

Employment and Skills
Observatory of Kosovo



Mainstreaming with Europe: an adult learning strategy for Kosovo (2005 – 2015)



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Glossary

ALST	Adult Learning Strategy Team
BB	Building blocks for adult learning strategy
BSPK	Kosova Confederation of Trade Unions
CARDS	EU financing support mechanism for the Western Balkans
CERT	Certification development group
DANIDA	The Danish Agency for Development Assistance
EAR	European Agency for Reconstruction
ESOK	Employment and Skills Observatory of Kosova
ETF	European Training Foundation
EU	European Union
EU10	10 EU accession countries (1 May 2004)
EU25	Enlarged EU following accession of 10 countries in May 2004
HRD	Human resource development
ICT	Information and communication technologies
INSB	Interim National Skills Board
IOM	International Office of Migration
ISCED	International Standard for Classification of Education
KEC	Kosova Education Center
KOSVET	EU-funded vocational education and training programme
KTA	Kosovo Trust Agency
MEST	Ministry of Education, Science and Technology
MLSW	Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare
MTI	Ministry of Trade and Industry
MOF	Ministry of Finance
NL	The Netherlands
NGO	Non governmental organisation
ODL	Open and distance learning
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
OEK	Kosova Chamber of Commerce
SAP	Stabilisation and Association Process
SME	Small and medium-sized enterprise
SOK	Statistical Office of Kosova
TAC	Tri-partite Advisory Council
UK	United Kingdom
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
UNFPA	United Nations Fund for Population Analysis
UNMIK	United Nations Mission in Kosovo
VET	Vocational education and training
VGC	Vocational guidance and counselling
VTC	Vocational training centre

Preamble

As part of its effort to join mainstream developments in education and training in Europe, key stakeholders involved in human resource development (HRD) in Kosovo have embarked upon a partnership exercise to determine how adult learning could be more strategically addressed. Set against rising poverty, chronic unemployment and an evolving market economy, key stakeholders concerned with Kosovo's human resource development agreed on the need for a more targeted planning process to develop adult learning to meet the needs of Kosovo's changing economy, in particular its SME community, while ensuring the development of a wider range of adult learning services which would enhance labour market access for the unemployed and other vulnerable groups.

Kosovo's adult learning strategy is part of a wider effort in the South Eastern Europe region to develop adult learning services, supported by the EU's European Training Foundation (ETF) and is set against the eventual integration of Western Balkan countries within EU structures.¹ With a mandate to promote EU human resource development policies in South Eastern Europe, the ETF prioritised life long learning as a development field in its work with the Western Balkan countries, in particular adult learning, in response to the EU's 'Lisbon' policy framework (competitive, knowledge-based economy), lifelong learning policy and employment strategy, all designed to meet wider economic and social cohesion goals.

The development of the Kosovo adult learning project had 5 distinct phases.²

Firstly, a cross-stakeholder, dialogue process kicked off in Kosovo with a two-part series of workshops (October 2002, January 2003) whose objectives were a) to raise awareness of key EU policies pertinent to adult learning and towards which Kosovo may be expected to evolve given the EU policy framework for the Western Balkan region and b) to determine interest and motivation of Kosovar stakeholders in taking a more integrated and partnership approach to developing human capital in Kosovo and identification of priorities.

The culmination of the workshops was the establishment of an *Adult Learning Strategy Team* (ALST) with membership drawn from key ministries, the social partners and civil society.

1 Santa Maria da Feira European Council, June 2000

2 The Kosovo adult learning project is paralleled with similar strategy developments supported by ETF in Croatia, Montenegro and Serbia.

Secondly, ALST members undertook two international study visits (NL, UK) in cooperation with fellow stakeholders from neighbouring countries. The study visits had a 'look and learn' objective and concentrated primarily on structures, policies and initiatives that promote adult learning in the host countries.

Thirdly, a stocktaking report on existing policies, partnerships, patterns of participation and quality and sufficiency of the adult learning infrastructure in Kosovo was drawn up.

Fourthly, and based on the stock-taking report, a cross-stakeholder symposium undertook a problem-tree analysis of adult learning resulting in a needs' identification and priority setting for future developments.³

Finally, the outcomes of the symposium were elaborated within a draft adult learning strategy agreed by ALST, followed by further consultation and approval by all stakeholder organisations.

The adult learning strategy has been submitted to the EU with a request for technical and financial support in 2004 for elaboration of a detailed work programme with a view to strategy implementation to begin in 2005.

3 Kosovo's stock-taking and problem tree analysis was presented as a case study on 'good-practice' adult learning strategy development at a regional meeting in Zagreb (19-20 January 2004). Further, the partnership approach to strategy development used by the Adult Learning Strategy Team will feature in a further regional meeting in Montenegro (10-11 May, 2004).

Executive Summary

Borrowing on the principle of the EU's Lisbon strategy - an integrated economic and social policy framework to enhance competitiveness - key stakeholders in human resources development in Kosovo (education, labour, trade & industry, employers, trade unions) have embarked upon a partnership exercise to determine how adult learning could be better adapted to the market transition with specific reference to economic development and social cohesion. In particular, the partnership focused on the changing manpower needs of small and medium enterprises, and policy and structures to meet the education and training needs of the unemployed and other groups marginalised from the labour market. The result is a first strategy paper for adult learning in Kosovo.

The adult learning strategy identifies a number of problems and constraints for effective adult learning development and delivery. It then sets out a series of strategic objectives and measures to address the problems.

A first problem is poor co-ordination between the key stakeholders. Despite common and critical concerns for quality human resource development across all stakeholders there is little or no policy dialogue or synergy. This undermines the potential for more effective and efficient use of public resources, including donor investments, in meeting Kosovo's workforce development needs.

Secondly, major skills' deficits and skill mismatches undermine Kosovo's economic growth and potential for competitiveness. These stem *inter alia* from a) low investment in workforce skills by enterprises, b) difficulties in the offer and take-up of appropriate training for small enterprises, c) a general decline in the value placed on adult learning, and d) large numbers of unskilled job-seekers. Further, learning provision is insufficient and unevenly distributed.

Thirdly, essential components are missing. Poor data and the absence of a labour market and adult learning research base, essential for good policy-making, compound the situation.

Fourthly, finance remains a major problem. Insufficient funding from the state budget, overdependence on short-term donor funding (putting at risk sustainability of current initiatives) and no mechanisms to raise additional domestic funding will frustrate adult learning development and the need to raise participation.

The strategy has a ten-year perspective (2005-2015). It identifies seven objectives that embed the key principles of the EU's Lisbon policy and lifelong learning framework:

- increased knowledge and competences for the market economy;
- a unified policy for adult learning;
- a systemic approach for the development of adult learning;
- sustainable data, information and research base on adult learning;

- increased value of learning and promotion of a learning culture;
- sustainable partnerships in adult learning;
- improved financial resources for adult learning.

To improve the skills' base, the strategy proposes two parallel development lines. Firstly, basic skills. The global knowledge economy and information age is now impacting on Kosovo. Kosovo will require higher levels of basic skills, both generic and vocational. The second addresses upgrading workforce skills to meet the demands of the market economy.

The strategy sets out a process for unifying policy approaches of different ministries and social partners to adult learning through the development of a common policy building and implementation framework. Capacity building of stakeholders is also included.

It adopts a systemic approach by outlining a series of integrated actions to put in place essential components of the learning system, including a research base, that are lacking or only partially covered (e.g. an integrated system of vocational qualifications, a system to recognise prior learning, information, guidance and counselling, in-service training of professionals, quality assurance, open and flexible learning opportunities, new data sets, better information sourcing from labour market and adult learning research). These actions will build on existing initiatives and facilitate the development of a well-articulated, functioning adult learning system.

Raising participation in learning through public awareness raising initiatives is proposed to increase support for investment in skills and to promote a learning culture.

To meet these strategic objectives, importance is given to a number of fundamental building blocks: working in partnership; increasing the aggregate level of funding for adult learning; and sharing in European debate and exchange.

The strategy recommends that employment, adult learning and wider lifelong learning issues be taken forward by a national, tri-partite partnership to include civil society: National Economic and Human Resource Development Council. This body would act as the primary policy forum for economic, employment and manpower development in Kosovo and ensure an integrated policy framework (economic, employment, education, social) vital for improving the manpower skills' base, developing entrepreneurship, enhancing employability and tackling inequalities in access to training and jobs, particularly of minorities and women.

