisaged capacity-building activities have had a positive impact on the targeted beneficiaries in the institutions. Compared to the pre-implementation period, the capacities of those who engaged with ALMP2 have certainly improved thanks to the training, seminars, study visits and technical expertise. All contacted stakeholders have shown the same high level of commitment and sense of ownership of the project's outputs, and satisfaction with the results in both policy and implementation. Additional commitment by the institutions is needed to sustain effective ALMMs in the long term, by shifting from donor to state funding.

The active partnership throughout all the phases of the project cycle has the potential to be applied in other complex multiannual projects in different sectors, at both policy-making and implementation levels. Similar ALMMs for specific target groups have been implemented in most Balkan and some EU countries. They are typical employment-boosting measures for economies with high unemployment rates. The design and implementation of the SEP may be seen not only as a good practice but also as a contemporary approach to solving the issues of unemployment and targeting a specific group of the unemployed. Based on the model and know-how transferred from Macedonian counterpart institutions, the SEP has itself become a success story, – as presented in Section 8.2 Effectiveness.

As the project itself substantially contributed to the alignment and strengthening of the legal framework, policies and governance structures, and processes in labour market development and inclusion of the most vulnerable groups, no risk in terms of the legal and institutional framework in place has been identified. The forthcoming adoption of the revised **Law on Labour** to ensure further alignment with the EU *acquis* will require the updating of the operational manuals and guideline for PES delivery, with the integration of lessons learned. In addition, implementation of the Employment and Social Welfare Strategy 2018-2022 should be assessed, and one developed for the subsequent period. Kosovo endorsed the summer 2021 Western Balkans Declaration on ensuring sustainable labour market integration of young people and committed to gradually establishing and implementing the Youth Guarantee scheme. It has still to be concrete preparations, starting with the appointment of a coordinator and coordinating body and the preparation of a YG implementation

plan.⁸⁰ According to interviewees, the Youth Guarantee Fund will be structured as a unit in the EA and the Agency will need technical support for its structuring and piloting. However, as the follow-up activities – and future development of the labour market in general – will be highly dependent on migration, labour force immigration and the challenges they pose for the demand and supply of labour, efforts to adapt the legal and institutional framework to new challenges should be foreseen. Political instability in Kosovo will have a significant impact on sustainability, and in particular on the commitment and financial resources for ALMMs. Related activities by the donor community should also be influential, and competition and overlap may be avoided by applying the effective partnership coordination mechanism established under ALMP2.

Recommendations for future strategies and programmes are as follows:

- Further attempts to ensure sustainability in the financing and implementation of active employment measures by shifting from donor-funded to state-funded;
- Further measures for interoperability of the existing systems for PES delivery (Kosovo Civil Registry for verification during the registration process, systems available at Kosovo Agency of Statistics (Census and LFS), Business Registration Agency, Tax Administration, Ministry of Education, etc.);
- An overarching training programme for EOs to enhance the implementation of duties and efficient use of the e-systems – mainly EMIS. Developing and piloting of a robust train-the-trainer approach and programme. Depending on the future strategy and budget of the Kosovo Institute of Public Administration, it could buy-in and implement the necessary training concepts for institutional skills development. Measures to update the training needs assessment (TNA) regularly, and a unified and integrated approach to HR development in EOs and VTCs should be undertaken;
- Enhance the impact of ALMMs on sustainable employment through a combined approach to implementation – OJT or IP followed directly by WS with the same employer. (The efficiency of such an approach should be assessed carefully, as the same budget will benefit fewer jobseekers;)
- Scaling up of SEP, adapting to current market analysis, and profiling of sectors with growth potential; further expansion of the coaching and mentoring activities under SEP, based on appropriate needs assessment; online modules for continuing coaching and mentoring for businesses established under SEP; and an acceleration phase for SEP to be supported by a combination of grants and financial instruments;
- Update of the operational manuals and guideline for PES delivery according to lessons learned and the forthcoming adoption of the revised **Law on Labour**; assessment and development of an Employment and Social Welfare Strategy for the next period;
- TA to EA for structuring and piloting of the Youth Guarantee Fund;
- Future follow-up activities launched by the donor community should avoid competition and overlap by applying the effective partnership coordination established under ALMP2.

Conclusion:

The project has created conditions for sustainable results and impacts beyond its implementation

⁸⁰ Kosovo 2021 Progress report, COM (2021) 644 final

period. TA and capacity-building activities have been implemented with expertise and know-how transferred to the relevant national and local institutions through train-the-trainer, training, operational manuals and guidelines, upgraded e-systems, an a system for employer needs surveys, study visits, and habits of cooperation with academia and business associations. Consideration of gender has been transferred to other programmes implemented by the EA. Final beneficiaries are equipped with knowledge, skills, work experience and employment opportunities. The findings from the survey of final beneficiaries show extremely high sustainability among SEP participants: 99% of the businesses established are still active. Currently 62% of the WS, 53% of OJT and 57% of IP participants are legally employed.

7.5 Stakeholders and Partnership Strategy

This section aims to assess i) the extent to which the project's partnerships are relevant to the political, strategic, and implementing context, and ii) the level of coordination in project design, management, and implementation. The main question addressed is: **Was the partnership strategy effective and supportive of achievement of objectives?**

The project is multi-dimensional and comprehensive by its nature and scope, set to operate in a multi-partner and diverse institutional environment, presenting opportunities for support and synergies of effects – but also causing serious cooperation and coordination challenges and higher administrative costs. This makes partnership and cooperation critical. [The positive feedback received from all stakeholders interviewed shows how this strategy became a key factor for success.](#) The project's partnership approach has been proven well-structured (in both the design and the implementation phases), with key actors actively involved, effectively supported, and closely monitored as regards needs, expectations and identification of opportunities for synergies. The EU Commission's Kosovo 2021 Progress Report acknowledges "important progress made towards more comprehensive policies and practices on return and reintegration of Kosovo nationals. A sustainable reintegration process is in place in Kosovo, but it remains complex, involving many actors".⁸¹ Interviews show how development partners have contributed significantly to the above achievements in reintegration, particularly UNDP and GIZ.

As acknowledged in annual reports and verified in stakeholder interviews, the partnership strategy builds upon the successful record of UNDP from previous project interventions.⁸² This trend was acknowledged in the 2018 continuation of the project.⁸³ The evidence demonstrates that the project has also further expanded and deepened cooperation with project partners. Thus, new partners have been consistently added based on evolving needs and changing project context – such as the MTI and various CSOs, as well as other UNDP-implemented projects including Aid for Trade,⁸⁴ and the northern municipalities in 2014-2015.⁸⁵ The University of Prishtina/Priština began effectively to

⁸¹ Kosovo 2021 Progress report, COM (2021) 644.

⁸² Annual Progress Report April-December 2014 states, "Building upon the lessons learned from the successful implementation of ALMP for Youth project (2005-2014), ALMP2 has utilized the strong and effective institutional collaboration and the know-how of the project staff to ensure continuation of the best practices and identification of innovative approaches to activity implementation."

⁸³ Project document 2018 notes that "UNDP has extensive work experience on labour market issues in Kosovo, successfully implementing the Employment Generation Project (2005-2006) and the Active Labour Market Programs (ALMP 2007-2013)".

⁸⁴ Annual Progress Report April-December 2014 named as new stakeholders the Ministry of Trade and Industry and various civil society organizations, as well as other UNDP-implemented projects, such as Aid for Trade, thus creating new synergies. In the same year, within the UN framework, ALMP project experience and tools were extended to the northern municipalities.

⁸⁵ Some of the activities were jointly implemented with the GBV and the forestry project that are joint programmes of several UN agencies. Previous ALMP previous experience has been used in the joint projects design phase during 2014.

participate in 2017, to ensure a stronger collaboration between policy-making and evidence-producing institutions.⁸⁶

The project has fully implemented its commitments to promote local ownership, harmonization, management for development results and mutual accountability. Since its inception, the main partners of the project have been the MLSW (LE) and its EO and VCTs. The project has collaborated with the Division for Social Welfare in different ALMMs. In reintegration, it has collaborated effectively with the MIA (DRRP), the MOCRs, the MLSW, the EARK and other partners to ensure adequate and sustainable service provision to repatriated people in the fields of employment, skills development, and self-employment.⁸⁷ In May 2018 the MLSW and MIA signed an agreement for transferring from MIA to MLSW competences in the field of reintegration of repatriated persons with the labour market. This led to UNDP, MIA and MLSW signing a cooperation agreement to implement the project “Sustainable reintegration of repatriated persons through Active Labour Market Programs” during 2019-2021, scaling up their previous successful cooperation in this field.

The project's objectives and outcomes have been found consistent and supportive of central and sectoral policies.⁸⁸ The involvement of institutional partners in the design of the project has been confirmed as an exceptionally good practice by the stakeholders interviewed. This finding is confirmed by the external evaluation as well.⁸⁹ The interviews verified that the agreed design was effectively put into operation by the partners, and the relevant procedures and process maps were adequately set up and operationalised. The same trend has been confirmed with “Sustainable economic reintegration for repatriated women and men 2019-2021”. In the project design phase, the UNDP Board and Working Group approach ensured that MLSW and MIA felt complete ownership of the project, and in particular the operational guidelines. This was a critical factor in the overall support and buy-in from all actors interviewed. In that sense, the partnership process between the UNDP, MLSW, MIA, EARK, the ALMP2 team, EOs and VTCs appears to have worked exceptionally well. During the project implementation phase, alignment with central priorities has been maintained in various ways. One good practice identified is the involvement of the ALMP2 team in the WG mandated by the MLSW's Permanent Secretary to work on secondary legislation as part of PES reform (the focus on establishment and functionalization of the Employment Agency)⁹⁰. Such direct involvement in WGs to support the establishment of sectoral priorities has also been identified in reintegration (one among the many examples is the support to developing the Strategy on Sustainable Reintegration of Repatriated Persons 2018-2022). When policy developments have been supported, the process has been mostly guided by the inputs of final beneficiaries, i.e. the DLE at MLSW and the staff of EOs and VTCs. Workshops have been organized before, during and after the finalization of the process, and the content has received major input from the experience of the staff

⁸⁶ This partnership is seen as having the potential “to support a more sustainable evidence-based policy making in the future”.

⁸⁷ 2018 Annual Progress Report.

⁸⁸ See Section 8.1 Relevance.

⁸⁹ The ownership and buy-in of the MLSW, to the extent that the SEP operational guidelines and manual are now the standard documents for the establishment of self-employment ALMPs in Kosovo. The evaluation report “The Implementation and Impact of the Self-Employment programme(SEP) in Kosovo (2015-2016)” restates that the “Project Board and Working Group approach at the SEP design phase, ensured that MLSW felt complete ownership of SEP and in particular, the operational guidelines” and considers this critical for the overall support and buy-in from all actors.

⁹⁰ Annual Progress Report April-December 2014.

in the field.⁹¹ Efficient and mutually satisfactory cooperation arrangements have been established, and partnerships and cooperation arrangements have worked at several levels (Table 4).

Table 4 Cross-sector partnership structures and aims.

PARTNERSHIP STRUCTURE		PARTNERSHIP AIM		
Configuration	Collaboration	Issue	Scope	Function
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project- Public Institutions (Central and Local) • Project- Business Partners • Project- NGOs • Project- Donor community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transactional • Transformative 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased access to Active labour market measures • Sustainable economic reintegration of repatriated persons 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kosovo • Labour market participation • Reintegration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service and equipment provision • Governance, policies and standards • Resource mobilization • Information and awareness raising

Inter-institutional cooperation partnership with key institutional partners at central and local levels: Efficient and mutually satisfactory cooperation arrangements have been established between the Project Team and the participating public institutions (Fig. 37).

⁹¹ 2017 Annual Progress Report.

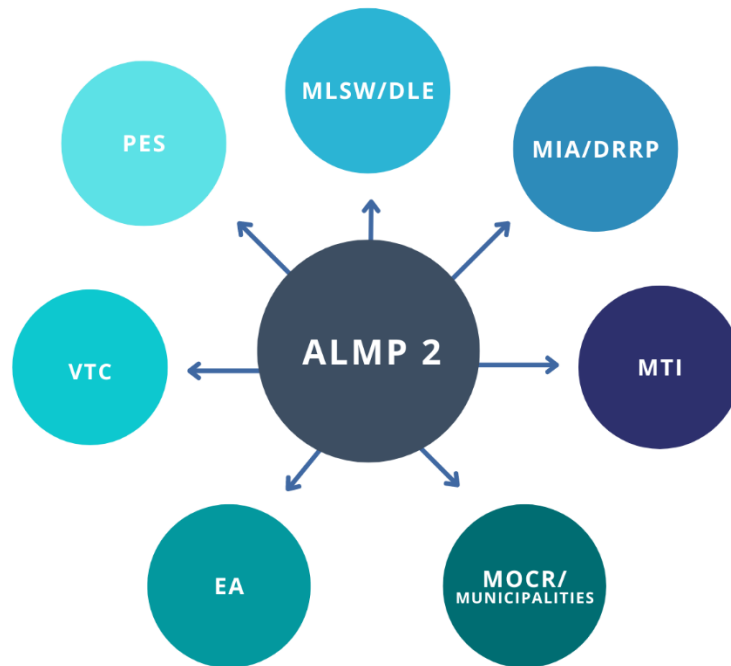


Figure 37 Main institutional partners at central and local level

Furthermore, through this project UNDP has effectively contributed to strengthening the institutional capacities of the two key actors in the field – the EARK and the DRRP (MIA). Difficulties notwithstanding, **partnerships have been actively sought and effectively established at local level**.⁹² Good practices included the use of the mechanisms and operational manual developed by ALMP2 to deliver ALMMs in the Northern municipalities, and the technical support to projects in the Northern municipalities.⁹³

Partnership with civil society: Consistent efforts have been made to include civil society extensively in project design and implementation, and thus to increase the visibility of project interventions amongst target groups (e.g. people with disabilities) and encourage higher participation.

Partnerships with private companies: Evaluation data supports the impression of efficient and mutually satisfactory cooperation arrangements between the project team and private companies. An example was the considerable outreach to private companies in 2015, and this continued trend in 2016 when the project joined forces with more than 300 private companies around Kosovo,

⁹² The 2015 annual progress report confirms that the project has further extended its activities to the northern municipalities through joint activities with other UNDP implementers, and Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland funded projects, i.e. AFT, Gender Based Violence (GBV) and Support to Implementation of the Forest Policy and Strategy in Kosovo.

⁹³ Annual Progress Report April-December 2014. In 2016, the municipal directorates for economic development and chambers of commerce were have been involved in the information regarding SEP. Another good practice identified at local level is the collaboration between ALMP2, EOs and the CSW to identify beneficiaries of social assistance who participate in skills development training. This active collaboration has been assessed as a key success factor in increasing the rate of vulnerable trainees in 2014.

operating in different economic sectors.⁹⁴ This approach was repeated in 2020. WS beneficiaries were placed in 52 companies, and OJT was offered in 143 companies.⁹⁵

From the beginning the project demonstrated a consistent instinct to identify the potential of and achieve **synergies in the delivery of assistance**. This includes the close coordination with other donor-funded projects and international organizations active in the area of employment generation and employment promotion, at both policy and local operational levels.⁹⁶ Several interventions were implemented jointly by the ALMP2 and EYE projects, such as the establishment of the Training System and the development of the PMF.⁹⁷ The cooperation with the Enhancing Youth Employment (EYE) Project (i.e. common annual work plan developed to coordinate implementation, establishment of the training system for PES and the introduction of the PMF) was very good practice. Implementation was monitored by both projects, through regular meetings, sharing and commenting on draft documents and agreeing on final approaches. This approach is seen as having increased the sustainability and MLSW ownership of results. ALMP2 also supported the MLSW in setting up a systematic technical coordination meeting with the donors/development organisations currently working in the labour market sector, which helped the MLSW to implement its Sector Strategy 2014-2020, and Action Plan 2014-2016. Stakeholders assess the partnership model as successful, and the same approach further helped MLSW to establish a common annual work plan for 2015 among all donor-funded projects.⁹⁸ The same integrated planning to avoid duplication and allow for coordination and synergies was used in the collaboration with Finnish-funded projects within UNDP, such as Aid for Trade (AFT) and Diaspora Engagement in Economic Development (DEED),⁹⁹ and with the World Bank for the LFS.¹⁰⁰ In 2018, ALMP2 joined forces with GIZ to mentor SEP beneficiaries.¹⁰¹ As regards sustainable economic reintegration in 2019-2021, the project has organized regular consultative meetings (online during the pandemic) with other donors such as GIZ and Helvetas. In view of the above, the legacy of the project with respect to partnerships may well be considered outstanding. However, the greatest challenge to sustaining project success will be sustaining successful partnerships with other institutional actors, businesses, NGOs and the University of Prishtina/Priština. To this end, evaluation data indicates that the project has significantly contributed to longer term impacts through having built relationships based on trust, connecting and engaging

⁹⁴ 2016 Annual Report and 2017 Annual Report

⁹⁵ Annual Progress Report April-December 2014. ALMP2 partner companies with potential to export were given the opportunity to benefit from the International Quality Standards training provided under Aft2 project and thus, be able to generate additional placement opportunities for jobseekers benefiting from ALMMs in a more qualitative and competitive environment.

⁹⁶ Swiss Agency for Development Cooperation (SDC)-funded project-: Enhancing Youth Employment (EYE); European Union (EU)-funded project: Enhancing Employment for Vulnerable Groups (EEVG); EU-funded KOSVET 6 project; and the GIZ funded project related to labour market policies.

⁹⁷ LMP2 and AFT2 also cooperate in implementation of the self-employment programmes and entrepreneurship. The model foresees stronger cooperation between the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare, Ministry of Trade and Industry and municipalities in the process of executing self-employment programmes. This will entail closer cooperation between the two projects, given that the main implementing partners for ALMP2 and AFT2 are respectively the MLSW and MTI.

⁹⁸ Annual Progress Report April- December 2014.

⁹⁹ The three projects have developed a common plan identified as cross-cutting, namely the skills needs analysis.

¹⁰⁰ 2016 Annual Progress Report.

¹⁰¹ GIZ had already had an operating contract with a local consulting company. The company had initially to evaluate the mentoring needs of each beneficiary, then begin mentoring according to the requirements identified by each candidate; the company has been obliged to report in writing on a three-month basis to the implementing partners.

people at a senior decision-making level, and large-scale, needs-based support in developing/strengthening institutional capacity to assume ownership of results.

Strengthening institutional capacities to assume ownership of project results, however, is a continuous challenge, and any future interventions will face it. Project progress reports restate institutional partners' diverse needs for training/direct support/advice from the project team throughout the process. Interviews suggest that this has not changed. The evidence (some discussed above) demonstrates that the project has designed and implemented a range of capacity-building and -strengthening activities (training, study tours, conference events, etc.) for the recipient institutions. Strengthening strategic management remains high on the institutional agenda, and interviews point to the need to improve capacities through system and process improvements, which are seen as needing a substantial upgrade. There are considerable opportunities to improve institutional performance in risk and quality management; the existing management systems should undergo significant improvements to embrace and to drive this effectively.