In conclusion, the paper refers to the Lisbon policy and EU employment strategy and the objective of 'more and better jobs' towards which Kosovo will need to evolve given signals by the European Council for future accession of the Western Balkan countries. It advises that orientation, alignment and integration of economic, employment, human resources, and social policies in the early stages of market reform in Kosovo will significantly assist Kosovo's preparations for eventual EU integration.

Part 1

Introduction

1. A strategy for adult learning

- 1.1. This document outlines an initial adult learning strategy for Kosovo for the period 2005 to 2015. It provides a justification for the focus on adult learning that will be important for the development of relevant knowledge and competences for sustaining economic growth, the development and competitiveness of Kosovar enterprises in the new market economy and promoting employability. In addition, the adult learning strategy underlines the importance of measures to address specific population segments that are disproportionately affected by long-term unemployment and social exclusion. In so doing, the strategy aims to contribute to greater economic and social cohesion in Kosovo and to reducing poverty levels.
- 1.2. Although human development is recognised as being important by the Kosovar authorities, adult learning has not yet become a policy priority of the government. There is no strategy for its development. Responses are ad hoc and donor driven. Funding is inadequate. This situation stems from a failure on the part of Government to recognise the importance of human resources development for economic and social cohesion.
- 1.3. This document argues the case for substantial policy intervention in adult learning as a response to the developing market economy, chronic unemployment, the privatisation process and the rapid increase in new start-up enterprises. It additionally provides a 'catch-up' framework for Kosovo over a 10-year period to enable it eventually to share in the benefits of the global knowledge economy and the information age.
- 1.4. Given the worst employment situation in the Western Balkans, the largest proportion of young people (relative to the size of the population flowing into the labour market each year⁴) and the highest level of income poverty in South Eastern Europe,⁵ employment intensive growth is critical for Kosovo's survival and prosperity in the twenty-first century. Through enabling the workforce to acquire employability skills (including entrepreneurial and information and communication technology skills), developments in adult learning will support the goals of increasing economic competitiveness and employment growth. The quality of Kosovo's human resources, both young people entering the labour market and the existing workforce, will be a determining factor in Kosovo's ability to share in the

4 Although problems of reliability and comparability of data remain, country specific population, unemployment and employment data for the Western Balkans suggests that Kosovo has the highest percentage of the population aged between 0-19 (approximately 40.5%) and the highest unemployment rate (57%) (see, [Central and Eastern Europe: Key Indicators for vocational education and training. ETE. \(2002\)](#))

5 Although measuring poverty is specific to individual countries, Kosovo also appears to have one of the highest levels of income poverty in the Western Balkans, if not the highest. See World Bank (2001). [Kosovo Poverty Assessment](#). Volume II. report N.233390-KOS. pp 7-8

benefits of the global knowledge economy and technology age which is based on the exploitation of ideas and technology, rather than on the availability of natural resources or low wages.

- 1.5. A decade of economic repression followed by the damage and destruction of war, economic collapse, social malaise and large-scale migration has had a devastating impact on the economy, community cooperation, poverty levels, health and education. Gender inequalities in the labour market and in access to education are particularly worrying.
- 1.6. A UNDP report highlights the importance of human development for bringing Kosovo closer to the standards enjoyed elsewhere in Europe. The report reinforces the message that more needs to be done to develop a more democratic and open society, to continue to promote the integration of minority communities into mainstream social, economic and political life and to provide equal opportunities for women and men.⁶
- 1.7. The UNDP report argues for more investment in education, from pre-school age, through the school years by improving enrolment rates, and supporting adult education, lifelong learning and tackling illiteracy.
- 1.8. For economic recovery and sustainability, the report emphasises the need to target support on specific sectors such as telecommunications, transport and energy, to identify new requirements and to build on comparative advantages. Other issues relating to health and improving the environment are also covered.
- 1.9. The adult learning strategy presented in this paper, with its focus on knowledge and employability skills, will contribute to meeting these objectives.
- 1.10. This paper aims to fill an important gap in strategic planning for human resources development in Kosovo. It analyses the problems, outlines a series of strategic objectives, identifies principles and support measures for substantially improving the capacity of Kosovo's workforce to adapt to the market economy.
- 1.11. The paper identifies key areas for the development of a high quality adult learning system over the next decade. In so doing, it aims to also contribute to economic regeneration and social cohesion and the strengthening of democracy. It will also provide initial suggestions for financial support from interested donors for human capital development, as well as consideration of co-finance mechanisms.

6 Human Development Report for Kosovo. UNDP. (2002)

2. Closer integration with the EU and the region of South East Europe

2.1. Although Kosovo's political status is unresolved and whatever the final solution, the relationship with the EU is set to be an important factor.⁷ The adult learning strategy is therefore drawn up with specific reference to a number of core EU policies: economic, social, employment and human resources.

Economic and social policy

2.2. The adult learning strategy is designed to enable Kosovo to gradually align its own development with the European Union's strategic goal for the next decade "to become the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world, capable of sustainable economic growth and more and better jobs and greater social cohesion".⁸ Borrowing on the principle of 'Lisbon' for an integrated economic and social policy framework, the adult learning strategy will attempt to bring together a number of economic and social policy areas to enhance competitiveness and social cohesion as a response to the challenge of reforms in adult learning.

2.3. That said, the adult learning strategy respects the specific economic and social circumstances of Kosovo and the need to build on reforms that have already been initiated or are planned, at its own pace.

Employment policy

2.4. The adult learning strategy takes account of the four pillars of the European employment strategy (employability, adaptability, entrepreneurship and equal opportunities). In view of Kosovo's extremely high unemployment level (57%)⁹, industrial reform plans, dynamic small enterprise sector and the need to ensure equal access to employment for men and women, all four pillars are of immediate relevance to Kosovo.

- **employability**: a recent report by an international peer review team¹⁰ stresses that the employability of the Kosovar workforce would be a key element in the country's shift to a market economy, to increasing the competitiveness of its enterprises and ensuring a broader socio-economic development;¹¹

7 Financial Times. [Farewell Yugoslavia](#). Comment and Analysis. 31 January 2003.

8 [Presidency Conclusions](#), Lisbon European Council. March 2000.

9 Determining just how many people are unemployed in Kosovo is no easy task. Snap-shot surveys provide some indication as to what is happening on the labour market. This figure is taken from the 2001 [Labour Force Survey](#) (Statistics Office of Kosovo). More recent data provides more optimistic data with unemployment at just under 50% (Rinvest (2003): [Labour Market and Unemployment in Kosovo](#). Draft Research Report. Institute for Development Research. Prishtinë. January 2003).

10 [Employability in Kosovo](#). Employment and Skills Observatory of Kosova Prishtina April 2003.

11 *ibid.* employability is defined as "the knowledge, skills and attitudes that enhance one's opportunities for access to and sustainability within the labour market".

- **adaptability:** increasing the ability of enterprises in Kosovo, particularly large socially-owned enterprises, and their employees to adapt (adaptability) to changing market conditions will be a critical issue in Kosovo's privatization process will be an important factor in the industrial reform effort;
- **entrepreneurship:** Kosovo's small business environment is already demonstrating the fruits of a dynamic, entrepreneurial culture. Some 32,098 small and medium sized enterprises are now registered accounting for 97% of all enterprise activity in Kosovo. These employ approximately 69,222 workers.¹² There is clearly significant employment creation potential in the SME area and efforts in promoting small businesses should not slacken. In this regard, the adult learning strategy highlights entrepreneurship for adults and the development of skills for small businesses as the growth and survival of the growing stock of small businesses is essential for Kosovo's economic prosperity. In this connection, the European Union's Charter for Small Enterprises, which is being adopted by Kosovo under the auspices of the Ministry of Trade and Industry, provides a useful reference and development framework;
- **equal opportunities:** with an estimated 63% of women out of work¹³, there is considerable work to be done to ensure better equity in the labour market for women. Increasing equal opportunities for women and men to access jobs and training opportunities is essential if "the current levels of gender-based inequalities in the economy" and among the unemployed are to be reduced.¹⁴ More specific attention is required for employment of minorities that is a key equity concern. The adult learning strategy puts equal opportunities as a central priority.

Lifelong learning

- 2.5. A key component of the Lisbon strategy is the EU's lifelong learning policy framework for transforming education and training systems to cope with increasing demand with fast-changing economic and technological developments.¹⁵ The lifelong learning policy is based on six building blocks: working in partnership, understanding the demand for learning and the needs of learners, adequate resourcing, facilitating access, creating a culture of learning and striving for excellence.
- 2.6. The adult learning strategy will establish one essential pillar of a broader lifelong learning process presently being developed by a working group supported by the EU KOSVET Programme. These features are incorporated within the Kosovo adult learning strategy.

12 All data provided by Ministry of Trade and Industry, Directorate for Private Sector Development and Investment, April 2004.

13 op cit. Riinvest (2003).

14 op cit. UNDP (2002). p.9.

15 Outlined in European Commission's Communication, [Making a European Area of Lifelong Learning a Reality](#) (2001).

3. Key challenges

- 3.1 Four challenges are addressed in the strategy.
- 3.2 Firstly, it aims to support economic growth through investing in manpower knowledge and skills that will enable enterprises and workers to compete and adapt to change in the market economy.
- 3.3 Secondly, in the face of unacceptably high levels of unemployment and socio-economic hardships, the strategy aims to ensure that people currently locked out of work and at risk of permanent social and economic exclusion acquire employability skills to increase their chances of obtaining and sustaining employment. In particular, programmes targeted at specific social groups: women, minority communities, people with disabilities, war veterans and returnees who are severely affected by unemployment and economic and social hardship - will be needed to ensure that they too have the opportunity to acquire employability skills that will help them find employment.
- 3.4 Thirdly, the strategy is set within the wider perspective of the Stabilisation and Association process or SAP (EU policy framework for South Eastern Europe) to achieve the fullest possible integration of the Western Balkan countries into the political and economic mainstream of Europe. This includes cooperation between Kosovo and neighbouring countries in the region. Cooperation with Western Balkan neighbours and the EU25 is therefore a key feature of the strategy.
- 3.5 Finally, there is the question of relevance of 'Lisbon' to Kosovo. The strategy takes into account that over the next decade the global knowledge and technology-based economy will increasingly impact on Kosovo's domestic economy and society.
- 3.6 Some specific skills, identified in the Lisbon strategy, are emphasised in the adult learning strategy for Kosovo. Importance is given to basic skills, both traditional skills of literacy and numeracy and to a range of new basic skills (see paras 11.3 - 11.4 below).
- 3.7 Information and communication technologies are stressed because they bring several benefits. Not only do they have substantial potential for business growth through, for example, the development of e-commerce, they also offer enormous scope for the development of flexible learning opportunities for adults, in open learning centres in enterprises and in the community. In addition, the acquisition of ICT skills considerably increases the likelihood of obtaining employment. Ensuring that the whole workforce, not just the privileged few, have access to ICT skills will be vital in Kosovo to counter the risk of the digital divide exacerbating existing levels of social exclusion.

4. Partnership and dialogue

- 4.1 Given the complexity and range of issues that the adult learning strategy will address, including the number of interest groups or stakeholders in human resource development in Kosovo, it was essential that the strategy building process be inclusive and balanced in terms of specific interest areas of the range of stakeholders.
- 4.2 To this end a number of cross-stakeholder meetings were held.
- 4.3 Firstly, a kick-off meeting and workshop in October 2002 considered how adult learning requirements for Kosovo would be a function of economic and social policies set against growing market competitiveness (local, regional and European levels). Further, given the range of different interest groups or stakeholders in adult learning, the workshop addressed the interests, responsibilities and perspectives of each of the stakeholders to adult learning in Kosovo. An exchange of roles between stakeholders in the workshop allowed for a better understanding of the concerns and responsibilities between stakeholders and engendered a clearer appreciation of the 'what, why and how' issues for adult learning of each of the stakeholders.
- 4.4 A second workshop in January 2003 concentrated on adult learning case studies from Poland and former German Democratic Republic with particular reference to industrial downsizing. The case studies demonstrated a number of features of particular interest to the stakeholder group:
- a) *funding*: financing job creation and retraining of redundant workers as a central feature of privatization strategy and process;
 - b) *inclusive process*: the importance of good social dialogue and consensus building between the various actors involved in economic reconstruction, in particular the role of the trade unions;
 - c) *stakeholder engagement in industrial restructuring*: the sequencing, responsibility and degree of involvement of stakeholders in the privatisation of an enterprise.
 - d) *partnership*: consensus that adult learning in Kosovo should be developed on stakeholder partnership based on cooperation, consensus and commitment by all stakeholders.¹⁶

16 For more detail on the stakeholder meetings and workshops see, Promoting Adult Learning in Kosovo: stakeholder cooperation. European Training Foundation. Pristina. (2003).

- 4.5 The approach to adult learning that is adopted in this strategy is based on dialogue, consensus and partnership between the main Kosovar stakeholders (the Ministries of Education, Sport and Technology, Labour and Social Welfare and Trade and Industry, KTA on privatisation, the social partners through the Kosova Chamber of Commerce (OEK) and the Federation of Trades Unions of Kosova (BSPK) and civil society represented by the Kosovo Education Council (KEC)). The strategy borrows on key issues from the stakeholder meetings and workshops (October, 2003, January 2004) and was elaborated in detail at a strategy-planning meeting in December 2003.
- 4.6 In addition, the strategy has been informed by the stocktaking exercise involving all stakeholders which was based on discussions with stakeholders and relevant literature.¹⁷
- 4.7 Working in partnership was a fundamental principle of developing this strategy and will be critical to its successful implementation.
- 4.8 Finally, the strategy is firmly rooted in existing policies and development orientations of the stakeholders. The strategy aims to align these, insofar as possible, with the mainstream economic, employment and social policies of the Lisbon framework. In so doing, the adult learning strategy proposed strives to meet the dual aims of promoting the economic and social development of Kosovo within the wider perspective of future integration with the European Union.
- 4.9 The stakeholder group approved the draft strategy in March 2004.

5. The case for adult learning

5.1 Kosovo at a crossroads

- 5.1.1 After a decade of economic and social oppression, a war and at the beginning of the twenty-first century, the Kosovo authorities face major economic and social challenges as they strive to restructure and build a competitive market driven economy and a democratic society. Faced with the imminent closure or privatisation of public or socially owned companies that will exacerbate already chronic unemployment levels, safeguarding as many jobs as possible, creating jobs and developing human resources will be critically important.
- 5.1.2 The challenges are daunting. With 36% of the 15-64 year-old working population in employment, a substantial grey economy (of approximately 20%)¹⁸ and very high unemployment rate (57%, Labour Force Survey data recognized by MLSW), employment intensive growth is essential if Kosovo is to provide employment in

17 Pupovci, D. (2003). *Adult learning in Kosova - stocktaking report*. ESOK. Prishtina.

18 Riinvest (2002). *Households' Survey*. Riinvest. Prishtina. December 2002.

the future for the majority of its citizens. With more than half of the population living in poverty and 12% of them living in extreme poverty¹⁹, getting Kosovo back to work is vital. However, major skills deficits in the adult population and young people entering the labour market and skill mismatches will put at risk wider efforts to grow the market economy and build a more cohesive society in the absence of a policy to develop Kosovo's human resources.

5.2 *Need for and scope of adult learning*

5.2.1 The Ministry of Education, Science and Technology's main policy thrust in general education and vocational education has been to tackle reforms to the formal system for young people. These reforms are of major importance. Investing in Kosovo's young people and ensuring that they acquire skills and knowledge relevant to the market economy and to the global knowledge economy is essential. Some 33% of the population is under 15 and over 50% under 25 years.

5.2.2 However, the impact of initial education and vocational education reforms will not begin to filter through in terms of higher workforce skills for a long time. In transitional economies adult learning is important to enable the shift from economic recovery to economic growth to take place in the short to medium term. Urgent action is, therefore, needed to tackle the poor level and quality of skills of people already in the labour market, including young people who have left full-time education.

5.2.3 Adult learning includes learning that takes place in formal institutions that leads to a qualification. It also includes non-formal structured learning that takes place in work as well as informal or random learning that take place in work, at home or in the community. Expanding and diversifying non-formal adult learning opportunities including work-based learning in enterprises and learning centres based in the community will be important ways in which Kosovo can increase the supply and participation of a adult learning.

5.2.4 Adult learning is a wide and complex field that is subject to misunderstanding. It is wider than adult education and includes continuing vocational training, second chance or basic skills learning as well as general adult education that is not labour market oriented.²⁰

5.2.5 The strategy outlined in this document focuses on continuing vocational training and basic skills, but not on general adult education because the main emphasis is on employability and the demand for new knowledge and competences in the labour market.