Conclusion:

The results of ALMP2 2014-2021 were achieved in close and effective collaboration with all the partners involved. Partnerships have been actively sought and effectively established, and synergies created in the delivery of assistance, including the capacity-strengthening of key institutional partners. Stakeholders have demonstrated continuous support to the project's objectives. The cooperation arrangements established between the project team and public institutions have worked efficiently and to mutual satisfaction. Cooperation with the private sector has been effective. Partner inputs to project implementation have proved timely and of good quality. Partners were enabled to discharge their responsibilities fully and effectively, thus contributing to the overall UN Country Strategy. There is convincing evidence that the project has fully implemented its commitments to promote local ownership, alignment, harmonization, management for development results and mutual accountability.

7.6. Theory of Change or Results/Outcome Map

This section aims to assess the project's design and conceptual relevance by exploring the extent to which the results framework (Theory of Change) is implemented, exploring how the expected activities and outputs have been achieved and led to the desired outcomes and results.

The main question addressed is: What were the main factors leading to the intended outcomes?

The Theory of Change has been evaluated from the perspective of whether the Theory of Change or project logic has been feasible and realistic, and whether assumptions, factors and risks have been sufficiently taken into consideration.

Evaluation evidence supports the finding that the Theory of Change/project logic appeared rational and feasible. As the project design of ALMP2 has been developed over three main project documents, for clarity this section follows the logic of the interventions as they continued to evolve over the period 2014-2021.

The main objective of ALMP2 (2014-2017) has been to "Improve the capacities of the labour market institutions to design relevant gender responsive policies at central level and to deliver integrated services at local level, focusing on the most vulnerable groups among the unemployed."¹⁰² To this end, the intervention has been designed to strengthen and ensure the sustainability of the links

¹⁰² ALMP2 (2014-2017) Project document.

between labour market actors – employers, jobseekers, policy-makers, public employment services and vocational training and educational institutions – through the following interventions:

1. Improving the human resource capacities for and continuing direct support to active labour market measures for vulnerable groups – with a particular focus on youth and women – and giving further technical support for the capacities of implementing institutions;
2. Enhancing the labour market knowledge base to ensure evidence-based decision-making among labour-market actors;
3. Identifying feasible ways for Kosovo to establish an Employment Fund, to ensure sustainability in the financing and implementation of active employment measures. The project rationale has been assessed as relevant to both the strategic priorities and the macroeconomic context.¹⁰³

Objective 1, “Improving the human resource capacities and provision of continued direct implementation of active labour market measures for vulnerable groups – with a particular focus on youth and women– and further technical support for the capacities of implementing institutions”, addresses the need to strengthen the capacities of the MLSW, PES and VTC to organize PES including through integrated service delivery and SEP, and to improve client profiling and the Employment Management Information System (EMIS). The intended reforms require further investment and training for employment offices. Those have been addressed by the project activities foreseen.¹⁰⁴ The focus on vulnerable groups follows the logic of supporting access to services for groups which have a higher likelihood of long-term employment – in particular young people and women.¹⁰⁵

Output 1. “Vulnerable youth across Kosovo – with a particular focus on women– receive integrated employment services” contributes directly towards the outcomes of the Kosovo Programme Action Plan 2011 – 2015 with respect to giving vulnerable women and men (returnees, IDPs, minority groups, people with disabilities, young people) better economic opportunities and better public and social services.

Output 2. “Knowledge base on labour market is enhanced, leading to evidence-based, gender sensitive decision making” is based on the need to ensure the production of detailed, good quality and relevant insights on the labour market in Kosovo that would enable labour market agents to make informed and evidence-based decisions as “neither KAS nor the MLSW have sufficient financial and technical capacities to ensure the quality of existing data collection systems, especially their analytical components”. The need to support KAS with qualitative analysis and ensure that the exercise is useful for policy-making purposes has been addressed through considerable technical support.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰³ See section “Project design and contextual relevance”.

¹⁰⁴ Improve Human Resource capacities of MLSW, Public Employment Service (PES) and Vocational Training Centre (VTC). Increase the awareness of PES and VTC services among Kosovo’s jobseekers and employers. Improve the business processes for integrated service delivery in offices where physical infrastructure allows).

¹⁰⁵ Addressed by the activity “Provide training and employment opportunities to unemployed jobseekers. Equal opportunities are provided to women and men. Inclusion of vulnerable groups is ensured through carefully- designed selection criteria”.

¹⁰⁶ The activity foreseen is “Support Kosovo institutions in producing gender disaggregated qualitative labour market data and analytical reports”.

Output 3 “Feasible modalities to establish an Employment Fund are developed” aims at the sustainability of ALMMs. Given the fact that “the implementation of the active employment measures in Kosovo is donor driven” and “gradual transfer of both financing and technical administration of active labour market measures and labour policy management to Kosovo’s institutions” is a stated need, this component uses a feasibility study to seek the “most suitable and applicable model for establishment of the Employment Fund in the Kosovo context, taking into consideration the financial implications for the institutions, private sector etc.” Considering the limited budget allocation to deliver support, a feasible way of establishing such a fund in parallel to the MLSW efforts in establishing the new Public Employment Agency has been considered timely and important.¹⁰⁷ A reservation, however, has been that the “actual establishment of the fund and functioning implementation mechanism would entail additional measures and financial resources as a support to MLSW, respectively the Public Employment Agency”.

¹⁰⁷ ALMP2 has acknowledged the fact that the actual establishment of the fund and functioning implementation mechanism would entail additional measures and financial resources as support to MLSW, specifically the Public Employment Agency.

Table 5 ALMP 2 (2014-2017): Theory of Change Map

ALMP2 (2014-2017): THEORY OF CHANGE MAP						
Needs	Priorities/ Objectives	Activities	Outputs	Outcomes	Assumptions	External Factors
Needs to strengthen capacities of MLSW, PES and VTC to reorganise PES including through integrated service delivery and SEP, improving client profiling and EMIS. Need to support access to services for groups which have a higher likelihood of long-term employment (Focus on youth and women)	Improve HR capacities and provide continued direct implementation of financial support for vulnerable groups – with a particular focus on youth and women – and further technical support for the capacities of implementing institutions.	Improve HR capacities of MLSW, PES and VTC. Improve business processes to enhance ‘integrated service delivery’ in offices where infrastructure allows Training and employment opportunities to unemployed jobseekers (focus on equal opportunities, vulnerable groups) Raise awareness of PES and VTC services	Vulnerable youth across Kosovo – with a particular focus on women – receive integrated employment services	Contribute towards achieving the outcome of the Kosovo Programme Action Plan 2011 – 2015: By 2015, vulnerable women and men (returnees, IDP, minority groups, PWD, youth) have more economic and livelihood opportunities, and benefit from better public and social services	Demonstrated political will to support the interventions Institutions, private sector, and NGOs willing and capable to support and scale up practices The right beneficiaries are reached The right message/support is given, understood and sustainable Practices and knowledge work towards outputs and outcomes	Natural events/threats Political framework conditions Financial Framework conditions
Capacity deficits of KAS and MLSW to ensure the quality of existing data collection systems, especially analytical components	Ensure the production of detailed, good quality and relevant insights on the labour market in Kosovo and enable labour market agents to make informed and evidence-based decisions	Support Kosovo institutions to produce gender-disaggregated qualitative labour market data and analytical reports	Knowledge base on labour market is enhanced, leading to evidence-based, gender-sensitive decision making			
Need to shift provision of financial support from donors and gradually transfer both financing and technical administration to Kosovo’s institutions	Identifying feasible ways for Kosovo to establish an Employment Fund, in order to ensure sustainability in the financing and implementation of active employment measures.	Undertake a feasibility study to define the most suitable and applicable model for establishment of the Employment Fund, considering the financial implications for the institutions, private sector etc.	Feasible modalities to establish an Employment Fund are developed, aiming at sustainability of ALMMs		The actual establishment of the fund and implementation mechanism would entail additional measures and financial resources as support to MLSW, specifically the Public EA.	

The second project document of September 2018¹⁰⁸ provided for continuation of ALM2 for the period 2018-2020. Continuation was justified as ensuring the longer-term sustainability of the mechanisms established. Achievements in direct provision of services for many beneficiaries enabled during 2014-2018 suggested that the institutional context would “not allow for quicker movement towards local ownership and long-term sustainability” – i.e. there was still a lack of capacity in policies and institutions (especially the narrow fiscal space) and a lack of established financing mechanisms within the Kosovo budget (an employment fund). A risk assessed and addressed by UNDP is that “without any continued intervention there is a high risk that service provision through active labour market measures will be discontinued”. The 2018-2020 Project Intervention was thus based on a scaled-up approach, to build on prior UNDP achievements and further “improve the capacities of the labour market institutions to design relevant gender responsive policies at central level and to deliver integrated services at local level, focusing on the most vulnerable groups among the unemployed.” To this end, the intervention has been designed to further strengthen and ensure the sustainability of the links between labour market actors through: improving the human resource capacities and provision of continued direct implementation of active labour market measures for vulnerable groups, with a particular focus on youth and women; further technical support for the capacities of implementing institutions; and enhancement of the labour market knowledge base in order to ensure evidence-based decision making among labour-market actors.

The rationale of 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” has been based on identified capacity needs in policy-making and operational and business processes to ensure long-term and sustainable local mechanisms that are capable of addressing such challenges on their own. These have been addressed through targeted technical assistance and support towards the PES Performance Management Framework, the MLSW Internal Training System, and a profiling system based on new models for service delivery.¹⁰⁹

The rationale for Output 2: “Sustainable economic integration for unemployed young men and women registered in the PES through active labour market measures (Wage Subsidy program)” aims to use the Wage Subsidy Program.¹¹⁰ The Intended Outcome contributes to Outcome 2.1 of the Kosovo programme Results and Resource Framework (CDP 2016-2020): By 2020, employment and education policies and programmes enable greater access to decent employment opportunities for youth and women.

¹⁰⁸ ALMP2 (2018-2020) Project document.

¹⁰⁹ Activities 1 and 2: Provision of technical expertise for EARK and Vocational Training Centres for the provision of training and employment services for registered jobseekers and strengthening of the capacities of institutional structures within the MLSW and the EARK by organizing policy development workshops and study visits to exchange best practices with other countries and developing research knowledge on the Labour Market.

¹¹⁰ Measures include: job search assistance for women and young men registered as unemployed jobseekers in the Public Employment Service (PES); offering employment through the wage subsidy scheme for long-term jobseekers in partnership with private enterprises; public information activities on provision of employment services by PES; and other integrated services with MLSW.

Table 6 ALMP 2 (2018-2020): Theory of Change Map

ALMP2 (2018-2020): THEORY OF CHANGE MAP						
Needs	Priorities/ Objectives	Activities	Outputs	Outcomes	Assumptions	External Factors
Need to further support the labour market institutions develop and strengthen their capacities in policy-making, operational and business processes to ensure long-term and sustainable local mechanisms that are capable to address such challenges on their own	Improving the human resource capacities and provision of continued direct implementation of active labour market measures for vulnerable groups – with a particular focus on youth and women – and further technical support for the capacities of implementing institutions. The enhancement of the labour market knowledge base in order to ensure evidence-based decision making among labour-market actors.	Technical expertise to EA and VTC for the provision of training and employment services for registered jobseekers Strengthen the capacities of institutional structures within the MLSW and the EARK through workshops and study visits and development of research knowledge on the Labour Market.	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”	Intended Outcome as stated in the Kosovo Programme Results and Resource Framework (CDP 2016-2020) Outcome 2.1: By 2020, employment and education policies and programmes enable greater access to decent employment opportunities for youth and women	Demonstrated political will to support the interventions Institutions (i.e. MLSW, PES, VTC), private sector and NGOs interested, willing and capable to support and scale up practices The right people are reached The right message/support is given, understood and sustainable The practices and knowledge work towards outputs and outcomes Financial resources committed by Kosovo institutions to continue implementation of ALMPs Coordinated efforts of organizations active in the field of employment	Natural events/threats Political framework conditions Financial Framework conditions Overall limited knowledge base on labour market conditions Lack or insufficient development of systems for data collection and analysis
Need for direct support to jobseekers and private sector companies to increase employability and job creation	Improving the direct provision of continued active labour market measures for vulnerable groups – with a particular focus on youth and women – and further technical support for the capacities of implementing	Provision of employment services for jobseekers through Wage Subsidy Schemes Public information activities on provision of employment services by PES and other integrated services with MLSW	Output 2: “Sustainable economic integration for unemployed young men and women registered in the PES through alms (Wage Subsidy program)” uses the Wage Subsidy Program			

The 2019 continuation of ALMP2 “Sustainable economic reintegration for repatriated women and men 2019-2021” builds upon its record in supporting the reintegration of repatriated persons to the labour market¹¹¹ and addresses the need to advance the socio-economic conditions of repatriated persons through various integrative intervention measures. The project considers employment as a key measure to impact sustainable reintegration of repatriated persons (a political strategic priority, related to the goals of visa liberalization and EU integration). The rationale is relevant to both strategic priorities and the macroeconomic context (See Section 8.1 Relevance).

Its main objective is to improve skills and provide employment opportunities for repatriated persons, working closely with labour market institutions and in partnership with private sector enterprises, and to strengthen the capacity of local municipal structures to provide support to integration for repatriated persons, focusing on labour market integration.

The focus of the project has been on ensuring the sustainable reintegration of repatriated persons through OJT, WS and SEP. Given the labour market challenges in Kosovo around reintegrated persons, with high unemployment and lack of skills, the project logic is to reach its objectives by making sure that each measure is designed to match beneficiaries’ skills with business sector needs.¹¹²

With respect to strengthening the capacity of institutions to provide support to integration for repatriated persons, focusing on labour market integration, the focus is on improving the case referral system, analysis of the profiles of repatriated persons, and so on. Strengthening local institutions involved in the reintegration process as a prerequisite for sustainable reintegration has been considered strategically important.

¹¹¹ The ALMP 2 “Sustainable economic reintegration for repatriated women and men 2019-2021” project fiche states that “the project has managed to provide training and employment for 1,175 repatriated persons (30% of non-majority communities and 20% of women). Given the small number of repatriated persons who have been registered as job seekers at the beginning of project implementation (several registered only), the project has achieved the results by increasing efforts to raise awareness, field information as well as strengthening capacities and enhancing cooperation between relevant institutional structures at the local level”. Regarding achievements in institutional capacity, relevant examples include the platform for providing advanced employment services at the local level, developed by UNDP, together with MLSW, MIA and local institutions; the introduced PES Performance Management Framework; MLSW Internal Training System; a profiling system based on new models for service delivery; and direct assistance in developing several policy documents in reintegration, etc.

¹¹² OJT targeted repatriated persons with no prior experience, limited skills, and a lack of formal education. Wage subsidy targeted repatriated persons registered as unemployed to subsidize their wages for twelve months; and during this period, beneficiaries can develop skills, knowledge, and experience, with little experience. The self-employment programme followed a competitive logic, where applicants were first trained on how to write business plans, and then proposed their business ideas. The best plans have been supported with tools and equipment, as well as coaching and mentoring, for twelve months. Given the heterogeneous composition of the beneficiary group, measures effectively attracted beneficiaries of different ages, genders, geographical background (urban/rural), and business sector.

Table 7 ALMP 2 (2019-2021): Theory of Change Map

ALMP 2 (2019-2021): THEORY OF CHANGE MAP						
Needs	Priorities/ Objectives	Activities	Outputs	Outcomes	Assumptions	External Factors
Support access to services for repatriated persons which have a higher likelihood of resulting in long-term employment (Focus on women and non-majority communities) Capacities of local municipal structures to support repatriated persons, focusing on reintegration into the labour market, are still insufficient	<p>Improve skills and provide employment opportunities for repatriated persons, working closely with labour market institutions and in partnership with private sector enterprises</p> <p>Further strengthen the capacities of local municipal structures in providing support to repatriated persons, focusing on reintegration into the labour market</p>	<p>Increase awareness-raising and public information activities about public employment services and opportunities to benefit from active labour market programs</p> <p>Develop skills and training opportunities in line with labour market needs (OJT)</p> <p>Employment opportunities through stimulation of private sector enterprises and support of employment initiatives through the Wage Subsidies Program (WS)</p> <p>developing entrepreneurship skills and providing opportunities for self-employment by financing business plans through the Self-Employment Program (SEP)</p>	<p>Increased awareness of public employment services and opportunities to benefit from active labour market programs</p> <p>Sustainable economic integration for repatriated persons through active labour market measures: OJT, WS and SEP</p> <p>Increased institutional capacity in providing support to repatriated persons, focusing on reintegration into the labour market</p>	<p>Outcome 1. Sustainable economic reintegration for repatriated women and men</p>	<p>Demonstrated political will to support interventions</p> <p>Central and local institutions, the private sector and NGOs are willing and able to support and scale up practices</p> <p>The right repatriated groups and persons are reached</p> <p>The right message/support is given, understood and sustainable</p> <p>The practices and knowledge work towards outputs and outcomes</p>	<p>Natural events/threats/ pandemic</p> <p>Political context</p> <p>Financial context</p>

Evaluation data indicates that the design of the measures has proven feasible. The targets, however, appear high when it comes to participation of non-majority communities and women in the reintegration component. As reviewed in the sections on human rights and gender, the project has faced serious challenges in meeting these. Demographic and other factors noted in the analysis prompt the question of how realistically indicator targets were set in the design of the project. A key obstacle has been the insufficiency of information from host countries about the numbers of repatriated persons. This has, undoubtedly, negatively affected not only the design of the project, but also its implementation, putting high pressure on the team which had to struggle to achieve the set targets while facing a steady decline in the target group.¹¹³ Interviewees emphasized the critical importance of information of a quality and scope appropriate to allow for realistic setting of targets. Considering the main factors leading to the intended outcomes, and the assumptions, factors or risks outlined in the project fiche, the quality of the programme's design and its implementation have been outlined by stakeholders as the main influences on the achievement of intended outputs and outcomes. The intended outcomes have proven well-defined and measurable, and the results verifiable. Throughout the project the assumptions, factors and risks have been sufficiently taken into consideration. Risk management has been active, systematic and evidence-based – “exceptionally well organised and supported by the UNDP and the PES”, according to the external evaluation. Diverse strategic and operational risks have been systematically identified: the risk log follows the contextual and project evolution, with new risks added during implementation¹¹⁴ or some risks dropping off.¹¹⁵ The risk log is actively maintained to track identified risks and actions taken. Certain risks identified at the programme design phase proved to be insignificant in practice.¹¹⁶ Risks have been addressed in a structured way, while risk management has demonstrated flexibility and the search for effective mitigation.