19 World Bank (2001). *Household Archives, Poverty Assessment Summaries: Kosovo*, 2001.

20 OECD (2003). Definition given in, *Beyond Rhetoric: Adult Learning Policies and Practices*, Paris, 2003.

5.3 *Basic skills*

- 5.3.1 Traditional basic skills are included in the strategy since functional illiteracy and problems with numbers are barriers to employment and social inclusion. Further, enterprise potential is considerably reduced if workers do not have the basic skills to allow them to perform essential tasks contributing to inefficiency, counter productivity and non-competitiveness.
- 5.3.2 Basic foundation skills also underpin technical competences. Higher levels of traditional basic skills are needed in the global knowledge economy, together with a wide range of other generic basic skills, referred to as "new basic skills" in EU lifelong learning documentation. These new basic skills include communication and process skills related particularly to information and communication technology skills, networking skills, problem solving skills, entrepreneurship and the ability to apply skills in the work place. All are important employability skills because they increase work-place competence.
- 5.3.2 In addition, individuals also need to be able to take responsibility for their own learning. Adult learning also fosters innovation and creativity, important qualities for business success, and, in parallel, active citizenship. Innovation, basic skills, entrepreneurship and ICT skills are highlighted in the Lisbon framework (see 2.2 above). Kosovo needs to be much more proactive in ensuring that the workforce acquires these basic skills.
- 5.3.3 Although illiteracy levels in Kosovo have been falling and the overall rates are low (for example just under 5% of people aged 45 or less are illiterate), the levels are higher for older people. There are also big gender discrepancies, with women being three times more likely to be illiterate than men²¹ and illiteracy among young people from minority groups other than the Serbian minority is also much higher (15% of 18-25 year-olds in these groups are classified as being illiterate rising to 22% for 16-17 year-olds).²² Action to improve basic skills in the workforce is consequently a critical element in efforts to reduce unemployment and to increase the competitiveness of Kosovo's enterprises.

21 see, KEC (2000). Illiteracy rates in Kosovo and Demographic, social economic situation and reproductive health in Kosovo following the 1999 conflict. Results of a household survey. UNFPA/IOM (2000).

22 World Bank Household survey (2001) quoted in Employability in Kosovo. (2003.)

5.4 *University education and research environment*

- 5.4.1 The universities concentrate primarily on academic learning and full-time courses that last 4 or 5 years, rather than on workplace competences, despite their potential as providers of short professional updating courses for adults. Their ethos tends to be characterised by a "stay away from business" mentality.²³ Given the specific vocational reference of this strategy therefore universities at this stage do not feature in the adult learning strategy. The development of universities and the diversification of their learning provision require a separate strategy, action plan and financial envelope. This should connect with the adult learning plans and other developments within a wider lifelong learning strategy.
- 5.4.2 The development of advanced vocational/technical courses may be an area for future development.²⁴ Other areas for development would be related to research and development, technology transfer and eventually the commercial exploitation of innovation, which are very important for the development of Kosovo's economy. Investment and support to Kosovo's research and development community may therefore require further and separate reflection. However, the main focus of this strategy is to build the skill base of Kosovo's workforce and enable more equitable access to employability skills for the adult workforce.

23 Pupovci (2003).op cit.

24 Hungary, for example, introduced advanced vocational/technical studies at higher education level (modelled on the French BAC + 2 years of studies).

6. ***Cause and effect of adult learning problems***

This section identifies 7 problem areas directly impacting on adult learning in Kosovo. These problems set the framework for an adult learning strategy that follows in Part II of this paper.

Problem 1

Major skills deficits and skills' mismatches

- Low investment in workforce development by enterprises*
- 6.1 Kosovo's difficult economic situation constrains investment in workforce development: large, socially-owned enterprises face the prospect of privatisation or closure and new small and medium-sized enterprises focus on the immediate problems of business survival. And workforce development is not perceived by employers as a business investment, but as a cost.
- 6.2 The development of new skills, the adaptation of the workforce to a more competitive environment, the need for higher level basic skills and information and communication technology skills are not perceived as being the responsibility of enterprises, but rather the responsibility of individuals, the education and training system or government. Enterprises are reluctant or unable to invest in workforce development because they lack the capacity or the financial means to do so. In-company training facilities of socially owned companies have collapsed, the development of private training providers has been slow and low capacity means that supply is insufficient. The quality is also variable.
- 6.3 Donor investment in management training has been the main driver of raising participation in learning within enterprises and has provided considerable financial and technical support. This is beginning to bear fruit in areas such as modern management methods. However, opportunities for all workers, including older workers, women and workers with poor educational attainment levels to have access to training have not been sufficiently addressed by donors.
- Difficulties sustaining management training and developing skills of small firms*
- 6.4 The managerial, technical and innovative capabilities of small businesses are weak and sustained support is needed. A 2004 MTI report reveals that the use of on-line services is low, despite an upward trend, partly because the services are in their infancy; internet connections are poor; costs are high. Also, many SMEs find it difficult to use electronic business techniques and adapt to new technology.²⁵

25 Source: Ministry of Trade and Industry. Unpublished 2004 response of Kosovo to the European Commission (DG Enterprise) questionnaire as preparation for cooperating in the European Charter for Small Enterprises.

6.5 Relying on donor support is not a long-term solution for financing and developing management and skills training for small businesses. Kosovo needs to develop its own expertise, but current capacity in Kosovo to provide high quality business training, to carry out skills needs analyses and to supply customised training programmes for individual companies, is not well-developed. There are also no incentives for small businesses such as training vouchers, training grants or subsidies or tax concessions to encourage investment in workforce skills.

Legacy of the past - value placed on adult learning declined

6.6 The political context, economic recession, rising unemployment and large-scale migration during the 1990s had an adverse impact on the supply and distribution of adult learning across Kosovo. Whilst the 'parallel' system established by the Albanian community that operated during this period does not seem to have had an adverse affect on young people,²⁶ adult education declined. During the war years, normal life was disrupted as people focused on survival. The legacy of these years meant that a learning culture was severely compromised. With the economy broken, the skills that the workforce had acquired while in the workplace deteriorated.

6.7 The collapse of the former adult education infrastructure also meant that there was no base on which to build a different, more skills-based system of adult learning. The conditions for innovation and development, for example, in setting up structured links between vocational training institutions and the business community, did not exist.

Large numbers of unskilled jobseekers

6.8 Kosovo suffers chronic unemployment and the situation is expected to deteriorate further as privatisation bites, enterprises close and others downsize. Major skills deficits compound the problem of unemployment. Of the 257,505 jobseekers registered in the Kosovo Office of Employment network in 2002, more than half (56.6%) were unskilled.

6.9 MLSW unemployment statistics, broken down by skills and educational attainment levels, show that employment is much more problematic for unskilled men than for men who are skilled or semi-skilled and have completed high school or university. The unemployment statistics for women show that they have difficulty in obtaining employment irrespective of whether they are unskilled or semi-skilled and their educational attainment level appears to have little impact on their chances of employment. The statistics point to the difficulties in obtaining employment generally and to gender imbalances in the labour market, with semi-skilled and skilled women finding it more difficult to access jobs than their male counterparts.

26 Pupovci (2003). op cit.

Poor motivation and few incentives for learning

- 6.10 Motivating adults to learn is problematic given that there are too few incentives. With few job opportunities and limited scope for career progression the return on learning is low and there are also few incentives to learn. With very limited or zero public or employer financial support for continuing learning, many adults on low wages who struggle to support their families, simply cannot afford to pay.
- 6.11 Among young people, there is a high incidence of drop out from lower secondary school and high numbers leave school before they have completed upper secondary level schooling. With less than a third of 15-19 year-olds participating in education and training in Kosovo (the lowest level in the Western Balkans) and only about 17.3% of the 19/20 cohort going on to tertiary level studies, large numbers of unskilled young people with low educational attainment levels join the growing numbers of adult job-seekers every year. They have little prospect of finding employment. This serious economic, social and human loss for Kosovo is in stark contrast to the potential asset that Kosovo's young population presents for Europe when set against its ageing populations.
- 6.12 The problem of unskilled young people is exacerbated by the demand for a different set of skills and knowledge in the market economy and in the demand for higher levels of basic skills and new technical knowledge. These young people are also ill equipped to take responsibility for their own learning or to want to invest in learning throughout life. The difficult economic and employment situation also means that the brain drain continues as many qualified young people, despite immigration difficulties, seek employment opportunities outside Kosovo. These factors impact negatively on the demand for learning. A major effort will be needed to stimulate adult participation in learning. This will need, however, to go hand in hand with building an adequate adult learning infrastructure.