Conclusion:

The Theory of Change/project logic has been found feasible and realistic, even in light of the diverse and unprecedented challenges provoked by the continuing pandemic. The assumptions, factors and risks foreseen in the project design have been effectively addressed in the implementation phase so that results and outcomes have been secured. The lack of sufficient information in the project design regarding the number of repatriated persons has challenged realistic target-setting of targets, especially for repatriated women and repatriated citizens. The value added by the project is undisputed by beneficiaries, and the interviews confirmed their appreciation. A key factor in this success is the consistency in the UNDP approach to the sector, as reforms take a long time in terms of choice of priorities and the consistent funding of active labour market measures.

¹¹³ This situation has been reflected in project monitoring and reporting, stating that “During the design phase of the project, there was very limited information regarding the characteristics of repatriated persons in the absence of an Information Management System and the few data were collected and available. During the project implementation and adapting to new circumstances, lessons learned, risks and complexity of the group, project interventions have been reconfigured again to meet the needs of the group that was objectively based on their characteristics.”

¹¹⁴ Annual Progress Reports for 2015, 2016, 2017.

¹¹⁵ Annual Progress Reports for 2015, 2016, 2017. For example, the risk “Delays in the process of forming the new institutions have influenced the work within the ministry and the political will to implement the sectoral action plan and establish the Employment Agency” has ceased to exist with the setting up of the EA.

¹¹⁶ These concerns “Lack of unemployed persons seeking jobs actively through PES due to lack of information or trust”, “Limited number of enterprises interested to partner in facilitating trainings, actively participating board meetings, public discussions, think tanks etc organized by the project” and “Limited number of local organizations/consultants that provide qualitative mentoring for start-ups”.

7.7. Human rights

This section aims to assess how the human rights-based approach is incorporated into ALMP2 design and implementation: the extent to which the most vulnerable groups in the labour market have benefited from the project. (ALMP2 puts special focus on the most vulnerable groups: women, non-majority communities, and jobseekers from rural areas. Most of them lack previous experience and appropriate education and skills). The main question addressed is:

- To what extent have human rights, the rights of vulnerable persons and ethnic minority rights been considered in the project design and to what extent have they been reflected in the implementation of the project?

Human rights have been evaluated from the perspective of how and how much the groups mentioned benefited from the project. As participation of women as a specific target group has been given thorough consideration in Section 8.8 Gender, this section will only look at non-majority communities, the physically disadvantaged, and jobseekers from rural areas.

In Kosovo, similarly to other countries in the region, the protection and promotion of human rights, the implementation of human rights legislation, and the oversight and coordination of existing human rights mechanisms has been said to “remain a challenge”; current human rights strategies have been said to “lack clear objectives, timelines and adequate implementation mechanisms”.¹¹⁷ The absence of strong labour unions, and the weak enforcement of applicable regulations, are considered to have exacerbated labour rights violations in Kosovo, especially during the pandemic.¹¹⁸ Particularly disadvantaged have been “members of non-majority communities and women as they are heavily employed in the informal economy and thus can rarely benefit from the public funds financial help”.¹¹⁹ Interviews note that during the pandemic, as businesses struggled to overcome constraints and to continue work as usual, the crisis disproportionately affected the most vulnerable workers, who experienced acute violations of the right to just and favourable conditions of work – violations such as illegal termination of contracts, wage cuts, increased workload because of absent or fired colleagues, and late payment. Due to data deficiencies regarding those involved in the informal economy, this analysis could only refer to qualitative findings of widespread discrimination with only a few reported cases, with ineffective institutional referral mechanisms and inadequate inspections on the matter.

Against this framework and to address the above challenges, the project has incorporated a straightforward human rights focus in its design through:

- Turning the protection of most vulnerable groups, i.e. non-majority communities, into its key objective.¹²⁰ Their improved standing is also envisaged in the intended outcomes (vulnerable women and men (returnees, IDP, minority groups, PWD, youth) have more economic and livelihood opportunities, and benefit from better public and social services).

¹¹⁷ Kosovo 2021 Progress report, COM (2021) 644 final, at p.28.

¹¹⁸ Civil Society Report on Human Rights in Kosovo in 2020, project “Engaging with civil society on human rights monitoring and reporting” funded by the Human Rights Component of the United Nations Mission Interim Administration in Kosovo (UNMIK) and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), issued 2021, at p.24

¹¹⁹ Democracy for Development, ‘(Non)Inclusion of Women in the Labor Market!’ (12 January 2021).

¹²⁰ ALMP 2 Project fiche 2014-2017: “The project’s main objective is to improve the capacities of the labour market institutions to deliver integrated services at local level, focusing on the most vulnerable groups among the unemployed.”

- Participation of vulnerable groups – non-majority communities, the physically-disadvantaged and jobseekers from rural areas – remaining among the project’s key targets. Indicators have been disaggregated to feature non-majority and physically-disadvantaged ALMM beneficiaries specifically, and relevant data has been made available.

Making this a factor in the design and implementation of ALMP2 influenced participation and access to project benefits by representatives of non-majority communities, the physically-disadvantaged and rural jobseekers. The evaluation evidence supports the assessment that a straightforward human rights approach has been consistently reflected in the implementation of the project. For the period 2014-2017, given the baseline of 10% of ALMM beneficiaries being from non-majority communities, and the target of increasing ALMM beneficiaries by at least for 3%, the project has successfully achieved 15% non-majority participation (Fig. 38). Given the achievements by year in 2014-2017, evaluation seems confirm a clear trend of success towards the inclusion of non-majority jobseekers.¹²¹

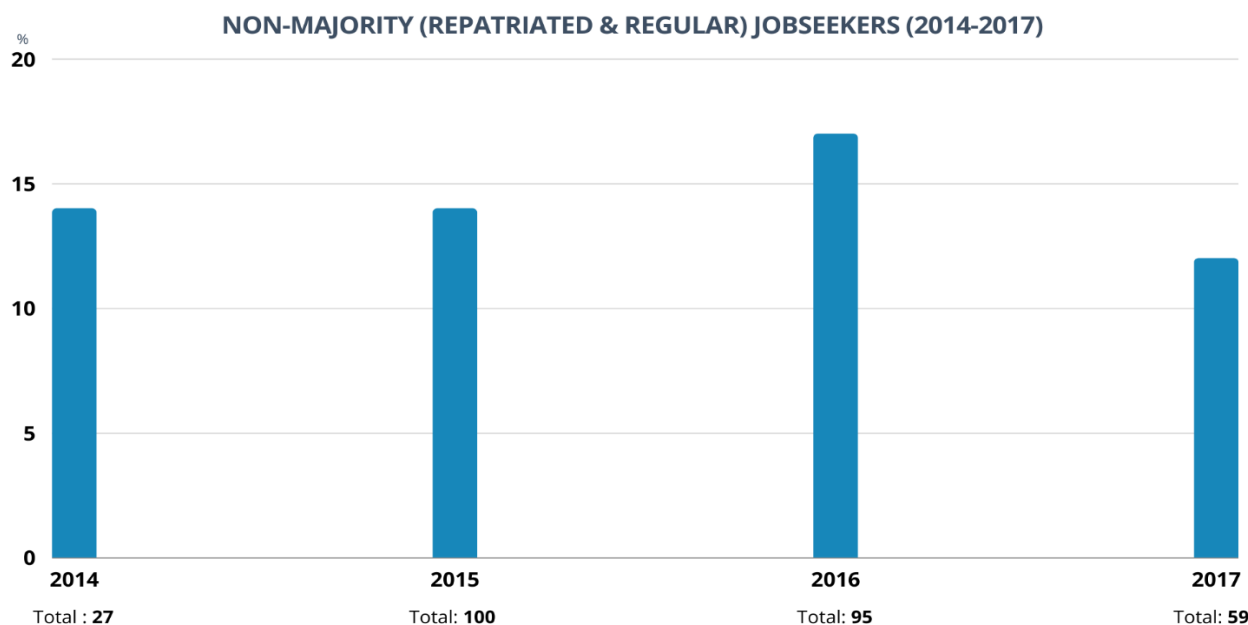


Figure 38 Indicators targeting non-majority communities’ participation in 2014-2017

An example of good practice in targeting support was the 2016 open call for applications for grants and business development support for unemployed persons with unique business ideas, under the SEP implemented in the region of Mitrovica in coordination with two other UN implemented projects (Support to implementation of the forest policy and strategy in Kosovo and UN Joint programme on Domestic Violence in Kosovo). Strong participation of non-majority communities is reported (89 out of 265 supported). The 2017 drop in percentage (12% achieved) may be attributed to the fact that

¹²¹ ALMP2’s 2014 achievements, with a focus on the OJT programme, report that 7% of the beneficiaries were people with disabilities, 14% were from non-majority communities, including Serbs, Roma, Ashkali, Egyptians, Bosniaks, and Turks, and 56% were from rural areas. This trend continued in 2015: 22% of OJT beneficiaries were non-majority, 8% Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian, and 39% from rural areas; WS had 10% of beneficiaries from minority communities and people with disabilities, and 48% from rural areas. In 2015, the goal of 3% increase of beneficiaries from minority communities was fully achieved (13.8%). The same trend was observed in 2016 (17%). The highest participation by non-majority communities is observed in the OJT (27%); in the WSP interest was considerably smaller (7%).

the main target group for this period were repatriated persons, with participation in ALMMs on a first-come-first-served principle. Quotas have been lifted because of the priorities regarding repatriated persons in the context of the importance of labour market reintegration to the visa liberalization process. In 2017, interest from non-majority communities in the OJT programme rates was higher (24%) than in WSP (9%, 2018-9%). In the 2017 Internship programme, 6% of participants were from non-majority communities.

Overall in 2014-2017, the most attractive ALMM for beneficiaries from non-majority communities was the OJT, with participation of 57%. Far less attractive was the WSP (7%), while the SEP did not reach out any beneficiary from this group; this is largely attributed to the fact that this scheme has proven most demanding in terms of existing competence, dedicated effort and motivation, and relevant resources for effective implementation (Table 8).

Table 8 Distribution of beneficiaries by ethnicity and by scheme (2014-2017)

REPATRIATION COMPONENT – ETHNIC COMPOSITION AS A PERCENTAGE (2014 – 2017)		
	TOTAL PER SCHEME	%
ON-THE-JOB TRAINING		
Majority	242	43%
Non-Majority	325	57%
Subtotal OJT	567	100%
THE WAGE SUBSIDY PROGRAMME		
Majority	328	93%
Non-Majority	25	7%
Subtotal WS	353	100%
THE SELF-EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMME		
Majority	0	0
Non-Majority	0	0
Subtotal SEP	0	0
Majority	570	62%
Non-Majority	350	38%
Total Beneficiaries	920	100%

In 2018-2021, the project scored considerable success in reaching targets for inclusion of non-majority regular job seekers. Given the target of at least 10% of ALMM beneficiaries from non-majority communities, the project achieved 13% (Table 6).

This more effective engagement with non-majority jobseekers may be attributed to the following: the service delivery model, profiling mechanism and SOPs used by MLSW/EA; allowing targeted support to the unemployed which leads to greater provision of support to jobseekers from non-majority communities who face higher structural barriers in the labour market; and the use of quotas

for certain measures and target groups.¹²² The project has supported the above instruments, as well as the corresponding capacities for their implementation, and such institutional investment is expected to continue through the promotion of human rights-sensitive policy-making for the labour market and economic development institutions, and thus to contribute to a further transformation. As the project has been designed to encourage non-majority jobseekers to participate in all three measures – SEP, OJT and WSP – the relative success of each is meaningful for future interventions. Essentially, the OJT and WSP have demonstrated more success in reaching more non-majority regular jobseekers: the OJT programme managed to attract around 15% of non-majority regular jobseekers in 2019-2021, and the WS programme 14%. Compared to the previous period (0%), SEP’s 11% inclusion of non-majority regular jobseekers is a considerable improvement and comes close to the two other schemes. The numbers achieved in the SEP under the hardship of the overall project environment in this period demonstrate the potential of this measure among non-majority jobseekers, which is much more motivation and competence demanding, to also work among them. 10% also gains the internship programme (Table 9).

Table 9 Regular jobseeker project beneficiaries by ethnicity and by scheme (2019-2021)

REGULAR JOBSEEKERS – ETHNIC COMPOSITION – COUNT OF BENEFICIARIES (2018 – 2021)						
	2018	2019	2020	2021	TOTAL PER SCHEME	%
ON-THE-JOB TRAINING						
Majority	137	96	0	0	233	85%
Non-Majority	19	22	0	0	41	15%
Subtotal OJT	156	118	0	0	274	100%
THE WAGE SUBSIDY PROGRAMME						
Majority	150	246	0	0	396	86%
Non-Majority	10	57	0	0	67	14%
Subtotal WS	160	303	0	0	463	100%
COMMUNITY VOLUNTEERS (UNV)						
Majority	0	0	0	0	0	0
Non-Majority	0	0	0	0	0	0
Subtotal UNV	0	0	0	0	0	0
THE SELF-EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMME						
Majority	19	53	0	0	72	89%
Non-Majority	1	8	0	0	9	11%
Subtotal SEP	20	61	0	0	81	100%
THE INTERNSHIP PROGRAMME						
Majority	0	30	0	347	377	81%
Non-Majority	0	0	0	45	45	10%

¹²² In this way, more women are encouraged to undergo training, enhance their skills, participate in entrepreneurship initiatives and therefore increase their employment prospects & generate income.

Subtotal IP	0	30	0	392	422	91%
Majority	306	425	0	347	1078	87%
Non-Majority	30	87	0	45	162	13%
Total Beneficiaries	336	512	0	392	1240	100%

In 2018-2022, in terms of the “Sustainable economic reintegration for repatriated women and men”, the project reached 16% non-majority beneficiaries (WS, SEP, IP, OJT) against a target of 23%. This was largely the result of the steady decline in the total number of repatriated jobseekers. In the reviewed period, non-majority repatriated jobseekers as a group appear substantially limited, thus creating a challenge to a quota for participation.¹²³ Further significant complications were caused by the pandemic and its related restrictions.¹²⁴ As monitoring reports note, “the pandemic has disproportionately affected the most vulnerable groups”.¹²⁵ Therefore, while under the planned overall target for the period 2018-2022, the accomplished reach of 16% participation of repatriated non-majority beneficiaries given The impact of COVID-19 and underlying factors on businesses’ ability to engage with ALMMs and integrate repatriated non-majority arguably renders the 16% reach a rather creditable achievement. (See Table 10.) The individual results per year demonstrate a consistent trend: 2018 – 14.1%; 2019 – 15.6%; 2020 – 15.9%; 2021 – 19.1%; and 2022 –15.8%.

Table 10 Repatriated jobseeker project beneficiaries by ethnicity and by scheme (2018-2021) (OJT, WSP, SEP)

REPATRIATION COMPONENT – ETHNIC COMPOSITION – COUNT OF BENEFICIARIES (2019 – 2021)							
	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	TOTAL/SCHEME	%
ON THE JOB TRAINING							
Majority	60	41	25	11	22	159	66%
Non-Majority	27	22	15	12	3	79	34%
Subtotal OJT	87	63	40	23	25	238	100%
THE WAGE SUBSIDY PROGRAMME							
Majority	117	74	37	7	3	238	74%
Non-Majority	15	14	19	8	1	57	26%
Subtotal WS	132	88	56	15	4	295	100%
THE SELF-EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMME							
Majority	303	186	159	109	92	849	91%
Non-Majority	37	20	8	10	18	93	9%
Subtotal SEP	340	206	167	119	110	942	100%
Total Majority	480	301	221	127	117	1246	84%

¹²³ The latest official data on the representation of the Kosovo Roma, Kosovo Ashkali and Kosovo Egyptian communities in Kosovo is registered in the 2011 census, which indicates that 8,824 Kosovo Roma, 15,436 Kosovo Ashkali and 11,524 Kosovo Egyptians live in the country. Kosovo Roma thus constitute 0.51 per cent of the population, Kosovo Ashkali 0.89 per cent, and Kosovo Egyptians 0.66 per cent. Cited in Overview of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities in Kosovo, OECD, 2020, at p.4.

¹²⁴ Implementation of MLSW Sectoral Strategy in 2018 and 2019 – Mid-term Assessment Report, Lorëz Qehaja November 2019 Pristina, at p.49 notes that “the inclusion of people from Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities from 2017 to 2019 declined to a low percentage. Out of the total number of unemployed registered at EARK, only 5.5% are from Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian community. This percentage is even lower for the registered people only during 2019 (2.9%), compared to 2018 (3.3%)”.

¹²⁵ Kosovo 2021 Progress report, COM (2021) 644, at p. 28.

Total Non-Majority	79	56	42	30	22	229	16%
Total Beneficiaries	559	357	263	157	139	1475	100%

Interviewees point out that this result may well be attributed to the active, consistent and thorough support of the project team to EOs and VTCs at every stage of the implementation of ALMMs, to ensure appropriate use of the operating manuals, procedures and templates, especially those designed for the newly-launched SEP. The project team has been confirmed as directly involved in developing the templates, selecting candidates, overseeing the implementation of the schemes by monitoring the payment process, ensuring that all appropriate regulations are applied, notifying the EO counsellors in cases of irregularities, and field visits. The successful collaboration with EOs and VTCs around Kosovo included those in the northernmost municipalities of the country. Implementation in 2019-2021 clearly indicates the potential of the OJT (34%) and WSP (26%) schemes to attract the highest attention by non-majority repatriated jobseekers. The 9% participation of repatriated non-majority beneficiaries in SEP may count as a relative success compared to 2014-2017, while lower than regular non-majority jobseekers' participation in the same period (11%). Such participation by the most challenging demographic, in terms of capacity, is a good indicator of the potential of such intervention among repatriated non-majority jobseekers. The project has also implemented external activities through the voucher scheme (2500 beneficiaries) under the "Response to COVID-19 Mitigation of Impact of Health and Humanitarian Crisis Output 2 Basic social protection to the most vulnerable groups" project, supported by the Government of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, and the PBF Project "Empowering Youth for a Peaceful, Prosperous, and Sustainable Future in Kosovo" (159 beneficiaries). 37% of beneficiaries were from non-majority communities. Critical to the perceived success of the voucher scheme is the Operational Manual for the "programme of support for the marginalized families, beneficiaries of the social assistance through the direct financial support", which was supported by the project.

Interview and document review findings indicate that the key barriers to minority inclusion in the labour market are lack of job opportunities and ethnic discrimination.¹²⁶ As regards the Roma, Ashkali, and Egyptian communities, the majority "often live at the margins of the society, struggling with high unemployment rates and low educational attainment. They often live in settlements, which are in some cases informal, with poor infrastructure, and their houses are in dire conditions. Furthermore, members of the Kosovo Roma, Kosovo Ashkali and Kosovo Egyptian communities, and women in particular, face barriers that lead to their exclusion from participation in all areas of life."¹²⁷ Though there are established mechanisms at the central and local level as well as a legal framework to protect non-majority communities and their rights, "conditions for a truly multi-ethnic and integrated society throughout Kosovo" have been assessed as "not fully in place"¹²⁸. The lack of a secure environment, especially in areas where returnees live, of access to property, personal documentation and language rights, and of adequate provisions for education, employment and social welfare, are recognized as barriers. Based on interviews, recommendations

¹²⁶ 2019 Enhanced knowledge base on labour market leading to evidence-based gender-sensitive decision-making and Research.

¹²⁷ Overview of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities in Kosovo, OECD, 2020, at p.4.

¹²⁸ Kosovo 2021 Progress report, COM (2021) 644 final.

for the institutions and for EO in particular focus on improving the efficiency and effectiveness of central and local coordination mechanisms, ensuring the effective delivery of services and implementation of the applicable human rights legislation, policies and strategies, strengthening the role of the anti-discrimination officers in ministries and municipalities, providing training for the most demanding occupations in the labour market, setting up a campaign with businesses and institutions to respect the employment quota for all groups, developing comprehensive recruitment programs, and partnering closely with the Career Centres and the VTCs.

Key barriers to the inclusion of physically disadvantaged persons in the labour market in Kosovo are considered to include poor working conditions, lack of access to appropriate infrastructure, lack of health insurance and other social security benefits, lack of transportation, and disability-based discrimination.¹²⁹¹³⁰ Recommendations for the institutions and EO in particular to address the employment challenges for people with disabilities include increased cooperation with businesses for inclusive employment, soft skills development training, skills training for the most demanding occupations, expanded collaboration with businesses/institutions/organizations for employment mediation, and campaigns with businesses and institutions to respect the labour quota.

Overall, results in the direction of inclusion of vulnerable groups in the job market have been achieved in an environment where many barriers are critical and enduring. The project had to face a steady decline in the total number of repatriated jobseekers, a key beneficiary group. Similarly significant has been the decline in jobseekers from the non-majority communities registered at EARK.¹³¹ COVID-19 measures seem to have been a powerful constraint on human rights in general.¹³² The economic and social consequences of the pandemic have particularly affected persons with disabilities, who have lacked access to quality medical care and other services. **Within this framework, the project's accomplishments regarding participation of non-majority communities in ALMMs are to be given a high evaluation.** Further to stakeholder interviews, the main factors leading to these outcomes include the following:

- The well-structured and proven effective partnership involving all key actors; and
- The close, effective, and continued involvement of the ALMP2 project team, who continuously provided extensive management support and mentoring to beneficiaries. The project has demonstrated flexibility to effectively respond to COVID-19 challenges, by modifying procedures and introducing new methods (i.e. remote activities).

The project has contributed to further developing the human rights agenda in Kosovo, directly by increasing the access of vulnerable groups (including non-majority communities, physically disadvantaged persons, the poor, persons from rural areas, etc.) to employment, income and assets,

¹²⁹ 2019 Enhanced knowledge base on labour market leading to evidence-based gender sensitive decision-making and research

¹³⁰ Kosovo 2021 Progress report, COM (2021) 644: "Persons with disabilities are subject to discrimination and lack of institutional care, starting from lack of proper medical care and lack of physical infrastructure. Limited access to public buildings, schools, medical facilities and transport remains a problem, despite the existence of relevant administrative instructions. There is a clear gap in harmonising the legislation and policies with the Conventions and EU acquis on the rights of people with disabilities."

¹³¹ Implementation of MLSW Sectoral Strategy in 2018 and 2019 – Mid-term Assessment Report, Lorëz Qehaja November, 2019 Prishtina, at p.49 notes that "the inclusion of people from Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities from 2017 to 2019 declined to a low percentage. Out of the total number of unemployed registered at EARK, only 5.5% are from Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian community. This percentage is even lower for the registered people only during 2019 (2.9%), compared to 2018 (3.3%)".

¹³² Framed by the August 2020 Law on preventing and combating the COVID-19 pandemic, which regulates public health-related restrictions of fundamental rights.

skills development and training, but also indirectly through its consistent and structured efforts – some implemented in partnership with stakeholders – to promote human rights. The project has actively involved central and local institutions, NGOs, media and others to support the development and implementation of human rights-sensitive decision-making and service delivery. One further accomplishment in the human rights field is help in developing an EA research database to support human rights-sensitive policy- and decision-making.¹³³ Thus, through the prism of this project, [promoting human rights goes beyond technical support to a number of beneficiaries from vulnerable communities, and tries to positively influence the relevant policy development and implementation processes by supporting the necessary changes to the established regulations, structures and procedures, and by further diminishing structural barriers.](#)

Conclusion:

Despite the particular challenges to meeting targets in 2019-2021, *the performance of the project on the cross-cutting issue of human rights, through inclusion of non-majority communities, the physically disadvantaged and persons from rural areas in project design and implementation, has been exemplary.*

7.8 Gender

This section aims to explore the extent to which the Gender mainstreaming principle is integrated in the project's design, implementation, and monitoring. The main questions addressed are:

- To what extent has gender equality been taken into account in the project design and to what extent has it been reflected in implementation?
- How has the project impacted and sustained gender equality and women's empowerment?

Though existing legislation and institutional mechanisms on gender equality have been brought in line with relevant international and EU standards, women's participation in Kosovo's economy and labour market is assessed as still significantly low. Kosovo has one of the lowest female labour force participation rates in the world (17.4% in 2018) – considerably below participation rates of men in Kosovo (63.1% in the same period).¹³⁴ Moreover, among those women participating in the labour market, unemployment rates are higher than those of men (33.1% vs. 21.5% in 2020).¹³⁵ See Fig. 39. On equality between women and men in employment and social policy, gender-based discrimination has “continued to be widespread in recruitment, promotion, pay, contract length”.¹³⁶ This under-utilization of human potential and the gender gap in creating opportunities represent a major challenge for Kosovo. This situation has worsened with COVID-19, and the impact of the pandemic on women's well-being has also been significant. Special support measures for women within the recovery package notwithstanding, women are said to “continue to face discrimination in the labour market and when accessing finance. They are still underrepresented, especially in decision-making positions, both in private and public institutions, even if the presence of women in

¹³³ Two reports – Involvement of persons with disabilities in the labour market in Kosovo, and Involvement of Roma, Ashkali, and Egyptian communities in the labour market in Kosovo – have been prepared under the auspices of the project in 2019; recommendations for the integration of marginalized groups as well as measures to address the obstacles identified have been submitted to the EA as: "Recommendations for the Inclusion of Marginalized Groups in the Kosovo Labour Market".

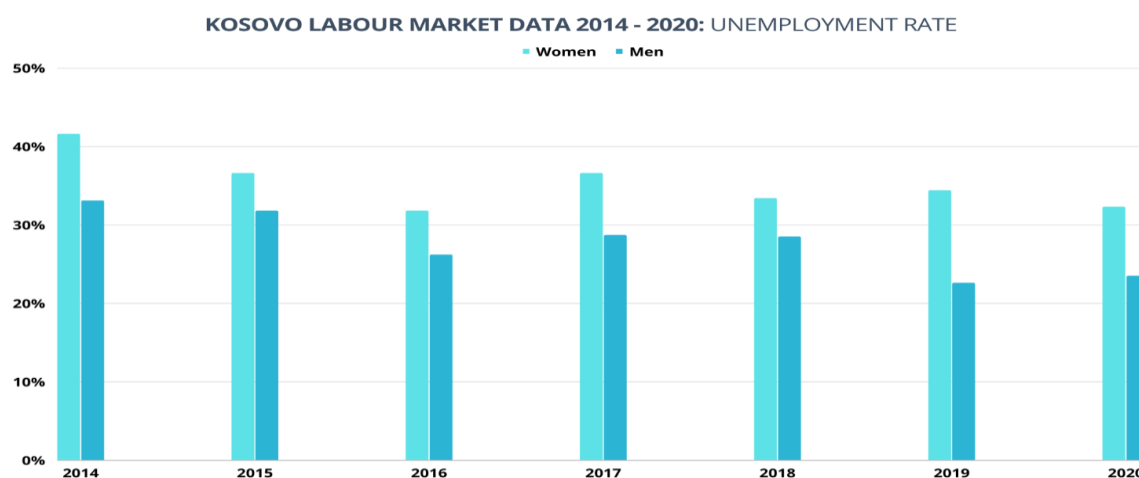
¹³⁴ LFS report, 2018.

¹³⁵ LFS report, 2020.

¹³⁶ Kosovo 2021 Progress report, COM (2021) 644.

politics has notably increased”.¹³⁷ In the assessment of the ILO, the pandemic has made Kosovo’s labour market challenges “even more urgent”.¹³⁸ These challenges include high rates of unemployment (26% in Q4 2021), particularly for women and youth, elevated rates of inactivity (above 60% in 2020), and informal employment (estimates range between 20% and 30%).¹³⁹ Interventions that provide women with opportunities to become economically active, to gain marketable skills, work experience or employment, are therefore of the utmost importance.

Figure 39 Kosovo Labour Market data, by gender: Source: LFS



¹³⁷ Kosovo 2021 Progress report, COM (2021) 644.

¹³⁸ ILO, https://www.ilo.org/budapest/countries-covered/kosovo/WCMS_649969/lang--en/index.htm.

¹³⁹ LFS report.

Against this background, increasing women's participation in the labour market has become a public policy priority for Kosovo (See Section 8.1 Relevance). The project has accordingly addressed gender equality in all its phases, including project design, project planning and implementation, as well as monitoring and evaluation. A straightforward gender perspective has been made evident in project design by:

- Setting gender equality among its main objectives.¹⁴⁰ In line with the thematic priorities of the UNDP Eight Point Agenda (SC 1325) point 6 (Ensure gender-responsive recovery), the UNDP Gender Equality Strategy Implementation, the relevant Sustainable Development Goals, and the relevant legislation, the project is working towards providing equal opportunities to men and women jobseekers and encouraging women to undergo training and enhance their skills, thus increasing their employment opportunities;
- Making women's employment and access to the labour market a key target. Indicators have been disaggregated by gender to focus specifically on how much the ALMMs reach women beneficiaries, and relevant data has been made available.

The design and the implementation of ALMP2, influenced women's participation and access to programme measures. Application and selection criteria and the entire ALMM process have been designed to not discriminate against any target group and to reach the intended beneficiaries. Profiling of jobseekers has helped ensure that support is provided in a targeted and responsive manner. The evidence suggests that the gender responsive approach has also been consistently reflected in project implementation. The data demonstrate a continuous and clear success trend in reaching the desired female participation. For 2014-2017, the target was to increase ALMM participation by 10% against a baseline of 30% of beneficiaries being women, and the project duly achieved 40% female participation. A gender quota was applied for ALMP2 beneficiaries in the call for proposals of 50% regular jobseekers and 30% repatriated women jobseekers. Because of the SEP's competitive selection process, extra points were allocated in the evaluation process to women applicants. Furthermore, while disseminating the call among women's NGOs, the project team has invested considerable effort to hold extra information sessions and other outreach activities to promote inclusion of women in the ALMM schemes. A particularly good practice has been project's assistance to another UNDP project (GBV) to tailor implementation of active labour market measures for the specific target group GBV. ALMP2 has provided feedback to ensure that ALMMs are implemented in the right way.

The achievements by year in the period 2014-2017 seem to demonstrate consistent efforts towards achieving targets (Fig. 40).

¹⁴⁰ The projects' main objective is to improve the capacities of the labour market institutions to design relevant gender responsive policies at central level and to deliver integrated services at local level, focusing on the most vulnerable groups among the unemployed.

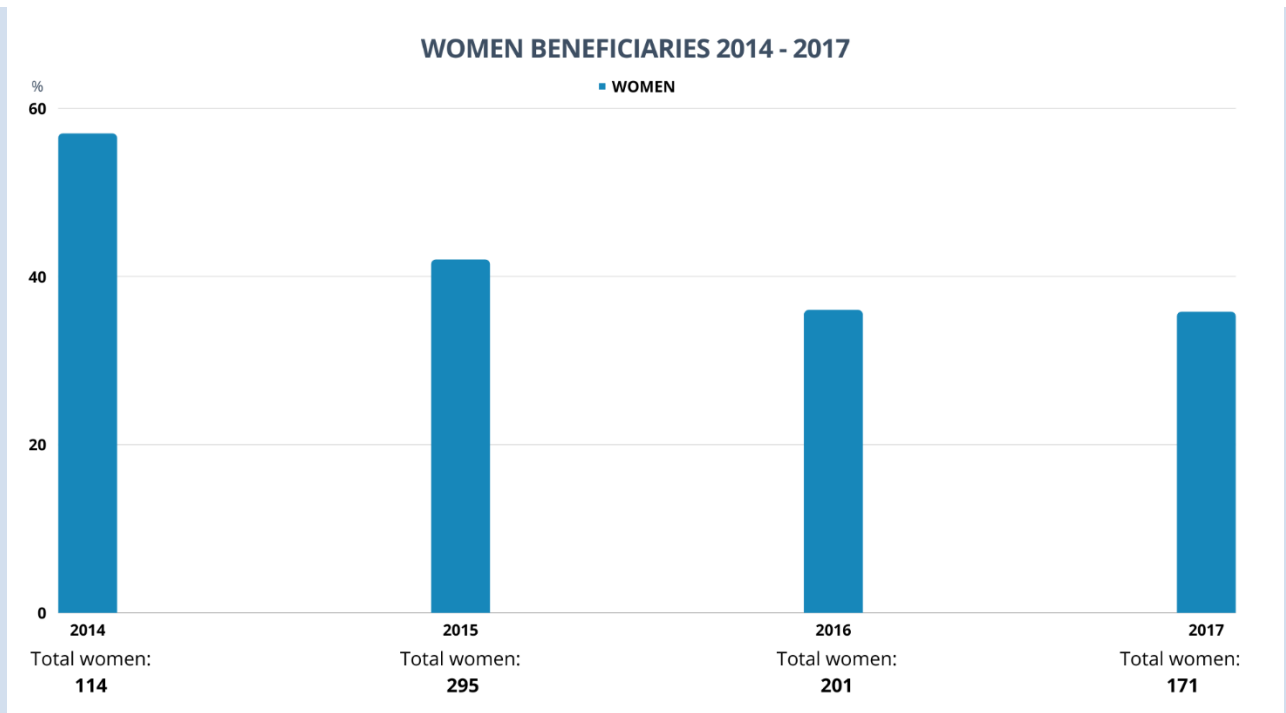


Figure 40 Women beneficiaries of ALMP2 in 2014-2017

As the project has developed over several years through changed circumstances and evolving challenges, a brief retrospective analysis of achievements on a yearly basis has been made. In 2014, the 30% target for women’s participation was exceeded (57% achieved). The same was reported in 2015 (42%). This increase may be attributed to the project’s deliberate efforts to provide equal opportunities to women who are faced with discriminatory practices whilst searching for a job. Stakeholders noted the effectiveness of the transfer of good practices from previous UNDP projects in the region (especially in FYROM) using instruments, identified earlier as best practices, to ensure equal participation of young women in the programme (i.e. use of quotas at regional level linked with the performance of the employment offices to the achievement of such targets. The quota is monitored through regular meetings of the project staff with employment offices to ensure the target is achieved). For 2016, women represent 35.8% of the total number of beneficiaries (58% female regular beneficiaries and 28% or female repatriated beneficiaries). As part of gender mainstreaming, the project together with PES has also started introducing quotas for professions, trying to attract more women into companies operating in sectors with higher potential for growth. The quotas were only used for a minority (153) of beneficiaries. Quotas were lifted, however, because the importance to visa liberalization of the reintegration of repatriated persons made them more of a focus. Participation in the ALMMs was based on first come-fulfil criteria-first serve basis. Women were best represented in the OJT scheme (43% of beneficiaries, mainly in private enterprises). 181 repatriated women and men (34%) have gained new skills through the OJT programme and WSP (28%). The employment scheme for the repatriated has lower participation by women (lower even than their minority presence among returnees), attributed mostly to family and cultural context. Nevertheless, even within the repatriated group, a positive change in participation has been noticed in the younger generations: although lacking job experience, they represent nearly 48% of the beneficiaries of this scheme. For the SEP, women’s

participation is also a considerable success.¹⁴¹ In 2017, the total percentage of women participation reached 35.8% – again in the absence of a quota, to avoid disadvantaging repatriated persons. Readmitted women represent around 32% of the total number of project beneficiaries (exceeding the 25% target). OJT has consistently attracted high interest amongst repatriated women (36% of women beneficiaries); followed closely by the WSP (28%). The newly introduced internship programme had the greatest reach (71%), with women trained in a three month programme targeting recent graduates (within one year), to get them integrated into the labour market, in the same field as their degree. In 2018-2021, the project scored significant success for inclusion of female regular job seekers (62% participation against a target of 50%; see Table 11). This may be attributed to the following: the service delivery model, profiling mechanism and SOPs used by MLSW/EA, targeting support on women facing higher barriers in the labour market; the use of quotas for certain measures and target groups¹⁴²; and the performance management framework introduced by the EA to set annual gender-disaggregated targets and indicators of performance for its employment offices.¹⁴³ The project has supported these instruments and their implementation¹⁴⁴, in the shared belief that “such institutionalized investment will continue to promote gender-sensitive policy making of labour market and economic development institutions a contribute to transformational change among central & local level actors”.¹⁴⁵ Active work in promoting gender inclusive measures – where for each vacant spot in employment schemes, preference has been given to female candidates – is also likely to have contributed to the project’s overall achievements.

Table 11 Regular jobseeker project beneficiaries by gender (2018-2021)

REGULAR JOBSEEKERS – GENDER COUNT OF BENEFICIARIES (2018 – 2021)						
	2018	2019	2020	2021	Total/scheme	%
ON THE JOB TRAINING						
Women	101	65	0	0	166	61%
Men	55	53	0	0	108	39%
Subtotal OJT	156	118	0	0	274	100%
THE WAGE SUBSIDY PROGRAMME						
Women	94	152	0	0	246	53%
Men	66	151	0	0	217	47%
Subtotal WS	160	303	0	0	463	100%
COMMUNITY VOLUNTEERS (UNV)						
Women	0	0	0	0	0	0

¹⁴¹ 110 out of 265 submitted business applications, 41 out of 85 jobseekers trained, 25 business plans received out of 79, 16 out of 39 grants and mentorship awarded.

¹⁴² In this way, more women are encouraged to undergo training, enhance their skills, participate in entrepreneurship initiatives and thus increase their employment prospects and generate income.

¹⁴³ The performance results also served MLSW to align development and training of its staff.

¹⁴⁴ Such instruments include: MLSW/EA service delivery model, profiling mechanism and SOPs, and allowing for targeted support to unemployed which leads to greater provision of support to women facing higher barriers in the labour market. Quotas have been used for certain measures and target groups to encourage more women to undergo training, enhance their skills, participate in entrepreneurship initiatives and thus increase their employment prospects and generate income. The performance management framework used by the EA to set annual gender-disaggregated targets and indicators of performance for its employment offices, with performance results also helps MLSW to align development and training of its staff.