Inadequate learning infrastructure

- 6.13 Learning infrastructure in Kosovo is under-developed. Its capacity to offer adult learning is low and the quality is variable. The former adult education provision, for which adults usually paid, collapsed during the 1990s. Formal adult learning, for which MEST and MLSW are responsible, is provided by public institutions including the network of eight new regional training centres and public and private higher education institutions. With few exceptions, higher education offers academic courses. Local NGOs and private training providers have developed some non-statutory provision.
- 6.14 In respect of non-formal learning, MEST took over responsibility from UNICEF for a large-scale basic literacy and numeracy project run by NGOs in 130 centres that aims to provide training for 2,500 for women and girls by the end of 2004.
- 6.15 The eight MLSW regional training centres also work with non-statutory providers. In 2002 they jointly provided vocational training for 1,658 unemployed adults in a wide range of occupations.
- 6.16 The insufficient supply of formal institutions offering adult learning at the central and local levels has existed for many years. It constitutes a major barrier to increasing participation in learning. In addition, the private training market has been slow to develop. Quality is variable and constrained by insufficient numbers of teachers and trainers, insufficient physical resources (equipment, learning materials) and inappropriate learning methodologies for adults. There is also poor co-ordination of training activities. Furthermore, fundamental support institutions are lacking and the research infrastructure, qualification accreditation systems and quality assurance systems have all to be established.

Difficulties in the learning process

- 6.17 The Kosovar stakeholders identified two main problems related to the learning process: an acute shortage of finance and inadequate investment in initial and in-service training of managers, teachers and trainers.
- 6.18 Many teachers and trainers are de-motivated, they earn low wages and there has been a large exodus from teaching. Although there are discussions with the Faculty of Education at Prishtina University to develop in-service training programme for vocational education teachers, there are no corresponding developments for vocational training trainers.

- Lack of commitment by the State to adult learning*
- 6.19 The stakeholders consider that the limited offer of public adult learning opportunities and slow development of the private training market stem from a lack of commitment by the government to the development of adult learning, which is marginalized when compared with initial education and training as the allocations from state budgets are small. Continuing vocational training and non-formal adult learning are heavily dependent on donor funding.
- 6.20 This lack of commitment results in the absence of an integrated policy framework, legislation and strategy for the development of adult learning. Reforms to modernise public initial education and training are slow to implement and inflexibilities in the system hinder innovation and development. The lack of commitment by the State indicates a serious problem: human resources development as a means to develop economic and social cohesion objectives is not recognised.
- Donor support and longer-term sustainability of adult learning*
- 6.21 International donors have been the drivers of adult learning developments in Kosovo. They have helped establish a better understanding of its importance. Major donor initiatives for small and medium-sized enterprises, continuing vocational training and vocational education are being taken forward by the key ministries (MTI, MLSW and MEST). They are important developments but their longer-term sustainability remains problematic. In addition, they are not enough to cure major skills deficits, nor will they be sufficient to solve the mismatch between the supply and demand for skills in the labour market.

Summary

Major skills deficits and skills' mismatches

- ⇒ 56.6% of unemployed unskilled with low educational attainment level;
- ⇒ small volume of labour market training;
- ⇒ workforce skills not relevant to market economy, poor basic skills;
- ⇒ low quality of teaching;
- ⇒ lack of skilled human resources to address economic and social problems;
- ⇒ skill mismatches;
- ⇒ employers see training as a cost not an investment;
- ⇒ low demand for adult learning;
- ⇒ insufficient development of formal and non-formal learning opportunities.

Problem 2

Uncoordinated approach across relevant ministries

Shared responsibilities

- 6.22 One of the difficulties that hinders a more pro-active approach to the development of adult learning is that responsibilities are shared across more than one ministry and sometimes these responsibilities are not clearly defined. The main ministries responsibilities for adult learning are MEST and MLSW, although MTI and KTA also have an interest in some aspects.
- 6.23 MEST's core responsibilities are the development of vocational education, but it has a role in non-formal adult learning (e.g. take-over of UNICEF basic skills' project for women and girls). Although MEST's five-year strategy indicates that the education and training system will be developed on the basis of lifelong learning principles, only a passing reference is made to the development of non-formal learning in the provision of second chance opportunities for young people who drop out to return to mainstream education and training.
- 6.24 MLSW is responsible for continuing vocational training for jobseekers and very disadvantaged people and also for workers at risk of being made redundant. Linkages between basic skills' provision for adults as a pathway into continuing vocational training do not appear to have been explored.

Different policy agendas

- 6.25 The Ministry of Trade and Industry has an important remit for business growth and small firms' development as it supports training for the business community at national and regional levels. It is the lead authority for implementing the European Charter for Small Enterprises in Kosovo. The Charter outlines a policy framework of ten development areas for small businesses, including education and training for entrepreneurship, training for managers in small enterprises, development of quality and certification systems and ensuring an adequate supply of skills adapted to their needs. Given the human resource concerns within the Charter, there is now impetus for greater connections to be made between the policies and strategies of MTI, MEST and MLSW.

6.26 The Kosovo Trust Agency (KTA) is responsible for the privatisation process that will affect 130,000 people. This has substantial implications for training. But this falls outside the remit of KTA. Different agendas of the two main ministries and different priorities of MTI and KTA mean that there is no co-ordinated, consistent and comprehensive approach to adult retraining as a consequence of industrial reconstruction and privatization. No priority is given to its development. In respect of the key ministries, MEST and MLSW, their focus is primarily on the development of formal learning.

Gaps - developing non-formal, ICT and internet learning

6.27 The development of non-formal learning in enterprises or in the community is not a policy priority for MEST and MLSW. It is not clear where responsibility lies for stimulating its development in companies and in the community, or for expanding flexible and open and distance learning. The exploitation of information communication technologies and the expansion of internet learning have an important role to play in opening up learning for adults and offering them the opportunity to learn at a pace, place and level that fits their needs. This is an important area of development for the future.

6.28 The potential of information and communication technologies and internet-based learning for expanding open and distance formal and non-formal adult learning has hardly been tapped, partly because the appropriate information and telecommunications infrastructure is under-developed and because of costs. However, plans could be drawn up to expand and link up locally based centres in the community and in enterprises into networks and into institutions, such as the regional training centres. Such developments could open up learning opportunities for people working in small and medium sized enterprises and for target groups (minorities, returning refugees, women, older workers).

Compartmentalisation, uncoordinated approaches and poor data

6.29 Lifelong learning, in particular adult learning, crosses ministerial boundaries, private and public divides and employment and unemployment divides. Ministry officials need to move outside specific ministerial compartments and mindset if effective adult learning systems are to be developed. This is difficult in the absence of plans for economic and social development with an integral human resource development component. Currently, individual ministries are responsible for only a part of a more comprehensive human resources agenda. Social and professional responsibilities for adult learning are under-developed and the lines of authority and individual responsibilities are unclear. This impact on the development of an integrated and comprehensive adult learning policy results in less optimal co-operation and coordination at different levels and between adult learning institutions on the ground.

- 6.30 The development of integrated adult learning policies is further hampered by poor data and lack of information on, for example, skill trends, analysis of learner needs (especially of disadvantaged segments of the population) and of appropriate learning methodologies for adults. This contributes to fragmented policies which impact on institutions and standards for adult learning.

Summary

Problems of an uncoordinated approach

- ⇒ no integrated, comprehensive policy for adult learning;
- ⇒ fragmented policies, gaps and compartmentalised approaches;
- ⇒ no economic and social development plan with integral HRD component;
- ⇒ lack of clarity on priorities;
- ⇒ legislation undeveloped;
- ⇒ ODL for adults and ICT and internet-based learning undeveloped;
- ⇒ responsibilities for adult learning undeveloped and/or unclear;
- ⇒ impact on whole system;
- ⇒ paucity of data, information and analysis to provide strategic steer.

Problem 3

Lack of systemic approach in developing adult learning

- Isolation from international debate and experience on lifelong learning*
- 6.31 Until quite recently Kosovo was not able to follow international debate on lifelong learning. It has not had sufficient exposure to the positive experience of other countries. This lack of exposure and the paucity of information and analysis of adult learner demand have contributed to low awareness of the importance of adult learning in enterprises (which hesitate to invest in workforce learning), in the population generally and in government. The importance of adult learning in Kosovo for making progress on wider economic and social objectives has already been highlighted.
- 6.32 The problems Kosovo faces, albeit much deeper, are the problems that the EU10 (accession 1 May 2004) have faced during their transition period. The process of preparing economic development strategies by the EU10 helped to build capacity in active employment policies and strategic planning, human resources development and reforms to education and training systems in a lifelong learning perspective. Tapping into this experience will be invaluable for Kosovo and in line with the EU/Western Balkan 'Thessaloniki Agenda'²⁷ and should be considered when the operational plan to follow this strategy is being elaborated.
- Key components of the system are missing*
- 6.33 Basic mechanisms and components of a learning system are missing. The classification of occupations has yet to be developed, along with an integrated system for vocational qualifications, although both are planned.²⁸ The latter not only impacts on certification of formal learning, but it also means that there is no mechanism to accredit prior and experiential learning acquired at work or in the community. Although the development of the vocational qualification framework is in its first phase, it needs to be designed in such a way that it can be adapted in the future to recognising and validating prior learning and experience.

27 The Thessaloniki Agenda for the Western Balkans. Moving towards European Integration. Conclusions of the General Affairs & External Relations Council. 16 June 2003 and Declaration of the EU-Western Balkan Summit. 21 June 2003.

28 A market driven re-classification of occupations is a priority of MLSW. Reform of the classification is underway supported by EAR while a DANIDA supported project for establishment of a national certification system and a National Skills Board has been agreed by MLSW, MTI, OEB, BSPK (endorsement by MEST, outstanding).

- 6.34 Similarly, a vocational counselling and guidance system has to be developed, but this will be hampered by insufficient information on vocational training opportunities. There is no clear policy or strategy on career guidance although MEST and MLSW have separate developments on-going. Poor human and financial resources undermine existing effort.²⁹ The National Vocational Guidance and Resource Centre that the MLSW plans to establish with other partners should facilitate this development.
- 6.35 There is an urgent need to improve the quality of learning, but quality assurance mechanisms, standards and indicators consistent with international standards have to be developed and the system implemented.

Equal opportunities

- 6.36 The distribution of adult learning in Kosovo is uneven and insufficient. Learning opportunities are not geared sufficiently to labour market demand and tend to be supply-driven rather than demand driven. Access to learning is unequal and a more inclusive policy for adult learning is needed. In general, gender concerns are not respected while more needs to be done to promote learning opportunities for minority groups.³⁰

Summary

Systemic issues

- ⇒ low awareness among partners of importance of adult learning;
- ⇒ no classification of occupations;
- ⇒ no integrated system of vocational qualifications;
- ⇒ no system to recognise and validate prior learning and experience;
- ⇒ no vocational information, guidance and counselling system available to all;
- ⇒ no quality assurance system consistent with international standards;
- ⇒ no policy on in-service training of vocational training teachers/trainers;
- ⇒ uneven and unequal distribution of learning;
- ⇒ equal opportunities not mainstreamed;
- ⇒ supply-driven learning opportunities.

29 Unpublished response of Kosovo to OECD questionnaire on vocational guidance and counselling in Kosovo. ESOK (2004).

30 op cit. Employability in Kosovo, p. 25.

Problem 4

Poor data, information and research base for adult learning

- 6.37 One of the difficulties in Kosovo is the lack of a national data collection framework on human resources. This means that basic information on, for example, education attainment and skills' levels of employees, workers in the grey economy or unregistered unemployed is lacking. There is no tracking system of school drop-outs or numbers of those who participate in non-formal adult learning. There is little information on who benefits from adult learning, on outcomes or on who pays. There is also no catalogue of non-formal learning opportunities and no research base into, *inter alia*, labour market trends, demand for learning, learner needs and characteristics.
- 6.38 The problem of data is recognised but as yet support (both financial and technical) from international donors for the development of a statistical database and collection system has not sufficiently materialised. The Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare is planning to establish a tripartite institution, the Workforce Development Research Centre, for research and analysis on labour market, skills and manpower issues. However, there are other issues, related to understanding the demand for learning and appropriate learning methodologies for adults that do not appear to be addressed in these plans. Research on labour market issues and on learning processes are important components of a good research base. The two research areas, despite different foci, are inter-related and need to be brought together.

Summary

Data, information and research base

- ⇒ no national data collection system for collecting adult learning data;
- ⇒ no research base, limited information on learning opportunities;
- ⇒ basic information missing;
- ⇒ no knowledge of potential learners;
- ⇒ young people who drop out not offered alternative progression routes;
- ⇒ no sustainable system of analysis of skill trends, labour market change, skill needs of employees or workers in the grey economy;
- ⇒ no capacity to forecast skill trends;
- ⇒ no management information system for development of adult learning.

Problem 5

Inadequate financial resources

- 6.39 The root cause of insufficient funds in Kosovo lies in the collapse of industry and the economic crisis. However, the severe shortage of finance for the development of adult learning (0.14% of GDP in 2004) is a major constraint and over-dependence on donor funding puts at risk longer-term sustainability of donor-sponsored initiatives.³¹ Kosovo stakeholders express concern that the concentration of funding on initial education and training and small state budgets allocated to adult learning do not constitute the most optimal use of public funds. This suggests that public funding for learning in Kosovo is not viewed from the perspective of the lifelong learning continuum and that, although difficult, redistributing some public funds, for example, to disadvantaged adults with low educational levels or who lack basic skills, has not been possible.
- 6.40 Stakeholders identify a number of difficulties in raising adequate levels of finance for adult learning. They point to the lack of co-operation of institutions in establishing an adult learning fund, lack of a legal framework for financial contributions from employers or individuals and the lack of funding for adult learning from employers and individuals. They highlight the insufficient budget line for continuing vocational training, and that adult learning has not been properly prioritised in the budget planning process.
- 6.41 The lack of co-financing mechanisms means that the disbursement of public funds for adult learning has also not been optimised. From the perspective of enterprises, despite the low value placed on investment in their human capital, the difficult economic environment in which they operate also restricts their capacity to pay. Clearly without adequate levels of funding, limited and slow progress will be made in implementing adult learning. Tackling this problem will involve the social partners, civil society organisations as well as MEST, MLSW, MTI and Ministry of Finance (MOF).

31 Maçstena (2004) reviewed investment in vocational training (public sector initial and continuing training), enterprise training and adult education over a three-year period (2002-2004). See [Investment in human resource development in Kosovo: an overview](#). ESOK Prishtina. March 2004.

Summary

Financial concerns

- ⇒ insufficient funding for adult learning;
- ⇒ adult learning not prioritised in budget planning process;
- ⇒ over-dependence on donor funding in adult learning;
- ⇒ concentration of state budget on initial education & training;
- ⇒ small budget for adult learning;
- ⇒ insufficient budget for continuing vocational training;
- ⇒ lack of co-operation in establishing an adult learning fund;
- ⇒ absence of legal framework for financial contributions from employers or individuals;
- ⇒ no co-finance mechanisms;
- ⇒ stakeholder co-operation needed to increase resources for adult learning.

Problem 6

Low perceived value placed on adult learning

- 6.42 A combination of several factors e.g. poor returns on learning, lack of systemic developments, uncoordinated approaches and inadequate levels of finance have contributed to a low perceived value being placed on adult learning.
- 6.43 At the same time, the difficult economic and social situation has led to a slow transformation of society, which has contributed to a lack of awareness of the importance of adult learning and scepticism perhaps that learning matters. Or that it leads to tangible returns. This has hindered the development of a learning culture. Some of the adverse consequences of this situation are listed in the box below.

Summary

Impact of low value placed on adult learning

- ⇒ no national HRD plan; no profile given to adult learning;
- ⇒ enterprises view adult learning as cost, not as an investment;
- ⇒ poor returns on investment in learning are disincentives;
- ⇒ poor motivation to learn;
- ⇒ unequal access to learning for many disadvantaged population groups;
- ⇒ development of a democratic society slowed down.

Problem 7

Lack of sustainable partnerships in design and implementation of adult learning

- 6.44 Another problem in developing adult learning is that it involves partnership working, not only among ministries, but also with a wide range of partners at different levels - national, regional or local and international. Partnerships for specific purposes will involve different groupings of actors from ministries, regional and local authorities, the social partners, NGOs and providers of services including training, counselling and guidance and research. In Kosovo a partnership culture is not well developed and sustaining partnerships once they are established can be problematic.
- 6.45 The stakeholders consider fear of financial commitment, fear of time commitment and fear of human commitment as factors that hinder sustainable partnerships. In addition, formal (and informal) structures have to be established and the different priorities or agendas reconciled. Sometimes, there are difficulties because of the positions of partners or their level of responsibility. Lack of co-operation in strategic planning often stems from unclear responsibilities for developing adult learning at ministerial level. Lack of experience in building and sustaining partnerships at all levels and by all partners is a further constraint.
- 6.46 Although protocols for co-operation have been signed by ministries, in practice this does not always result in joint measures, integrated policies or agreements being implemented.
- 6.47 A number of partnership activities have been set up. For example, the consultative Tripartite Advisory Council (TAC) on social dialogue that involves equal representation of employers (OEK), employees (BSPK) and the Provisional Self-Government Institutions (represented by MLSW) and the development of an assessment and certification framework for competences acquired in formal statutory organisations will be taken forward through the work of the Interim National Skills Board (INSB), whose membership involves representatives from MLSW, MEST and MTI as well as the social partners. These partnerships need to be supported and strengthened.