¹⁴⁵ 2018 Annual Progress Report.

Men	0	0	0	0	0	0
Subtotal	0	0	0	0	0	0
SELF-EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMME						
Women	16	38	0	0	54	67%
Men	4	23	0	0	27	33%
Subtotal	20	61	0	0	81	100%
INTERNSHIP PROGRAMME						
Women	0	27	0	273	300	71%
Men	0	3	0	119	122	29%
Subtotal	0	30	0	392	422	100%
Total Women	211	282	0	273	766	62%
Total Men	125	230	0	119	474	38%
Total Beneficiaries	336	512	0	392	1240	100%

As the project has been designed to encourage women to participate in all three measures, its outcomes are essential for future interventions. Essentially, the OJT and WSP have shown considerably more success in reaching out to women. The OJT managed to attract around 61% of women beneficiaries who are regular jobseekers during 2018-2021, and the WS programme 53%. The SEP attracted considerably more beneficiaries among female regular jobseekers (67%) compared to previously. The numbers achieved by the SEP despite the challenging project environment in this period demonstrate the potential of this measure, which demands much more motivation and competence, to work among women. The internship programme reported a reach of 70% among female regular jobseekers.

In 2018-2022, the “Sustainable economic reintegration for repatriated women and men” project reached 24% of repatriated women beneficiaries (WS, SEP, IP, OJT) against a target of 30%.

This relatively lower result compared to that for regular jobseeker women may be attributed to the low proportion of women among the repatriated in Kosovo: for the period 2019-2020 (September), the overall percentage of women among the repatriated in Kosovo was 16.9%. This significant disproportion – in general some 5 men are repatriated for every 1 woman – has undoubtedly affected project outcomes. This has been confirmed by the external evaluation.¹⁴⁶ Besides the low proportion of women among the repatriated¹⁴⁷, the steady decline of the total number of repatriated jobseekers has also had an impact. Overall, the target group repatriated jobseeker women appears very limited. Further significant complications have been experienced with the pandemic. According to LFS results, in Q3 2020, the inactive labour force was quite high at 60.0% – with women at 78.5% and men at

¹⁴⁶ Sustainable reintegration of repatriated persons into the labour market through UNDP’s labour market measures 2019-2020, at p.62, “this difference regarding the overall proportion of men and women in Kosovo’s case comes from the fact that the number of men who migrated is higher than women” and also “can come from the fact that Kosovo is still a patriarchal society in which supposedly men are considered the main family providers who have the pressure to leave Kosovo for better economic opportunities.”

¹⁴⁷ For many years now, the average percentage of women among the repatriated persons in Kosovo is ~17% compared to men of ~83%.

41.1%.¹⁴⁸ Although it was under the overall target for the period 2018-2022, the achieved reach of 20.5% of repatriated women (2020) and 28% (2021), given the demographic challenge and the impact of COVID-19, should be given a high evaluation.

In the context of the “Sustainable economic reintegration for repatriated women and men” 2019-2021 project phase, achievements regarding the inclusion of repatriated women may well be attributed to the active, consistent, and thorough support of the project team to EOs and VTCs at every stage of ALMM implementation, to ensure appropriate use of the operating manuals, procedures and templates, especially these designed for the SEP. Interviews confirm that the project team has been directly involved in developing the templates, selecting of candidates, overseeing the implementation of the schemes by monitoring the payment process, checking that all the applicable regulations are implemented throughout the implementation of schemes, notifying the EO counsellors in cases of irregularities, and field visits.

Outcomes for repatriated women’s participation in the three measures are highly significant future interventions. Simply put, the OJT and WSP proved considerably more successful in reaching out to more women (Table 12).

Table 12 Repatriated jobseeker project beneficiaries in numbers by gender and by scheme (2018-2022)

REPATRIATION COMPONENT – GENDER COUNT OF BENEFICIARIES (2018 – 2022)						
	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	TOTAL/SCHEME
ON THE JOB TRAINING						
Women	38	32	14	10	13	107
Men	49	31	26	14	12	132
Subtotal OJT	87	63	40	24	25	239
WAGE SUBSIDY						
Women	35	31	17	3	1	87
Men	97	57	39	11	3	207
Subtotal WS	132	88	56	14	4	294
THE SELF-EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMME						
Women	58	33	23	31	14	159
Men	282	173	144	88	96	783
Subtotal SEP	340	206	167	119	110	832
Total Women	131	96	54	44	28	353
Total Men	428	261	209	113	111	1122
Total Beneficiaries	559	357	263	157	139	1475

¹⁴⁸ As noted in the external evaluation “with the onset of COVID-19, the project has focused on ensuring that employment measures are implemented to the repatriated jobseekers as an economic measure first, with the aim of securing steady income on “family basis” – knowingly that by default, integrating heads of families within employment measures is a better approach to reducing poverty for both men and women within the family, rather than none”.

In this regard, as shown in Table 13, the OJT managed to have around 45% of female regular jobseeker beneficiaries during 2018-2021, and the WS 32%. SEP, by contrast, with the greatest percentage of female regular jobseeker beneficiaries in the same period, and with all project efforts and additional measures, could still only reach 17% women beneficiaries. The relatively lower participation of repatriated women in the employment scheme may be attributed to the fact that migration in this context is primarily male-driven and the vast majority of people seeking reintegration services are men, and to family and cultural factors. Quotas have not been used for this target group because of the priorities for repatriated persons and the demographic profile of the target group. The lower participation of women in the SEP may be attributed also to the challenges which self-employment poses, in particular the required minimum levels of time and dedication required, which are still challenging for some women. The external evaluation has made an essential finding regarding women's involvement in sectors with the potential to grow in the future. The increase in the number of women who benefited from SEP in the ICT sector, from 0% in 2019 to 0.61% in 2020, may “show that applying in business sectors with potential growth in the future can be the source of long-term self-employment”. In 2020, the project also supported community volunteers (UNV PBF) – 74% of beneficiaries are women – and 59% female beneficiaries through the Voucher Scheme (Lux Development).

Table 13 Repatriated jobseeker project beneficiaries in % by gender and by scheme (2019-2021)

REPATRIATION COMPONENT – GENDER IN PERCENTAGE (2019 – 2021)		
	TOTAL PER SCHEME	%
ON THE JOB TRAINING		
Women	69	45%
Men	83	55%
Subtotal OJT	152	100%
WAGE SUBSIDY		
Women	52	32%
Men	110	68%
Subtotal WS	162	100%
THE SELF-EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMME		
Women	101	17%
Men	501	83%
Subtotal SEP	602	100%
Total Women	222	24%
Total Men	694	76%
Total Beneficiaries	916	100%

Overall, project results in women's economic empowerment have been produced in an environment where many barriers are enduring and critical. Due to the importance of overcoming barriers in the design of future interventions, considerable recent research has focused on understanding the obstacles to women's integration in Kosovo's labour market. Key barriers to inclusion of women in the labour market in Kosovo include: "family responsibilities in combination with limited access to quality and affordable child and elderly care, conservative social norms and discrimination, lower levels of education and work experience among women, legal barriers to women's employment (e.g., high cost of maternity leave for employers), and women's limited access to assets and productive inputs".¹⁴⁹ Any future interventions in the field should incorporate mechanisms to address the above barriers. Disproportionately high inactivity among women has also been related to "employers' perceptions of the low quality of formal education and vocational training institutions that are seen as not equipping employees with skills that are in demand."¹⁵⁰ In the assessment of the EU Commission, "limited access to childcare and flexible working arrangements, as well as regulations which discourage the recruitment of women (e.g. lengthy maternity leave) remain important barriers. Other challenges faced by women, especially in rural areas, are the lack of care for the elderly, discrimination when it comes to access to property and gender-based violence".¹⁵¹ Further, "the pandemic has disproportionately affected the most vulnerable groups"¹⁵² disrupting access to goods and services, including education. The economic and social consequences of the pandemic have affected women particularly seriously, increasing their domestic workload and thus restricting their time for other activities. Within this context, [the project's accomplishments in the period 2018-2022 are to be given an exceptionally high evaluation.](#) Based on interviews, the main factors leading to the very successful outcomes include the following:

- The well-structured partnership approach involving the key actors;
- The close, effective, and continued involvement of the UNDP ALMP2 project team, who continuously provided extensive management, support and mentoring to the beneficiaries, as outlined in this report; and
- The proven flexibility to effectively respond to COVID-19-related challenges, through modifying procedures and introducing new methods (i.e. remote activities).

The project has contributed to women's economic empowerment, directly by increasing women's access to income and assets, skills development and training, but also indirectly by all the efforts undertaken to ensure gender equality. The project has involved formal institutions, NGOs, media, and others in supporting development and implementation of gender sensitive decision-making and service delivery. [Achieving women's economic empowerment through the project involves much more than isolated technical support to a number of female beneficiaries: it goes deeper into the inherently political and administrative process supporting the necessary changes to established norms, structures, and of structural barriers.](#)

In view of the project's accomplishments in promoting gender-sensitive outcomes, discussion of future support to women empowerment in Kosovo should be prominent on the development agenda.

¹⁴⁹ Workshop Summary: Improving the integration of women in Kosovo's labor market – June 21, 2018, World bank Group, at p.4.

¹⁵⁰ Job Diagnostic Kosovo, 2017 International Bank for Reconstruction and Development/The World Bank, at p.68.

¹⁵¹ Kosovo 2021 Progress report, COM (2021) 644 final, at p.89.

¹⁵² Kosovo 2021 Progress report, COM (2021) 644 final, at p. 28.

The “Implementation of MLSW Sectoral Strategy in 2018 and 2019 – Mid-term Assessment Report” states that “From 2018 to 2019 an increased number of women registered in ALMM has been marked, which presents a step forward towards the implementation of the strategy, however still a lot of work is needed in this direction.” The increased role of civil society has been reported as “critical for advancing gender equality”¹⁵³, making civil society organizations working on gender issues strong potential partners to any future interventions. In terms of reach, NGOs experienced in women’s economic empowerment programs can act as an effective liaison between women and the Public Employment Agency. Based on the analysis made and the interview data, the main issue to be further addressed is the capacities of the EARK as the key body implementing employment policy. Though the latter “continued to consolidate its management and operational procedures and data management, and to refine the portfolio of active labour market programmes”, “further work is still needed to improve its operational capacity, including as regards monitoring, evaluation, as well as employment counselling, including for priority groups.”¹⁵⁴

Interviews suggest the importance of: strengthening implementation of the relevant legal frameworks, including through specialised anti-discrimination training for key actors; improving data collection procedures; directing public awareness towards equal treatment; and improving institutional capacities to monitor implementation. Enhanced inter-institutional cooperation and coordination, also with gender equality officers in the ministries and municipalities, is stated as a need to ensure a multi-agency approach to tackling workplace discrimination. Analysis of the implementation of the MSLW Sector Strategy for 2018-2022 states that “gender equality should continue to be the focus of the Ministry; it is recommended that gender equality principles are implemented in all activities in a cross-sectoral manner throughout all levels and activities”.

As far as the ALMMs are concerned, the evaluation data indicate that direct efforts are needed towards improving the quality of VTC courses to make them more attractive and affordable while responding to labour market needs. Use of affirmative measures such as quotas for women has proven effective for raising female participation. However, this could be complemented by improved the added value of training, for instance through an emphasis on soft-skills training (e.g. how to search for jobs or how to present yourself in a job interview, how to increase self-esteem) and/or involving female trainers, with good examples through appropriate case studies and personal experience. Affordability of training may be improved by providing for flexible schedules to allow for higher attendance and meeting family responsibilities at the same time; transport and/or accommodation expenses could be provided. Linking theoretical classroom training with practical on-the-job work experience, followed by career counselling and jobseeking assistance would increase placement opportunities and thus stimulate positive outcomes. To encourage employers to engage more actively in fostering gender equality in the workplace, campaigns with the participation of business organisations could be positive. Measures should continue to be supported by active information campaigns that effectively reach target groups. To this end, interviewees suggest the use of motivational success stories, increased use of social media and local networks, and use of online services for counselling to increase and ease reach. To ensure sustainability of outcomes, appropriate

¹⁵³ Kosovo 2021 Progress report, COM (2021) 644 final, at p.33.

¹⁵⁴ Kosovo 2021 Progress report, COM (2021) 644 final, at p.88.

follow-up assistance measures may be considered (i.e. promoting peer networking also through online collaboration platforms and coaching).

An appropriate and forward-looking policy approach would extend beyond the traditionally female dominated sectors into promising new sectors (e.g. green industries) with a potential for job creation. As a persistent gender gap in digital access may hinder access to the job market, measures to address gaps in technical skills and specialized technical training (STEM education and training) could be critical. From a labour-market perspective, COVID-19 has accelerated remote working and independent platforms, and women can benefit from the resultant flexibility for workers in remote, digitally-delivered services, such as software, design, or sales and marketing. Another promising area is financial and technical support to women-managed SMEs (e.g. e-commerce).¹⁵⁵ Gender-responsive policies on land, agricultural extension services and green technology may encourage women farmers to engage in commercially-oriented agriculture.¹⁵⁶ Critical enablers to be considered include increased outreach through well designed information campaigns; career orientation and counselling; OJT and job search assistance; soft skills development; addressing women's time constraints through more flexible work arrangements; promoting networking as part of services/training (e.g. through self-help groups, mentoring) to expand women's professional networks; and effectively addressing barriers such as access and transportation, childcare and elderly care. A further longer term agenda involves effectively engaging with employers to not only foster a women-friendly workplace (e.g. part-time, flexible hours, etc), but also change stereotypes where.

Conclusion:

Despite the challenges in the period 2019-2021 in meeting targets regarding participation of repatriated women, the performance of the project on the cross-cutting issues of gender equality by including women in project design and implementation has been exemplary.

¹⁵⁵ ILO, Assessing the gendered employment impacts of COVID-19 and supporting a gender-responsive recovery, aA country-level policy tool, http://www2.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_emp/documents/publication/wcms_778847.pdf.

¹⁵⁶ ILO, Building Forward Fairer: Women's rights to work and at work at the core of the COVID-19 recovery, https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---gender/documents/publication/wcms_814499.pdf.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

Project design	<p><u>Institutional participation in design of actions and political accountability</u></p> <p>Issue statement: The project has demonstrated that structured involvement of Kosovo institutions in the planning process has a positive impact on the sustainability of the project results, visibility, and impact.</p> <p>Recommendation: Continue and reinforce the participation of key institutional stakeholders (MIA, MLSW and KEA) in the identification and formulation of future similar assistance in the sector. Consider TA to MFLT to develop the employment strategy for the next planning period and in accordance with the new Labour Law if adopted; TA for the establishment of the Youth Guarantee Fund under the KEA; joint activities based on tailored needs assessment with other UN organisations such as UNHCR to target the most vulnerable on the labour market – minority returnees, stateless and internally displaced persons.</p>
Project design	<p><u>Align future project ALMMs interventions with changing labour market conditions and needs</u></p> <p>Issue statement: Globally the jobs recovery from the COVID-19 crisis is lagging behind the economic recovery. Young people, women and lower-skilled workers have been especially affected.¹⁵⁷ It will take the global economy at least until 2023 to re-create the jobs lost to COVID-19, but many of these jobs are expected to be of low productivity and poor quality, according to the International Labour Organization.¹⁵⁸ Shocks to certain sectors and industries, and job creation in others (i.e. technology and care services), may leave economies with an excess of some skills and a deficit of others.¹⁵⁹ The post-pandemic economic recovery and the changed labour market require re-orientation towards training policies that can help economies reallocate labour to support economic restructuring, well-targeted employment incentives and wage subsidies to support the most vulnerable.</p> <p>Recommendation: As COVID-19 and the current hardships caused by the geopolitical situation have considerably changed the job market, future project interventions need to be designed based on a targeted Labour Market Needs Assessment for the Kosovo market in order to be realistic, needs-based and relevant. Consider the integration of green and digital transformation challenges in the new approach – e.g. focus on green jobs, both in traditional sectors such as manufacturing and construction in terms of automation and digitalisation of industrial processes, and in new, emerging green sectors such as renewable energy and energy efficiency. This will support progress in the EU’s environment agenda. The proposed training by the VTCs should</p>

¹⁵⁷ The Global risk report 2022, World Economic Forum.

¹⁵⁸ International Labour Organization. 2021. “World Employment and Social Outlook. Trends 2021.” ILO Flagship Report. ILO. 2021. https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/---publ/documents/publication/wcms_795453.pdf.