- 6.48 Co-operation between ministries and non-statutory partners is also facilitated through donor projects. In the field of adult learning, aside from project driven partnerships, there have been no sustainable partnerships that engage all the relevant actors in a wider dialogue on policy developments (apart from the Adult Learning Strategy Team established for the purposes of drawing up this strategy).³²
- 6.49 There are no structures to promote adult learning development at the regional and/or local level nor are there cooperation plans between public and private training providers, between training providers, local authorities, officials responsible for local economic development and NGOs. Partnership building will be essential and requires time and facilitation before partners play a full part in adult learning developments.
- 6.50 Finally, there must be tangible returns for all partners to commit themselves that will be central to a working partnership.

Summary

Cooperation and partnership

- ⇒ agreements between partners not implemented;
- ⇒ stakeholder dialogue on a common approach to adult learning not initiated;
- ⇒ adult learning development not initiated due to no cross-stakeholder cooperation;
- ⇒ insufficient communication between adult learning providers, and with researchers;
- ⇒ fragmented and uncoordinated provision.

³² A working group supported by KOSVET programme is tasked with considering options for development of lifelong learning. This strategy should feed into the discussions and plans put forward by the working group.

7. Conclusions

- 7.1 In conclusion, the problem scenario for Kosovo's adult learning policies and structures centre around how learning needs are articulated (demand) and the response by the education and training providers (supply). The problems outlined above are inter-dependent and a range of integrated responses will be needed in order to reverse them and to build a high quality learning system for adults that reflects good practice in lifelong learning and contributes to economic and social cohesion including employment objectives.
- 7.2 The strategy in this paper sets out a range of strategic objectives and measures that together will assist Kosovo in designing and implementing action to build an effective adult learning system over the next decade – an adult learning system to improve workforce skills and reduce mismatches in the supply and demand. At the same time, it aims to increase employability of jobseekers and contribute to poverty alleviation.
- 7.3 The symbiotic relationship between human resource development, economic growth, job creation and social progress means that adult learning supports economic and social cohesion. Progress in these fields in turn increase the incentives to learn, brings higher returns and increases motivation of adults with the result that participation in learning also increases. The strategy seeks to contribute to the creation of a virtuous learning cycle.

PART II

The strategy

8. Key principles

8.1. A number of principles underpin the strategic objectives outlined below. They reflect the Lisbon strategy for economic competitiveness, employment growth and social inclusion addressed earlier. Adult learning, as an essential part of human resources development, supports:

- the economic process of revitalising and restructuring the economy and, in particular, the development of innovative small and medium-sized enterprises;
- employment, intensive growth, local economic development, entrepreneurship and self-employment and the reduction of reliance on the informal economy;
- mainstreaming equality of opportunities, greater social inclusion and poverty alleviation;
- democratic development, a reduction in societal divisions and greater social cohesion; and by extension
- quality of life improvements, health and social progress.

Balancing economic and social priorities in activities and finance

8.2 The strategic objectives, priorities and measures below seek to achieve a balance between:

- developing the knowledge and competences of people already employed, including managers of small enterprises, to assist in their adaptation to the market economy and to growing innovative small businesses;
- job-seekers and people working in the informal economy;
- specific disadvantaged groups to enhance their employability and to achieve a more equitable access to learning;
- continuing vocational training and basic skills provision (both traditional and new);
- increasing the overall participation of adults in learning and more equal access to learning by specific target groups; and
- increasing the overall supply of formal and non-formal learning opportunities and making quality improvements.

8.3 In terms of finance, the proposals seek to balance two principles - *efficiency* (increasing participation in and distribution of learning and increasing outcomes) and *equity* (through ensuring that participation in and the distribution of learning are more equal). Although Kosovo will continue to rely on financial and technical support from international donors for some time it is also important that financial planning addresses longer-term, self-sustainability through sharing costs between public funds, enterprises and individuals who benefit from learning through the development of co-finance mechanisms.

Monitoring progress and evaluating impact

- 8.4 The strategy emphasises the need to develop a monitoring and evaluation framework to monitor progress and evaluate impact. There is also a need to systematically review whether the focus of the strategy and the action plans that will follow are meeting the objectives, milestones and targets identified. Or whether they have to be adapted in the light of changing circumstances. The monitoring and evaluation frameworks are intended to be strategic tools for developing adult learning and the use of reliable baselines to set realistic targets and milestones, will be necessary.

9. ***Vision and mission***

- 9.1 Adult learning is not a panacea for solving complex economic and social problems. But, it plays an important part, alongside wider economic and social reform measures, to reverse the cycle of economic decline, chronic unemployment and increasing social inequalities. Access to training and jobs has to become much more equal and benefit all citizens, not just certain segments of the population.
- 9.2 The strategic vision, mission statement and strategic objectives in this paper reflect the principles and balances outlined above for the development of an adult learning infrastructure responsive to individual learners' needs and those of the market economy. The vision, mission and objectives bear in mind the impact of the global economy and technological change that are impacting on Kosovo with due reference to Kosovar people a) surviving in the new labour market, b) being able to contribute to its development and success and c) sharing in the benefits that accrue from greater economic prosperity.
- 9.3 At the strategy planning meeting in December 2003, participants agreed the following vision:

Vision

To build a democratic society able to sustain economic and social cohesion through developing human resources, pursuing equal opportunities for all citizens and creating and supporting a learning society that also supports integration of Kosovo with mainstream Europe.

9.4 In addition, stakeholders agreed the following mission statement.

Mission

To raise awareness of the value of learning and increase opportunities for all citizens to participate in continuous learning of high quality that meets the needs of individuals and those of the labour market through building the infrastructure for adult learning, creating sustainable partnerships and sharing in EU lifelong learning developments.

10. Strategic Objectives

Key problems to be addressed

10.1 Part I of the strategy justified the focus on adult learning and analysed seven key problem areas showing how they collectively and individually constrained the acquisition of skills for the market economy and hindered the effective development of adult learning provision. Particular skills were highlighted such as information and communication and entrepreneurial skills. These are so important for innovation and employment in the global knowledge economy. In addition, employability skills are stressed because they are essential in helping the unemployed, particularly the unskilled and target populations, find and sustain employment. Problems included:

- major skill deficits and skill mismatches;
- uncoordinated approach across relevant ministries and other partners;
- lack of systemic approach to developing adult learning;
- poor data, information and research base for adult learning;
- inadequate level of financial resources;
- low perceived value given to adult learning; and
- lack of sustainable partnerships in the design and implementation of adult learning.

The objectives

10.2 Seven strategic objectives were agreed by the stakeholders:³³

- 1) increased knowledge and competences for the market economy;
- 2) creation of an enabling environment;
- 3) a systemic approach for the development of adult learning;
- 4) sustainable data, information and research base on adult learning;
- 5) increased value of learning and promotion of a learning culture;
- 6) sustainable partnerships in adult learning;
- 7) improved financial resources for adult learning.

10.3 The strategic objectives, whilst emerging from an analysis of Kosovo's situation, reflect the EU lifelong framework and the six building blocks (BB) as shown below. The measures for each objectives also reflect actions included in the Lisbon strategy for economic and social cohesion.

- BB1 - Partnership working (Objectives 1, 6);
- BB2 - Understanding the demand for learning (Objective 4);
- BB3 - Adequate resourcing (Objective 7);
- BB4 - Facilitating access (Objectives 1, 4);
- BB5 - Creating a culture of learning (Objective 5);
- BB6 - Striving for excellence (Objective 3).

³³ Partnerships, such as tri-partite partnerships between government and the social partners and partnerships with NGOs, providers and local development agencies, are an essential element in the strategic development of adult learning.

11. *The Measures*

The strategic objectives will be taken forward through a series of measures that will require individual strategies or action plans and programmes. An initial indication of the scope of the measures is given under each measure below. These are not comprehensive and are provided as a guide for the development of future programmes, which will be expected to give details of the intervention envisaged and finance together with baseline information, targets and milestones. In developing programmes, references to Lisbon principles will be useful. Programmes should also include a list of monitoring and impact evaluation criteria and an outline of the evaluation framework (including details of timing, scope and responsibilities).