¹⁵⁹ OECD, Designing active labour market policies for the recovery, 2021, <https://www.oecd.org/coronavirus/policy-responses/designing-active-labour-market-policies-for-the-recovery-79c833cf/#section-d1e126><https://www.oecd.org/coronavirus/policy-responses/designing-active-labour-market-policies-for-the-recovery-79c833cf/#section-d1e126>.

	accordingly be adapted, amongst other things exploring and establishing partnerships with global training providers/platforms.
Project design	<p><u>Adapt project design to exploit effectively the value added of remote activities</u></p> <p>Issue statement: Covid-19 has permanently changed the project implementation environment. ALMP2 has been implemented largely under these extraordinary circumstances. The project team had to readapt rapidly to a totally new scenario by changing working procedures, mostly through new methods. These included a range of remote activities, advisory and training; implemented online, these have proven cost- and resource- efficient and convenient to use, and offered the opportunity to expand the training audience and train people at multiple locations, enabling more flexibility and knowledge retention.</p> <p>Recommendation: Consider where feasible and favourable the use of tailored remote activities. Use experience so far to unlock opportunities for experts and specialized organisations (training providers, etc.) to make available their experience online. A vast library of knowledge would accordingly be created and shared, and a knowledge management system could be established.</p>
Project design – Gender mainstreaming	<p><u>Cross-cutting activities in favour of women’s and other vulnerable groups’ participation</u></p> <p>Issue statement: The findings show that gender equality has been an important project consideration at all stages; this trend needs to be sustained and further supported. Increased employment of women, with a focus on doing business, has been stated as a priority and should be enabled through targeted capacity-strengthening and support.</p> <p>Recommendation: Consider additional support to address constraints in women’s participation in active labour market measures, and further diversify means to increase outreach. Continue with the OJT, given the proven high interest among women. Continue with the WS, considering some extra support packages for potential female entrants, perhaps including support for additional training to compensate for skill gaps (soft skills, computer literacy, online working, language). Also consider subsidies to address disincentives and constraints – cover travel, and child- and elderly-care, or provide for flexible time arrangements. Greater availability of care-leave and widespread flexible working arrangements are important for the employment opportunities of young women. Regarding SEP, to ensure higher participation of women consider increased publicity and structured information campaigns to maximise outreach, including through social media, local media and any outlets popular among women; NGOs and informal groups to share good practices and organize information events in municipalities.</p> <p>Consider support for establishing social enterprises as a tool to address the most vulnerable groups in the labour market e.g. disabled people.</p>
Partnerships	<u>Sustain project partnerships through a formalized e-based partnership platform</u>

	<p>Issue statement: Partnership, coordination, cooperation, and information-sharing have been among the key advantages in the design and implementation of the project. Project partnerships have been effectively sought, deepened and widened, synergies established, new partnerships added, and partnership formats diversified.</p> <p>Recommendation: Consider the value added of a formalized partnership network through an online platform to help multiply reach, share information, increase visibility of results and accommodate improvements. Such a network has the potential to be a resource for all stakeholders in all sectors, including ALMM beneficiaries.</p>
Partnerships	<p><u>Sustain and further develop partnerships with business and business organizations to promote their involvement in design and implementation of effective ALMMs</u></p> <p>Issue statement: The project has helped build and strengthen multiple effective partnerships with business and business organizations. Due to the critical role which these have in ensuring the effectiveness and sustainability of support to beneficiaries, bringing them on board for further tailoring and updating ALMMs is essential. To this end, regular networking with Chambers of Commerce and other representative business organisations could be a feasible and effective option.</p> <p>Recommendation: Consider the value added of a formalized partnership network with Chambers of Commerce and other representative business organisations, among other things to promote their involvement in design and implementation of effective ALMMs.</p>
Institutions	<p><u>Strengthen capacities of Kosovo Employment Agency and Employment Offices to effectively discharge their functions</u></p> <p>Issue statement: The project has worked exclusively with the Employment Agency, as the key body implementing employment policy, to consolidate its management and operational procedures and data management, and to refine the portfolio of active labour market programmes. However, as noted in the 2021 EC report¹⁶⁰ “further work is still needed to improve its operational capacity, including as regards monitoring, evaluation, as well as employment counselling, including for priority groups such as youth or long-term unemployed.”</p> <p>Issue statement: The project has made a serious effort to provide for shifting from donor-funded ALMMs to more sustainable financial solutions, by means of the feasibility study. Current institutional priorities restate the need to work towards increased employment and ALMMs, including through a review and redesign of current fiscal policies and the financial system. Seeking sustainable financial solutions behind the political commitments by higher level institutions is of critical importance.</p> <p>Recommendation: Future project interventions should focus on further strengthening the capacities of the Kosovo Employment Agency as the key body implementing labour market policies; capacity-building measures could be needed in the context of the forthcoming establishing of a Youth Guarantee Fund.</p>

¹⁶⁰ See EC Report 2021, at p.88.

	A tailored long-term training programme for the EA and EOs to be developed and piloted, using e-learning platforms; A decentralised model to be set up for business needs assessment at regional level, linked with VTC curricula updates.
Resources	<p><u>Review and adapt ALMM manuals to ensure their continued adequacy and suitability to contextual changes</u></p> <p>Issue statement: The ALMM operational manuals, also developed with the support of the project, have proven efficient and workable tools for design, implementation, and monitoring. However, the changed context – including legal amendments, institutional/organisational changes and strategic commitments – requires them to be adapted/amended accordingly. Lessons from implementation also need to be incorporated to allow for experiential learning and accommodate improvements.</p> <p>Recommendation: The unified ALMM operational manuals should be reviewed and adapted to the new context with lessons learned integrated. Combined implementing approaches need to be considered to increase the sustainability of the measures – combining OJT and WS, internship program and WS.</p>
Resources	<p><u>Further digitalisation and measures for interoperability of existing labour market databases and systems , and adequate capacity-strengthening for users</u></p> <p>Issue statement: The ICT systems used in the implementation of measures, also supported by the project, have proven indispensable aids to successful outcomes. There is a need, however, to continuously upgrade the existing systems, including their interoperability, and to support their appropriate use with adequate capacity-strengthening for users.</p> <p>Recommendation: Undertake further needs-based digitalization of existing databases and systems for employment and social assistance, improve their interoperability and provide for adequate user capacities through training and mentoring schemes.</p>
Capacity strengthenin g	<p><u>Increased effectiveness of training programmes to match labour supply with demand</u></p> <p>Issue statement: Even prior to the COVID-19 crisis, vocational training systems struggled to match investments in training with labour market needs. Post-crisis conditions have added new challenges. To meet specific market demand for professional competence and practical work experience, the project has worked in both fields: supporting vocational training and providing an opportunity for beneficiaries of the wage subsidy scheme to receive practical on-the-job training. Post-pandemic labour markets will demand effective training measures to build and sustain the skills that will be needed, both in the short term as some industries face immediate shortages and in the longer term as sectors and industries adjust to post-crisis conditions.</p> <p>Recommendation: Improve the responsiveness of training to changing labour demands. This will imply structured and effective cooperation between employers, vocational training providers, public agencies and policy-makers to deliver for jobseekers, workers and firms alike. Institutions should do more to provide agile and well-oriented responses to the changes that are occurring in the labour market and demonstrate practical focus. Making training responsive to employers’ needs requires a strong dialogue with employers and social partners. Skills assessment and anticipation studies may effectively guide their expenditures on learning investments.</p>

Capacity strengthening	<p><u>Further harmonize professional training with the requirements of the labour market</u></p> <p>Issue statement: The crisis has highlighted that the continued development of online learning will be critical to the future of adult learning systems.¹⁶¹ Existing good practices demonstrate that during the pandemic, online learning platforms made their content freely available for jobseekers, including some major platforms offering large-scale open online courses.¹⁶² Investing in digital training platforms through future project interventions has a clear potential to maximise reach (including among women), efficiency, adaptability, and flexibility of use, and should be considered in partnership with service providers, public offices and employers.</p> <p>Recommendation: Consider development and introduction of a sustainable model for dual training and introducing unified digital theoretical training in VTCs and practical training in companies; a train-the-trainer model for VTC trainers to be developed and piloted with digital components where appropriate.</p>
Capacity strengthening	<p><u>Place special emphasis on training in digital and soft skills</u></p> <p>Issue statement: The crisis has shown that digitalisation can increase resilience and preserve capacity in the face of stringent restrictions on physical interaction. Boosting digital skills further enables the participation of job seekers in online training, and in job-hunting. In an increasingly digitalized economy, digital skills are now required in almost every occupation.</p> <p>Recommendation: To enable more effective digital service provision, make further efforts to ensure that beneficiaries of support have the skills and access to technology to fully benefit. Consider digital and soft skills need assessment, and developing and piloting of digital and soft skills training, to be combined with other measures especially SEP.</p>
Capacity strengthening	<p><u>Strengthen evaluation of effectiveness of training to promote improvement</u></p> <p>Issue statement: Ensuring consistent quality standards and improvements requires a structured professional evaluation of training effectiveness. The project has been actively involved in various capacity strengthening activities. Data shows that training evaluation focused mostly on exploring reactions to the training and the learning.</p> <p>Recommendation: Where appropriate consider testing the “transfer to the job” aspect of training or whether the participants have been actually enabled to put what they learned into practice in their job roles. Developing a structured training evaluation methodology will provide a clear value added for the whole training sector in Kosovo.</p>
Career counselling and guidance	<p><u>Enhance career guidance and counselling system</u></p> <p>Issue statement: Evaluation evidence points out the potential of improving career guidance and counselling by developing a model of career guidance and counselling in VET, also supported as an institutional priority.</p>

¹⁶¹ OECD (2020), “The potential of online learning for adults: Early lessons from the COVID-19 crisis”, *OECD Policy Responses to Coronavirus (COVID-19)*, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://dx.doi.org/10.1787/ee040002-en>.

¹⁶² OECD, Designing active labour market policies for the recovery, 2021, <https://www.oecd.org/coronavirus/policy-responses/designing-active-labour-market-policies-for-the-recovery-79c833cf/#section-d1e126>.

	<p>Recommendation: Improve career guidance and counselling by developing a model of career guidance and counselling by EOs and developing and piloting an app for the service.</p>
<p>Coaching and mentoring</p>	<p><u>Continue and expand the coaching and mentoring activities under SEP</u></p> <p>Issue statement: The evidence demonstrates that twelve months of mentoring and coaching under the Self-Employment programme proved effective, as many businesses are active and have revenues. Beneficiaries have restated their satisfaction and have positively assessed related impacts on their business. To maximise impact and sustainability, continuing support may be needed. Counselling during the implementation of OJT and WS, in the period of their activation in the measure, will help career orientation, expand horizons, help identify opportunities and ease the transition to sustainable employment.</p> <p>Recommendation: Scaling up of SEP, adapted to current market analysis, and profiling of sectors with growth potential; further expansion of the coaching and mentoring activities under SEP, based on appropriate needs assessment; and design and piloting of an acceleration phase for SEP to be supported by combined funding – grants and financial instruments.</p>
<p>Information campaigns</p>	<p><u>Maximise reach through active promotion of ALMMs, especially using the potential of social media, transfer of know-how to EOs</u></p> <p>Issue statement: The evidence demonstrates that twelve months of mentoring and coaching under the Self-Employment programme has proved effective, as many businesses are active and have revenues. Beneficiaries have restated their satisfaction and have positively assessed related impacts on their business. To maximise impact and sustainability, continuing support may be needed. Counselling during the implementation of OJT and WS, in the period of their activation in the measure, will help career orientation, expand horizons, help identify opportunities and ease the transition to a sustainable employment.</p> <p>Recommendation: Consider innovative approaches to increase outreach of ALMMs, making the best possible use of the available communication channels, including social media, transfer of know-how to EOs, sharing of good practices and amplifying positive experiences.</p>

9. LESSONS LEARNED

<p>Collaborative project design prepares for success</p>	<p>The right alignment of project objectives with vision and strategic priorities of key institutional partners (MLSW and MIA) in project design pays off in implementation. A shared vision and an aligned plan, developed with partners and capturing objectives, governance, metrics and so on, gets partnering right, creates co-ownership and generates support towards results.</p>
<p>Continuous active learning and flexibility have a key role for effective and efficient intervention</p>	<p>The project demonstrates effective experiential learning processes which have enabled: introduction of necessary changes in the operational procedures; upgrading practices to best fit changing and emerging needs in the context (i.e. focus on reintegration) through testing and scaling up of some schemes while phasing out others; flexibility to better understand and more effectively respond to the capacity-building needs of local institutions; learning from experience to be able to better understand the interventions necessary to ensure the long-term sustainability of ALMPs once donor support is phased out.</p>
<p>Effective partnerships are key for sustained success</p>	<p>A collaborative mind-set as a powerful success factor requires continuous efforts and seeks reciprocity – it embraces open and transparent communications and leads with trust. It values alternative opinions as opportunities to create value.</p>
<p>Effective monitoring is critical for achieving expected quality of participation and results</p>	<p>Continuous, large-scale monitoring (80-90% of beneficiaries) during project implementation has proven an effective tool to manage risks of abuse and optimize results. Following selection of beneficiary jobseekers and enterprises, in cooperation with regional and municipal employment centres, the project has organized regular monitoring visits to ensure that they were fulfilling their commitments and – depending on results – a “blacklisting” approach has been adopted to exclude applicants from future schemes. As mentioned in the 2018 Annual report, “insight from monitoring has resulted with better tailored grant packages, assistance in marketing and outreach, as well as management of recipient expectation.”</p>
<p>Simplification of SEP procedures with a focus on priority profiles has the potential to increase participation</p>	<p>The project demonstrated an experiential learning process by redesigning the call and simplifying application guidelines ahead of the second and third calls for the SEP, to attract a wider reach of applicants. Operational procedures drafted also eased the implementation of the Self-Employment Program by Employment Offices. Simplification of the application procedure favours a larger range of applicants and reduces administrative steps and costs. As mentioned in the 2018 Annual report this led “to reduction of application expenses for repatriated jobseekers, such as printing, travel expenses and</p>

<p>and institutional efficiency</p>	<p>other individual costs, as well as the reduction of administrative costs, as most jobseekers registered throughout employment offices are in poor social conditions and every additional cost/hurdle comes at great personal expense. Focusing on priority profiles, identified by the Ministry of Trade and Industry, has eased procurement procedures in purchasing packages of equipment for each profile, and allowed for better information of applicants about the nature and technical capacities of grants they will apply.</p>
<p>Technology and information tools are critical for the efficiency and sustainability of ALMPs</p>	<p>Advanced technology and information tools to support implementation and programme design increase efficiency. The 2018 and 2019 annual reports acknowledge that the “EMIS has greatly synergized EOs and improved the delivery of ALMPs and matchmaking between the jobseekers and employers.” The EMIS does the automatic matchmaking, bridging the employer requirements with jobseeker profile and skillset. Apart from delivering matchmaking efficiency and ease of job placement, it also allows for quality data for the LMIS to help identify labour market trends and data disaggregation to facilitate policy-making.</p>
<p>Institutional commitment and ownership are critical for efficiency in implementation and sustainable capacity-building</p>	<p>As noted in the annual reports “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. That is why it is of critical importance for projects seeking sustainability to include in their governance actors such as the Ministry of Finance and the Office of the Prime Minister to establish the Employment Fund, which will be used specifically to finance the implementation of different active labour market programmes. The feasibility study for this fund along with proposed models is in place through the project.”</p>

APPENDIX 1. EVALUATION MATRIX

Main questions:				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the project relevant to the needs of the identified target groups and beneficiaries and Kosovo context in general? • Were the areas of intervention appropriately chosen for reaching its results and outcomes? • Were coordination, management, and financing arrangements supportive to institutional strengthening and local ownership? 				
Evaluation sub-questions	Judgement criteria	Key performance indicators (KPIs)	Evaluation Methods	Sources of information
1. To what extent are the Project's objectives still valid?	Views of stakeholders Overall objectives and strategy reflected in programming/ financing documents	No. of programming/ financing documents justifying that objectives and strategy are still relevant	Document review Stakeholder interviews Analysis of statistical data Analysis of reports Descriptive analysis	Programme & project Documents (Project documents/fiches Annual reports Midterm evaluations Financing agreement Programme/Measure Operational Manuals) Strategic documents Questionnaire State statistics & labour market statistics EC monitoring reports
2. To what extent are the cross-cutting issues (such as environment, gender equality, women's empowerment, human rights-based approach, and social standards) principles and quality criteria?				
3. Does the Project respond to the needs of the identified target groups and beneficiaries?				
4. Were the unique needs of jobseekers taken into consideration/ To what extent was gender equality addressed, obstacles in respond to programme?				
5. Were all procedures and beneficiaries respected and mainstreamed within the programme implementation?				
6. Was the design of the Project appropriate for reaching its results and outcomes?				
7. Have any changes been made to the Project's design during the implementation? If yes, did they lead to significant design improvements?				
8. Were coordination, management and financing arrangements clearly defined and did they support institutional strengthening and local ownership?				
Effectiveness				
Main questions:				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent have the objectives been achieved and were they adapted to changing context and external conditions? • Which are the interventions assessed by the beneficiaries as the most effective, and which have satisfied the target groups the most? 				
Evaluation sub-questions	Judgement criteria	Key performance indicators (KPIs)	Data collections and Evaluation Methods	Sources of information

9. To what extent have the programme outputs and outcomes been achieved? Are they on track to be achieved as planned during the programme?	Views of stakeholders Strengthened institutional capacities related Strengthened inter-agency leadership and coordination Factors contributing to achievement of results identified Good practices or successful experiences or transferable examples identified	No. of documents/views reporting on improved capacities No. of staff trained	Document and process review Stakeholder interviews Survey of final beneficiaries Analysis of statistical data Analysis of reports Descriptive analysis GAP analysis	Programme & project documents (Project documents/fiches Annual reports Midterm evaluations Financing agreement Programme/Measure Operational Manuals) Questionnaire Semi-structured interview State statistics & labour market statistics EC monitoring reports
10. What factors contributed to progress or delay in the achievement of products and results?				
11. What good practices or successful experiences or transferable examples have been identified?				
12. What is the quality of interventions and results achieved with main project stakeholders?				
13. Have any changes in the overall context in Kosovo affected project implementation and overall results?				

Project efficiency

Main questions:

- To what extent have the project activities been delivered on time, implemented as scheduled with the quality foreseen and in line with the planned financial resources?

Evaluation sub-questions	Judgement criteria	Key performance indicators (KPIs)	Evaluation Methods	Sources of information
14. How efficiently has support been given to the project beneficiaries by the implementing partners?	Views of stakeholders		Document and process review Stakeholder interviews Survey of final beneficiaries Analysis of statistical data Analysis of reports Descriptive analysis GAP analysis	Programme & project documents (Project documents/fiches Annual reports Midterm evaluations Financing agreement/Financial records) Questionnaires Semi-structured interviews State statistics & labour market statistics
15. To what extent have the target population and participants jobseekers taken an active role in implementing the programme? What modes of participation have taken place?				
16. What factors contributed to progress or delay in the achievement of products and results?				
17. What good practices or successful experiences or transferable examples have been identified?				
18. What is the quality of interventions and results achieved with main project stakeholders?				
19. To what extent were activities implemented as scheduled and with the planned financial resources?				

20. Is there any duplication of efforts, including among stakeholders and implementing partners? If not, was the programme so unique in content? If yes, how was this coordinated between coordination bodies/stakeholders or implementing partners, as a tested product or ownership? What was the effectiveness or difference of each approach/case?				
21. What factors contributed to effectiveness or ineffectiveness?				
Sustainability				
Main questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has the Project created conditions for its results and impacts (i.e. strengthened capacities, continuity of use of knowledge, improved practices) to be sustainable beyond their implementation periods? 				
Evaluation sub-questions	Judgement criteria	Key performance indicators (KPIs)	Evaluation Methods	Sources of information
22. Has the Project created conditions to ensure that benefits continue beyond the project activities?	Views of stakeholders		Document and process review	Programme & project documents
23. How has the Project institutionalized overall capacity development efforts so far?			Stakeholder and beneficiary interviews	(Project documents/fiches
24. Has an approach/model been developed that can be further disseminated throughout Kosovo?			Survey of final beneficiaries	Annual reports
25. Is the duration of the current project sufficient to ensure sustainability of the interventions?			Analysis of statistical data	Midterm evaluations
26. Which recommendations can be made to inform future strategies and programmes?			Analysis of reports	Financing agreement)
27. Has the project used modern /innovative approaches to solving issues of unemployment?			Descriptive analysis	Questionnaires
28. How is the project ensuring sustainability of its results and impacts (i.e., strengthened capacities, continuity of use of knowledge, improved practices, etc.)?			Contribution analysis	Semi-structured interviews
29. Do the legal frameworks, policies, and governance structures and processes within which the project operates pose risks that could jeopardize sustainability of project benefits?				State statistics & labour market statistics

30. What is the prospect that the level of stakeholders' ownership will be sufficient to allow for the project benefits to be sustained?				
Stakeholders and Partnership Strategy				
Main questions:				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Was the partnership strategy effective and supportive of achievement of objectives? 				
Evaluation sub-questions	Judgement criteria	Key performance indicators (KPIs)	Evaluation Methods	Sources of information
31. Are the project's objectives and outcomes consistent and supportive of institutional policies and sectoral policies (where relevant)?	Views of stakeholders		Document and process review Stakeholder and beneficiary interviews Questionnaire Analysis of statistical data Analysis of reports Descriptive analysis	Programme & project documents (Project documents/fiches Annual reports Midterm evaluations) Questionnaires Semi-structured interviews
32. To what extent have partnerships been sought and established and synergies created in the delivery of assistance?				
33. To what extent do stakeholders support the project's long-term objectives?				
34. Were efficient and mutually-satisfactory cooperation arrangements established between the project team and public institutions? Likewise with the private sector?				
35. Were partners' inputs of quality and timely?				
36. Have partners fully and effectively discharged their responsibilities? Does the project contribute to the overall UN Country Strategy? Have any new partners emerged that were not initially identified?				
37. How has the project implemented its commitments to promote local ownership, alignment, harmonization, management for development results and mutual accountability?				
Theory of Change or Results/Outcome Map				
Main questions:				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What were the main factors leading to the intended outcomes? 				
Evaluation sub-questions	Judgement criteria	Key performance indicators (KPIs)	Evaluation Methods	Sources of information
38. Was the Theory of Change/project logic feasible and was it realistic?	Views of stakeholders	Level of positive outcomes.	Document and process review	Programme & project documents

39. Were assumptions, factors and risks sufficiently taken into consideration?		Affirmation of the design	Stakeholder and beneficiary interviews Questionnaire Analysis of statistical data Analysis of reports Descriptive analysis	(Project documents/fiches Annual reports Midterm evaluations Financing agreement) Semi-structured interviews
Human rights				
Main questions:				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent have human rights, gender equality, the rights of vulnerable persons and ethnic minorities been considered in the project design and to what extent have they been reflected in the implementation of the project? 				
Evaluation questions	Judgement criteria	Key performance indicators (KPIs)	Evaluation Methods	Sources of information
40. To what extent have the poor, minority groups, the physically disadvantaged, women and other marginalized or vulnerable groups benefited from the project?			Document and process review Stakeholder and beneficiary interviews Questionnaire Analysis of statistical data Analysis of reports Descriptive analysis	Programme & project documents (Project documents/fiches Annual reports Midterm Evaluations Financing agreement) Semi-structured interviews
Gender				
41. To what extent have gender equality and the empowerment of women been addressed in the design, implementation, and monitoring of the project?	Views of stakeholders	Good gender balance	Document and process review Stakeholder and beneficiary interviews Questionnaire Analysis of statistical data Analysis of reports Descriptive analysis	Programme & project documents (Project documents/fiches Annual reports Midterm evaluations Financing agreement) Semi-structured interviews

APPENDIX 2. LIST OF PERSONS/ORGANIZATIONS CONSULTED

07 OCT 2022				
TIME	Name & Surname	Position	Contact Details	Meeting Venue
09:30 10:30	Muhamet Klinaku	Director of Department of Active Labour Market Measures	044 402 403 muhamet.klinaku@rks-gov.net	Employment Agency
10 OCT 2022				
TIME	Name & Surname	Position	Contact Details	Meeting Venue
10:00 11:00	Mentor Morina	Director of Department of Social Policy and Families (DSPF) Ministry of Finance Labour and Transfer/ Department of Social Policy and Families	044 159 715 Mentor.morina@rks-gov.net	Meeting at DSPF Offices
13:00 14:00	Jehone Rexha	Director of EA at Ministry of Finance Labour and Transfers /Employment Agency	044121 567 jehona.rexha@rks-gov.net	Employment Agency
15:00 16:00	Vehbi Mujku	Director of Center for Social Labour Services	044 130 742 vebimujku@gmail.com	Office for Social and Labour Services
11 OCT 2022				
TIME	Name & Surname	Position	Contact Details	Meeting Venue
08:30 09:30	Besim I. Zogaj	Employment Counsellor at Employment Office Prishtina/Priština	049 804 004 besim.i.zogaj@rks-gov.net	Employment Center in Prishtina/Priština
10:30 11:30	Sinan Gashi	Director of Vocational Training Center Prizren	044812762 sinan.gashi@rks-gov.net	VTC Center in Prizren
15:45 16:45	Safet Fazliu	Chief Executive Officer of D&D Business Support Centre	044 570 021 safet.fazliu@gmail.com	D&D Offices in Prishtina/Priština
12 OCT 2022				
TIME	Name & Surname	Position	Contact Details	Meeting Venue
11:00 12:00	Fahrije Ternava Sheremeti	General Secretary at Ministry of Internal Affairs Department of Reintegration	044 675 095 fahrije.ternava@rks-gov.net	Ministry of internal Affairs
14:00 15:00	Besmir Sailhu	Head of Employment at Employment Office Mitrovica	049 114 603 besmir.salihu@rks-gov.net	Employment Office in Mitrovica
13 OCT 2022				

TIME	Name & Surname	Position	Contact Details	Meeting Venue
15:00 16:00	Venera Fusha	Coordinator at PMD – GIZ, Kosovo	044 576 262 Venera.fusha@giz.de	GIZ Offices
17 OCT 2022				
TIME	Name & Surname	Position	Contact Details	Meeting Venue
13:00 14:00	Basrie Beka	Senior Official for vocational education and employment and business at Ministry of Internal Affairs Department of Reintegration	044 562 222 basrie.beka@rks-gov.net	Ministry of Internal Affairs – Department for Reintegration
19 OCT 2022				
11:00 12:00	Emond Gashi	Director at GIZ DIMAK Kosovo German Information Centre for Migration, Vocational Training and Career Migration for Development Programme	044 576 262 edmon.gashi@giz.de	online via MS Teams.
2 NOV 2022				
	Bardha Keqa	Programme Associate UNHCR Office of the Chief of Mission in Kosovo	+383 45 226 000 keqa@unhcr.org	online via MS Teams

APPENDIX 3. LIST OF DOCUMENTS/LITERATURE REVIEWED

2015 Operational manual for provision of employment services.

2016 Skills needs assessment: Identifying employers' needs in six economic sectors in Kosovo

Active Labour Market Programmes 2. Scheme descriptions.

(GIZ) GmbH, 2019. ACTIVE LABOUR MARKET MEASURES: Are they effective tools for addressing Kosovo's skills and employment challenges?

Cooperation agreement in the field of reintegration of repatriated persons in active labour market programs between Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA), Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare (MLSW) and United Nations Development Program (UNDP)

Hristoforova, Teodora and Koro, Levent, 2016, Operational guidelines for the implementation of the self-employment programme, Mitrovica region, Version 2.

Kavanagh, Frank, 2014, The Development of an Institutional Structure, Framework and Model of Staff Training for the Public Employment Service (PES) of Kosovo.

Kavanagh, Frank. 2017, The Implementation and Impact of the Self-Employment programme (SEP) in Kosovo (2015-2016). UNDP Active Labour Market Programme 2 Project. Evaluation Report (final).

Mukkavilli, Seetharam, 2008, Evaluation of Active Labour Market Programme for Youth in Kosovo

National Strategy for sustainable reintegration of repatriated persons in Kosovo 2018-2022.

Republic of Kosovo, Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare, 2014: operational manual for on-the-job training; operational manual for internship scheme; operational manual for wage subsidy, Version 1.

RINVEST, 2019: Employment and Labour Market Analysis Kosovo

Sustainable reintegration of repatriated persons into the labour market through UNDP's Active Labour Market measures during 2019-2020, External Evaluation of the Implementation and Impact of the project: Active Labour Market Programmes 2

UNDP, ALMP for Youth, 2014, Final report 2005 – 2013

UNDP, ALMP2, 2015, Annual Progress Report April-December 2014.

UNDP, ALMP2, 2016, Annual Progress Report January-December 2015.

UNDP, ALMP2, 2016, Progress Evaluation Report of the Wage Subsidy Scheme, 2015-2016.

UNDP, ALMP2, 2017, Annual Progress Report January-December 2016.

UNDP, ALMP2, 2018, Annual Progress Report January-December 2017.

UNDP, ALMP2, 2019, Annual Progress Report January-December 2018.

UNDP, ALMP2, 2020, Annual Progress Report January-December 2019.

UNDP, ALMP2, 2021, Annual Progress Report January-December 2020.

UNDP, ALMP2, 2021, Annual Progress Report January-June 2021.

UNDP Kosovo, Active Labour Market programmes 2, Project Document 2014-2017.

UNDP Kosovo, Active Labour Market programmes 2, Project Document 2018-2021.

UNDP Kosovo, Active Labour Market programmes 2, Project Document 2019-2021.

UNDP's Work in Implementing Active Labour Market programmes in Kosovo (2005-2021), Executive Summary.

Kosovo 2021 Progress report, COM (2021) 644.

APPENDIX 4. SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRES

Information and data derived from the phone interviews with final beneficiaries will be filled in. If it is decided to use it as an online survey tool for final beneficiaries, they will receive an e-mail with request and instructions.

General information

- 1.Age
- 2.Gender
- 3.Area of residence
- 4.Have you been repatriated?
 - Yes
 - No
- 5.Are you a representative of any of the minority communities?
 - Yes
 - No
- 6.Educational degree
 - No official education

- Primary education
- Secondary education
- Higher education
- Postgraduate
- Other

7. In what year did you benefit from the project?

8. Through which active labour market measure have you benefited?

- On-the-job Training
- The Wage Subsidy Programme
- The Self-Employment Programme
- Internship scheme
- Training at Vocational Training Centres
- Entrepreneurship training for the SEP

OJT

1. When did you start your OJT?

2. In what field have you attended the training?

- Food processing and packaging industries:
- ICT in addition to outsourcing business processes and the customer support centre sector
- Construction
- Metalworking industry
- Textile industry
- Wood processing industry
- Other

3. Have you been certified by the training?

- Yes
- No

4. How would you rate the training received, on a scale from 1 to 5 (where 1 is not useful at all, and 5 is extremely useful)?

5. What else would you recommend in the training that would have helped you more in your employment? Please list below any module, topic, or method.

6. Please rate the OJT application procedure, on a scale from 1 to 5 (where 1 is very difficult, and 5 very easy)?

7. Please rate the mediation procedure (Employment Agency), on a scale from 1 to 5 (where 1 is very difficult, and 5 very easy)

8. Please rate the Employment Agency's assistance, on a scale from 1 to 5 (where 1 is very poor, and 5 very good)

9. Please indicate the business sector that you have applied for/accomplished

10. What was your employment status before applying for the OJT measure?

- Employed
- Self-employed
- Unemployed
- Social Assistance

11. How many months has your OJT lasted?

12. In which business sector is this company?

- Food processing and packaging industry
- Information and Communication Technology
- Construction
- Metal processing industry

- Textile industry
- Wood processing industry
- Auto repair
- Other crafts

13. Have you finished your OJT period?

- Yes
- No

14. Have you had to wait until you found another job/self-employment?

- No, I immediately found another job
- I had to wait 0-3 months
- I had to wait 4-6 month
- More than 6 months

15. If employed at a different company, do you think that the OJT has had an impact in attaining this employment?

- Yes
- No

16. Do you have a contract now with your employer?

- Yes
- No

17. Prior to being assigned your OJT, did you have a Needs Assessment (consultation at EO) session?

- Yes
- No

18. Have you received consultancy sessions for career guidance and soft skills development?

- Yes
- No

19. In your opinion, were the consultancy sessions successful?

- Yes
- No

20. What is your plan for the future, in regard to employment?

- Keep my current job
- Keep looking for a job
- Start a business and become self-employed
- More training
- Social Assistance

21. On a scale of 1 – 3 (where 1 is the least, and 3 is the most), how important were the following parts of the On-the-Job Training as Active Labour Measures?

- Training
- Compensation
- Consultancy (all types)

22. Please mention any recommendation for the following parts of the On-the-Job Training Active Labour Measure:

- Training (if any)
- Compensation
- Consultancy (if any)

23. What else would you recommend in the training that would have helped you more in your employment? Please list below any module, topic, or method.

1. Please rate the WS application procedure, on a scale from 1 to 5 (where 1 is very difficult, and 5 very easy??
2. Please rate the mediation procedure (Employment Agency), on a scale from 1 to 5 (where 1 is very difficult, and 5 very easy)
3. Please rate the Employment Agency's assistance, on a scale from 1 to 5 (where 1 is very poor, and 5 very good)
4. Please indicate the business sector that you have applied for/accomplished
5. What was your employment status before applying for the WS measure?
 - Employed
 - Self-employed
 - Unemployed
 - Social Assistance
6. When did you start your WS?
7. How many months has your WS lasted?
8. In which business sector is the company?
 - Food processing and packaging industry
 - Information and Communication Technology
 - Construction
 - Metal processing industry
 - Textile industry
 - Wood processing industry
 - Auto repair
 - Other crafts
9. Have you finished your WS period?
 - Yes
 - No
10. Are you currently employed in the same or another company?
 - Same company, same job
 - Same company, different job
 - Different company, same job
 - Different company, different job
 - Not employed
11. If unemployed, are you registered with KEA, as unemployed seeking a job?
 - Yes
 - No
12. Do you have a contract now with your employer?
 - Yes
 - No
13. Prior to being assigned in your WS, did you have a Needs Assessment (consultation at EO) session?
 - Yes
 - No
14. Have you received consultancy sessions for career guidance and soft skills development?
 - Yes
 - No
15. In your opinion, were the consultancy sessions successful?
 - Yes
 - No

16. What is your plan for the future, in regard to employment?

- Keep my current job
- Keep looking for a job
- Start a business and become self-employed
- More training
- Social Assistance

17. On a scale of 1 – 3 (where 1 is the least, and 3 is the most), how important were the following parts of the WS as Active Labour Measures?

- Working Conditions
- Compensation
- Consultancy (all types)

18. Please mention any recommendation for the following parts of the On-the-Job Training Active Labour Measure:

- Compensation
- Consultancy (if any)

SEP

1. Please rate the SEP application procedure, on a scale from 1 to 5 (where 1 is very difficult, and 5 very easy)

2. Please rate the mediation procedure (Employment Agency), on a scale from 1 to 5 (where 1 is very difficult, and 5 very easy)

3. Please rate the Employment Agency's assistance, on a scale from 1 to 5 (where 1 is very poor, and 5 very good)

4. Please indicate the business sector that you have applied for/accomplished

5. What was your employment status before applying for the SEP measure?

- Employed
- Self-employed
- Unemployed
- Social Assistance

6. When did you start your SEP?

7. Did you receive consultancy on business plan development?

- Yes
- No

8. What was the amount invested?

9. What was the investment for?

- Equipment/Tools
- Rent
- Repair
- Transport
- Stock

10. Did you have to invest additional resources?

11. How much time was needed for you to start operating commercially, from the date you received the grant, tools and equipment?

12. Is your business still operational?

- Yes
- No

13. Where do you conduct your business?

- Home Online
- Office/Workshop

- Mobile
 - Did not start – if so please explain
14. Do you still have in your possession tools and equipment you were given?
- Yes
 - No
15. Does your business generate a profit?
- Yes
 - No
16. Do you currently have any employees?
- Yes
 - No
17. If yes, how many?
18. If no, have you previously had any employees?
19. Prior to business plan submission, did you have a Needs Assessment (consultation at EO) session?
- Yes
 - No
20. Have you received consultancy sessions during the establishment and development of your business?
- Yes
 - No
21. How would you rate the business consultancy services, on a scale of 1 to 5 (where 1 is not useful at all, and 5 is extremely useful)?
22. On a scale of 1 – 3 (where 1 is the least, and 3 is the most), how important were the following parts of the Self-employment as Active Labour Measures:
- Training
 - Tools & Equipment
 - Consultancy
23. Do you think it would be effective to apply online for SEP?
- Yes
 - No
24. Do you think it would be effective to receive online training consultations?
- Yes
 - No
25. Do you think there could be a more environmental approach (energy efficiency etc)?
- Yes
 - No
26. What is your plan for the future, in regard to employment?
- Keep my current job
 - Keep looking for a job
 - Start a business and become self-employed
 - More training
 - Social Assistance

Internship programme

1. Age:

- 18-24
- 24-35
- 35+

2. Gender:
 - Male
 - Female
3. Area of residence:
 - Rural
 - Urban
4. Have you been repatriated?
 - Yes
 - No
5. Are you a representative of any of the minority communities?
 - Yes
 - No
6. Educational degree:
 - Secondary education
 - Vocational Training Centre
 - Vocational Training school
 - Other
7. In which year did you benefit from the project?
8. What was the duration of your internship?
 - 2 months
 - 6 months
 - 1 year
 - Other
9. What were your reasons for participation in the internship program?
 - to gain experience
 - to develop skills
 - to earn income
10. In which sector have you attended the internship program?
 - Private
 - Public
11. In what field have you attended the internship program?
 - Food processing and packaging industries
 - ICT/outsourcing business processes /customer support
 - Construction
 - Metalworking industry
 - Textile industry
 - Wood processing industry
 - Other
12. Have you completed your internship?
 - Yes
 - No
13. How would you rate the Internship programme, on a scale from 1 to 5 (where 1 is not useful at all, and 5 is extremely useful)?
14. What was your employment status before applying for the internship program?
 - Employed
 - Self-employed
 - Unemployed

- Social Assistance
15. Did you have a supervisor/trainer assigned by your employer during your internship?
- Yes
 - No
16. Have you been monitored by an EO during the Internship?
- Yes
 - No
17. What was your status upon completion of the scheme?
- Retained by the same employer without interruption
 - Returned to the same employer after a short break
 - Started with another company
 - Continuing as unemployed
 - Other
18. What is your current employment status?
- Employed full time
 - Employed part time
 - Self employed
 - Seasonal work
 - Working with the same employer as when the scheme was completed
19. What is the main benefit from participation in the scheme?
- work experience
 - skill development
 - additional income
 - enhanced network of contacts for employment purposes
 - increased self-confidence
20. Do you have a contract now with your employer?
- Yes
 - No
21. What is your plan for the future, in regard to employment?
- Keep my current job
 - Keep looking for a job
 - Start a business and get self-employed
 - More trainings
 - Social Assistance
22. What type of support have you received from the EOs prior to being included in the internship programme?
- Counselling (e.g. on career paths, skills for a specific career, help with job search and preparation for application/interview, etc.)
 - Training at VTC
 - Other
23. Please rate the Employment Agency's assistance, on a scale from 1 to 5 (where 1 is very poor and 5 is very good)
24. What else would you recommend in the internship that would have helped you more in your employment?
25. Please mention any additional recommendation for the Internship programme

APPENDIX 5. STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEW QUESTIONS
MINISTRY OF FINANCE, LABOUR, AND TRANSFERS

Relevance

- 1) Please explain the role of the MFLT in the project?
- 2) To what extent did the MFLT manage the program? Please explain.
- 3) To what extent do ALMM (Active Labour Market Measures) target national and local labour market needs?
- 4) Do you find the institutional capacity-building measures well-tailored to the institutional and policy context in the country?
- 5) How are the unique needs of different target groups/jobseekers taken into consideration?
- 6) How was the design of the measures adequate to the needs?
- 7) Have any changes been made to the project's design during implementation? If yes, did they lead to significant design improvements?
- 8) Did the new economic situation created by the pandemic force the project team to change/improve the objectives, or to redesign the project approach without losing the essential content?
- 9) To what extent has the ALMM project been relevant before, during and after the pandemic? Do you have any ideas for innovative changes around the Active Labour Market Measures project, to increase its impact and efficiency?

Effectiveness & Efficiency

- 10) Do you find the Active Labour Market Program important for the employment sector? If yes, please specify the impact. If not, please describe the changes that could be made to the different capacity-building activities and jobseeker support measures (WS, OJT, SEP)
- 11) Would you change anything in these interventions and measures, to meet the expected outcomes?
- 12) To what extent were the envisaged results achieved? Are there any results/outcomes not achieved? If so, what are the reasons?
- 13) How would you describe the quality of the measures implemented?
- 14) How were the institutional capacity-building measures identified and structured?
- 15) How were the final project beneficiaries defined and approached? Please give specifics per each measure
- 16) What was the budget planning process and was it done in coordination with the relevant implementing partners (DRRP; UNDP, etc.)? Does the financial budget for this project correspond to the needs of the beneficiaries?
- 17) Is the implementation mode efficient? Please explain your answer.
- 18) Please describe the factors influencing the project implementation and impact, both in a positive and negative way.
- 19) How has COVID-19 influenced the project?
- 20) Did any other changes in the Kosovo context influence the project?
- 21) Was there a risk of duplication of specific measures, among the different donors, projects, and stakeholders in the field? If yes, how was it managed?
- 22) What lessons can be learned based on the project's results for each component (self-employment; wage subsidies; job training)?

Sustainability

- 23) Does the legal, strategic and structural context support the project implementation, or are any changes needed?
- 24) Do you feel full ownership of the programme (self-employment, job training and wage subsidy) or do you see it as a UNDP program?
- 25) How would you evaluate the capacity-building measures for setting up the EA provided under the ALMP?
 - highly satisfied

- satisfied
 - neutral
 - unsatisfied
- 26) Do you find that the regional Employment Offices demonstrate enough capacity to implement public services effectively?
- 27) Have you identified any future assistance needed for the Ministry, EA, or regional EO?
- 28) Do you expect the project benefits to continue beyond the project? If yes, how exactly?

Partnership and cooperation

- 29) At policy level, how effectively did the partnership model work – are the outcomes consistent and supportive of the policies of the Ministry?
- 30) How has the project promoted the Ministry's ownership of the achieved results? To what extent does the Ministry support the project's long-term objectives and how do they relate to current priorities?
- 31) At operational level, were the cooperation arrangements established between the project team and the Ministry efficient, timely, and up to standards and expectations?
- 32) Which were the major constraints at operational level? How were these constraints addressed (good practices)?
- 33) What would the Ministry change (modify) in the partnership strategy if starting again? Any lessons learned for future project interventions?

Gender

- 34) How did the Project respond to the gender issue? To what extent has the project promoted positive changes in gender equality and the empowerment of women? Were there any unintended effects?
- 35) What constraints to women's participation have been encountered?
- 36) Which good practices to encourage women's participation could be outlined? How could outreach to women be increased in future interventions?

Human rights

- 37) To what extent have human rights issues been effectively addressed?
- 38) How were the special needs of jobseekers representing minority groups addressed? What constraints to the participation of minority groups have been encountered?
- 39) Which good practices to encourage participation of minority groups could be highlighted? How could outreach be increased in future interventions?

Theory of Change

- 40) Were project assumptions, factors and risks sufficiently taken into consideration?
- 41) How would you assess the risk management process? Any good practices in this respect?

Recommendations for future actions

- 42) What are the new challenges in the labour market (e.g. new vulnerable target groups) and what kind of measures do you think will support its active development (i.e. how could existing measures evolve)? How could they be synchronized with relevant Kosovo strategies and policies?
- 43) How could digitalization influence any future measures?

EMPLOYMENT AGENCY

Relevance

- 44) Please explain the role of the Employment Agency (EA) in the project?
- 45) To what extent did the EA manage the program? Please explain.
- 46) To what extent do ALMM (Active Labour Market Measures) target national and local labour market needs?
- 47) How are the unique needs of different target groups/jobseekers taken into consideration?
- 48) How was the design of the measures adequate to the needs?

- 49) Have any changes been made to the project's design during implementation? If yes, did they lead to significant design improvements?
- 50) Did the economic situation created by the pandemic force the project team to change/improve the objectives, or to redesign the project approach without losing the essential content?
- 51) To what extent has the ALMM project been relevant before, during and after the pandemic? Do you have any ideas for innovative changes around the Active Labour Market Measures project, to increase its impact and efficiency?

Effectiveness & Efficiency

- 52) Do you find Active Labour Market Measures important for the employment sector? If so, please specify the impact. If not, please describe the changes that could be made to the different measures (WS, OJT, SEP, internship).
- 53) Would you change anything in these components, to meet the expected outcomes (self-employment, wage subsidies and job training)?
- 54) To what extent were the envisaged results achieved? Are there any results/outcomes not achieved? If so, what are the reasons?
- 55) How would you describe the quality of the implemented measures?
- 56) How were the final project beneficiaries defined and approached? Please give specifics for each measure.
- 57) What was the budget planning approach and was it done in coordination with the relevant implementing partners (DRRP; UNDP, etc.)? Does the financial budget for this project correspond to the needs of the beneficiaries?
- 58) Is the implementation mode efficient? Please explain your answer.
- 59) Please describe the factors influencing the project implementation and impact, both in a positive and negative way.
- 60) How has COVID-19 influenced the project?
- 61) Did any other changes in the Kosovo context influence the project?
- 62) Was there a risk of duplication of specific measures among the different donors, projects, and stakeholders in the field? If yes, how was it managed?
- 63) What lessons can be learned based on the project's results for each component (self-employment; wage subsidies; job training)?

Sustainability

- 64) Does the legal, strategic and structural context support the project implementation or are any changes needed?
- 65) Do you feel full ownership of the programme (self-employment, job training and wage subsidy) or do you see it as a UNDP program?
- 66) How would you evaluate the capacity-building measures for setting up the EA provided under the ALMP?
 - highly satisfied
 - satisfied
 - neutral
 - unsatisfied
- 67) Do you still have any need for assistance/capacity-building to guarantee the effective functioning of the EA? If yes, please specify.
- 68) Do you find that the regional Employment Offices have enough capacity to implement public services effectively?
- 69) Have you identified any future assistance needed for the regional EO?
- 70) Do you expect the project benefits to continue beyond the project? If yes, how exactly?

Partnership and cooperation

- 71) How has the project promoted EA ownership of the achieved results? To what extent does the Kosovo Employment Agency support the project's long-term objectives and how do they relate to current priorities?
- 72) At operational level, were the cooperation arrangements established between Project Team and the EA efficient, timely, and up to standards and expectations?
- 73) What were the major constraints at operational level? How were these constraints addressed (good practices)?
- 74) What would the EA change (modify) in the partnership strategy if you were starting again? Any lessons learned for future project interventions.

Gender

- 75) How did the Project respond to the gender issue? To what extent has the project promoted positive changes in gender equality and the empowerment of women? Were there any unintended effects?
- 76) What constraints to women's participation have been encountered?
- 77) What good practices to encourage women participation could be highlighted? How could outreach to women be increased in future interventions?

Human rights

- 78) To what extent have human rights issues been effectively addressed?
- 79) How were the special needs of jobseekers representing minority groups addressed? What constraints to participation of minority groups have been encountered?
- 80) What good practices to encourage participation of minority groups could be highlighted? How could outreach be increased in future interventions.?

Theory of Change

- 81) Were project assumptions, factors and risks sufficiently taken into consideration?
- 82) How would you assess the risk management process? Any good practices in this respect?

Recommendations for future actions

- 83) What are the new challenges in the labour market (e.g. new vulnerable target groups) and what kind of measures do you think will support its active development (i.e. how could existing ones could evolve)? How could they be synchronized with the relevant Kosovo strategies and policies?
- 84) How could digitalization influence any future measures?

MINISTRY OF INTERNAL AFFAIRS

Relevance

- 1) Please explain the role of the MIA (DRRP – Department for Reintegration of Repatriated Persons) in the project?
- 2) Please explain the Needs Assessment process for repatriated persons and the reintegration process.
- 3) Was the design of the measures adequate for the needs?
- 4) How is economic integration implemented through the repatriated persons program?
- 5) Have any changes been made to the project's design during the implementation? If yes, did they lead to significant design improvements?
- 6) Did the new economic situation created by the pandemic force the project team to change/prove the objectives, or to redesign the project approach without losing the essential content?
- 7) To what extent has the ALMM project been relevant before, during and after the pandemic? Do you have any ideas for innovative changes around the Active Labour Market Measures project, to increase the impact and efficiency of the project?

- 8) To what extent does the MIA (DRRP), and other relevant departments, if any, directly dealing with the issue of reintegration of repatriated persons) have the capacity (human, financial and institutional) to respond to the needs of repatriated persons?
- 9) What role did local and international organizations have in the process of reintegration of repatriated persons?
- 10) What were the challenges faced by the MIA (DRRP) and how did it manage to fulfil its responsibilities regarding the coordination of the reintegration of repatriated persons?

Effectiveness & Efficiency

- 11) Do you find Active Labour Market Measures important for the reintegration of repatriated persons? If yes, please specify the impact. If not, please describe the changes that could be made for each measure (WS, OJT, SEP, internship).
- 12) Would you change anything in these components, to meet the needs of repatriated persons and expected outcomes (self-employment, wage subsidies and job training)?
- 13) To what extent are the envisaged results achieved? Are there any results/outcomes not achieved? If yes, what are the reasons?
- 14) How would you describe the quality of the implemented measures?
- 15) How were the final project beneficiaries approached?
- 16) What was the budget plan approach and was it done in coordination with the relevant implementing partners (Employment Agency)? Does the financial budget for this project correspond to the needs of the beneficiaries?
- 17) Is the implementation mode efficient? Please explain your answer.
- 18) Please describe the factors influencing the project implementation and impact, both in a positive and negative way.
- 19) Did any other changes in Kosovo's policies on reintegration of repatriated persons influence the project?
- 20) Is there a risk of duplication of specific measures among the different donors, projects, and stakeholders in the field? If yes, how was it managed?
- 21) What lessons can be learned based on the project's results for each component?

Sustainability

- 22) Is the model established under the project suitable for further/future dissemination throughout Kosovo?
- 23) Does the legal, strategic, and structural context support the project implementation, or are any changes needed?
- 24) Do you expect the project benefits to continue beyond the project? If yes, how exactly?
- 25) Do you have any ideas for innovative changes to ALMP2, to increase the impact and the efficiency of the project for the reintegration of the repatriated persons?

Partnership and cooperation

- 26) At policy level, how effectively did the partnership model work? Are the outcomes consistent and supportive of ministerial and sectoral policies?
- 27) How has the project promoted local ownership and mutual accountability? To what extent does the Ministry support the project's long-term objectives, and what are the current priorities in this respect?
- 28) At operational level, were the cooperation arrangements established between the project team and the Ministry efficient, timely, and up to standards and expectations? Which were the major constraints at operational level? How were these constraints addressed (good practices)?
- 29) How was the partnership at local level activated (regional coordinators, MOCR)? Any good practices to be used as a future reference?

- 30) What would the Ministry change (modify) in the partnership strategy if you were starting again?
Any lessons learned for the future project interventions?

Gender

- 31) How did the Project respond to the gender issue? To what extent are gender issues effectively addressed by the project? How were the special needs of repatriated jobseeker women addressed?
- 32) To what extent has the project promoted positive changes in gender equality and the empowerment of women? Were there any unintended effects?
- 33) What constraints to women's participation have been encountered and how were they addressed?
- 34) What good practices to encourage women's participation could be highlighted? How could outreach to repatriated women be increased in future interventions?

Human rights

- 35) To what extent are human rights issues effectively addressed by the project?
- 36) To what extent have poor, minority groups, the physically challenged, women and other disadvantaged and marginalized groups benefited from the project?
- 37) How were the special needs of repatriated jobseekers representing minority groups addressed? Was the minority representation marker appropriately set? Any lessons learned in this respect?

Theory of Change

- 38) Were project assumptions, factors and risks sufficiently taken into consideration?
- 39) How would you assess the risk management process? Any good practices in this respect?

Recommendations for future actions

- 40) What are the new challenges in terms of reintegration of repatriated persons and what kind of measures do you think will support its active development (i.e. how could existing ones evolve)? How could they be synchronized with relevant Kosovo strategies and policies?
- 41) How could digitalization influence any future measures?

PES

- 1) What was the role of the PES in the project? In which components?
- 2) How do you evaluate the components of the programme PES is responsible for:
-needs of the target group?
-effect on the final beneficiaries in the short and long term?
- 3) Have the unique needs of the target groups – jobseekers – been taken into consideration?
- 4) To what extent are gender and other vulnerability issues met by the relevant component?
- 5) What constraints to the participation of women and vulnerable groups have been encountered and how were they addressed? What good practices to encourage participation of women and the vulnerable could be highlighted in project implementation?
- 6) What are the main constraints in the project/component implementation?
- 7) Do you find the technical assistance effective when setting PES?
- 8) Do you find the Operational Manuals well targeted, effective, and easy to implement?
- 9) Do you think the capacity development efforts focusing on your institution effective?
- 10) In your view, how effectively did the partnership model work? Were efficient and mutually-satisfactory cooperation arrangements established between the project team and the PES? Were inputs provided timely and of quality?
- 11) What were the major operational constraints with respect to partnership? How effectively were these addressed (good practices)?
- 12) Is there any duplication of effort among stakeholders and implementing partners at the local level? What would you change in the partnership approach if you were starting again?
- 13) What lessons can be learned based on the project's results in the relevant component?
- 14) Could you describe a good practice you noticed in project/programme implementation?

- 15) Do you share best practices and convenient information about the repatriation programme with other relevant stakeholders (such as reports, data on beneficiaries, etc.)? If so, do you have regular meetings, do you invite external stakeholders to your workshops, or do you respond directly to requests (emails, etc.)?
- 16) Were project assumptions, factors and risks sufficiently accounted for? How were the critical contextual changes (i.e. pandemic, institutional changes, etc.) identified and managed as risks to project implementation and outcomes?
- 17) What factors contributed to project/component results? What were the major negative factors affecting project implementation?
- 18) What changes does the new economic situation – post-Covid and in the current European economic crisis – require in the design of future active labour market measures?
- 19) Do you find that, given the changed situation, the PES role and responsibilities should be changed?
- 20) Do you think that the PES could sustain the results and impacts (i.e. strengthened capacities, continuity of use of knowledge, improved practices, etc.)?
- 21) At the end of the day, has the project managed to promote local ownership in results? What is your one most important takeaway from the project?

VTC

- 1) What was the role of the VTC in the project? In which components?
- 2) How do you evaluate the training provided by Vocational Training Centres under the project in terms of the:
 - needs of the target group – final beneficiaries?
 - the effect on the final beneficiaries in the short and long term?
- 3) Have the unique needs of the target groups – jobseekers – been taken into consideration?
- 4) To what extent are gender and vulnerability issues met by the training at Vocational Training Centres?
- 5) Which constraints on the participation of women and vulnerable groups have been encountered and how were they addressed? Which good practices to encourage participation of women and the vulnerable did you notice in project implementation?
- 6) What were the main constraints in the planning and implementation of training at Vocational Training Centres?
- 7) Do you find the technical assistance provided to VTCs under the project (ToR, manuals, etc.) effective in terms of the VTC role?
- 8) What lessons can be learned based on the implementation and results of training at VTCs?
- 9) Could you describe a good practice you noticed during the implementation of training at VTCs?
- 10) Do you share best practices and convenient information about the repatriation programme with other relevant stakeholders (such as reports, data on beneficiaries, etc.)? If so, do you have regular meetings, do you invite external stakeholders to your workshops, or do you respond directly to requests (emails, etc.)?
- 11) In your view, how effectively did the partnership model work? Were efficient and mutually-satisfactory cooperation arrangements established between the project team and the VTCs? Were inputs timely and of quality?
- 12) What were the major operational constraints with respect to partnership? How effectively were these addressed (good practices)?
- 13) Is there any duplication of effort among stakeholders/implementing partners at the local level? What would you change in the partnership approach if you were starting again?

- 14) Were project assumptions, factors and risks sufficiently accounted for? How were the critical contextual changes (i.e. pandemic, institutional changes, etc.) identified and managed as risks to project implementation and outcomes?
- 15) What factors contributed to project/component results? What were the major negative factors affecting project implementation?
- 16) What changes does the new economic situation – post-Covid and in the current European economic crisis – require in the design of future active labour market measures, particularly for training at VTCs?
- 17) Do you find that, given the changed situation, the VTC role and responsibilities in the labour market should be changed?
- 18) At the end of the day, has the project managed to promote local ownership of results?

OTHER STAKEHOLDERS

- 1) Describe the role of your organization in this project?
- 2) Do you think that ALMM (Active Labour Market Measures) are important for the economy of Kosovo? If so, what impact have they had and how effective have they been? If not, then what changes can be made?
- 3) To what extent do ALMM (Active Labour Market Measures) target the national and local labour market needs?
- 4) How do you assess each programme separately (self-employment; wage subsidy; job training)?
- 5) To what extent do you think the project objectives are still valid and to what extent do they address the problems and needs of the target groups?
- 6) How did the partnership and cooperation model work? What worked best in the partnership approach?
- 7) What best practices have you identified? Do you share them and convenient information about the programme with other relevant stakeholders (such as reports, data on beneficiaries, etc.)? If so, do you have regular meetings, do you invite external stakeholders to your workshops, or do you respond directly to requests (emails, etc.)?
- 8) To what extent do you think the project objectives are still valid and to what extent do they address the problems and needs of the target groups?
- 9) How has the project contributed to the general socio-economic welfare of jobseekers?
- 10) How did the project support participation of women in the labour market and women's empowerment in general? Any good practices to identify?
- 11) How to increase outreach to women and vulnerable persons in future interventions?
- 12) Do you think the relevant central and local administrations are adequately equipped (with human resources, administrative capacity, know-how, technical equipment) to sustain the project results? If not, please propose appropriate measures that could be undertaken.
- 13) Do you have any ideas for innovative changes to the Active Labour Market Measures project, to increase the impact and the efficiency of the project?
- 14) What are the new challenges in the labour market (e.g. new vulnerable target groups) and what kind of measures do you think will support its active development (e.g. how could the existing ones evolve)? How could they be synchronized with relevant Kosovo strategies and policies?
- 15) How do you feel digitalization could influence any future measures?