Objective 1

Increased knowledge and competences for the market economy

- 11.1 This objective will be taken forward through two separate measures: a) improving basic skills and b) upgrading technical skills.
- 11.2 The scope of the activities outlined for the two areas takes account of the intention to adopt a systemic approach to adult learning. What is at stake is to increase the overall level of skills of all people perhaps to a minimum of level 2 qualification in the first instance, and to shift the level up to ISCED level 3 and beyond.³⁴
- 11.3 Dividing measures according to beneficiary group (job-seekers, disadvantaged groups, employees, small businesses) may create administrative burdens at the delivery level as the system develops if providers have mixed beneficiary groups. Important information on employment status, skills' level of beneficiaries at the start of training, learning outcomes and employment destination at the end can be gathered through good management information systems (see paras 11.27 - 11.29).
- Measure 1.1. Programmes to increase basic skills*
- 11.4 Actions are required to address general basic skills' provision. Pre-vocational training and continuing vocational training to ISCED level 2 address employability skills that would tackle functional illiteracy and poor number skills. The objective would be to provide adults with second chance opportunities and/or a first and second vocational training qualification as a foundation for working life. As highlighted above, over 56% of jobseekers are unskilled and have low educational attainment levels.

34 These levels of education relate to ISCED (UNESCO's International Standard Classification of Education, 1997 edition). The structure of education in Kosovo has been redesigned. Compulsory schooling now consists of 5 years of primary schooling for 6-11 year-olds, followed by 3 years of lower secondary schooling for 11-14 year-olds, followed by 1 year of orientation. 3 years of upper secondary schooling for 15-18 year-olds is optional. This fits with the ISCED classification shown below.

- Level 1 = primary education (first stage basic education);
- Level 2 = lower secondary (second stage of basic education);
- Level 3 = upper secondary education - minimum entrance qualification to higher studies;
- Level 4 = post-secondary non-tertiary education;
- Level 5 = first stage of tertiary level education (leading to a degree);
- Level 6 = second stage of tertiary education (leading to an advanced research qualification).

11.5 It is also possible, despite the absence of statistical information (but based on experience in EU Member States) that substantial numbers of people in work have low educational attainment levels. These are the least likely to find alternative employment if made redundant and the least likely to be offered training opportunities by their employers. In addition, special programmes for target groups, such as unskilled young people, returning refugees, people with special learning needs, minorities (e.g. Roma populations) and people living in isolated rural areas would be included under this measure. Specific initiatives to tackle gender inequalities also need to be included.

Measure 1.2. Programmes to upgrade skills

11.6 Actions will be necessary for skills' upgrading including programmes to lead to an ISCED level 3 vocational qualification and above, and customised training programmes for employers/employees. Also included here will be entrepreneurship programmes for managers of small businesses and their employees, members of family businesses and people wishing to become self-employed. They could also include capacity building programmes for people involved in local economic and social cohesion initiatives.³⁵ These programmes would include employees of SMEs, particularly small businesses, and people working in the grey economy, jobseekers and also the target groups listed above.

11.7 Special programmes related to privatisation, women in business, small business start-ups or for priority skill areas (e.g. business and entrepreneurship skills, technology skills and the use of on-line services, or skills for e-commerce) should be developed as well as full-time continuing vocational training courses.

11.8 Specific programmes for sectors defined as priority sectors for the economic development of Kosovo (or because they have strong employment growth potential) could also be developed under this measure. Building the capacity of trainers to use modern teaching methods will also need to be considered to adapt learning methodologies for different kinds of adult learners and to develop competence in carrying out skill needs' analysis and customised programme development.

11.9 Although the development costs of vocational guidance and other support services (for example training allowances, transport costs or child care costs) would come under a different Strategic Objective, the on-going costs might form part of an overall package of training and support for beneficiaries in these two measures. In addition, the on-going costs of updating of vocational teachers and trainers' knowledge and skills could also be included under this measure.

35 For example, NEP Kamenica (ETF/Italian funded local economic and employment development project). EAR is also providing support to local employment initiatives through the Employment Regeneration Programme (2003).

11.10 Collectively, the measures outlined here address skill deficits and skill shortages that constrain economic growth and competitiveness. They are designed to increase participation in learning by the workforce generally, and to achieve more equitable access to the acquisition of employability skills by specific target groups.

Objective 2

Enabling environment

11.11 There are two measures for Strategic Objective 2 whose aim is to establish an integrated environment which will enable, sustain and ensure relevance of adult learning in Kosovo between 2005-2015 and beyond:

- a) development of an integrated economic and human resource policy framework;
- b) capacity building in the field of adult learning.

Measure 2.1 - Development of a integrated economic and HRD policy framework

11.12 A single economic and human resource policy framework should be established e.g. National Economic and Human Resource Development Council. This would involve setting up appropriate cross-ministerial consultative structures to include social partners and civic society. The Council, led perhaps by the Prime Minister's Office, should be charged with responsibility for drawing up an integrated policy and policy implementation framework (combining economic, employment, education and social concerns).

11.13 The Council should appoint separate commissions to address priority concerns. An adult learning commission should initially define responsibilities in adult learning, to agree priorities, to draft policy and legislation.

11.14 In the medium-term, it is anticipated that economic and social cohesion plans will be drawn up, that will include a human resource development chapter. Policy development and consensus building in the development of these strategic plans should borrow on the best partnership experience from the EU10.

Measure 2.2 - Measures for capacity building in the field of adult learning

11.15 Until an integrated government policy and strategic development framework for adult learning are in place and plans are developed, the complex matter of co-finance is in a vacuum. It is suggested that exchange of experience with EU Member States, including new members, on financing adult learning would be useful. Similar exchanges of experience in systemic developments in adult learning should also be facilitated with consideration given to expertise transfer by way of participation in EU community programmes as foreseen within the 'Thessaloniki Agenda', e.g. Leonardo or its successor and Tempus Plus.³⁶

³⁶ EU community programmes will be opened to the countries of the Western Balkans along the lines established for the participation of candidate countries.

Objective 3

A systemic approach for the development of adult learning

11.16 Five measures are proposed for Strategic Objective 3:

- a) development and implementation of an information, counselling and career guidance system;
- b) development of an occupational classification system;
- c) development and implementation of an integrated national qualification system, modular course provision and a system to recognise and validate competences acquired by adults through non-formal and informal learning;
- d) development of flexible formal and non-formal adult learning opportunities with delivery and methodology appropriate to adults where supply and demand are balanced and equal opportunities mainstreamed;
- e) development and implementation of a quality assurance system.

Measure 3.1 Development and implementation of an information, counselling and career guidance system

11.17 The development of a career guidance system should include *inter alia* the design of the system, its introduction through the Employment Offices who would network with employers and training providers (via counsellors and electronic means), and reach out into the community to facilitate access for all, the development of professional counselling qualifications, the development and maintenance of an information database (of learning opportunities and on the labour market) and on-line services and the professional development of counselling and guidance specialists.

11.18 Services that are developed need also to be tailored to the needs of specific learners. This development is foreseen as part of the five-year strategy of the MLSW. It is suggested that given the focus on counselling and guidance under the EU's 'Copenhagen process'³⁷, links to EU developments in this field are established to enable the exchange of good practice (see for example the work of the European Counselling and Guidance Working Group). Dialogue and planning presently being undertaken within the KOSVET programme working group on

³⁷ On 30 November 2002, the Education Ministers of 31 European countries and the European Commission adopted the Copenhagen Declaration on enhanced cooperation in European vocational education and training.

vocational guidance and counselling and participation in a planned ETF regional VGC initiative will go some way to elaborating ideas to develop this measure.

Measure 3.2 - Development of an occupational classification system

- 11.19 The MLSW strategic plan foresees the introduction of a market-driven occupational classification system. Initial work on this has been supported by EAR. This measure will support the development of the occupational classification system and the updating of professionals in its use. The process will get underway in 2004.

Measure 3.3 - Integrated national qualification system, modular course provision and a system to recognise and validate competences acquired by adults through non-formal and informal learning

- 11.20 Steps have already been taken to set up an Interim National Skills Board (INSB) in Kosovo with membership from the three key ministries (MEST, MLSW and MTI) and the social partners (OEK, BSPK). This is a first step in the creation of a permanent, national authority to assure quality and standards for vocational training in Kosovo. The INSB will be supported by Vocational Standards Committees (made up of experts, employers and trades people) with the remit to provide technical assessment of vocational curricula, vocational teachers and trainers and vocational institutions set against the standards of other EU countries.
- 11.21 This measure will support the work of the INSB and the Vocational Standards Committees (and the permanent bodies that will be established in the future for the certification of vocational courses delivered by public providers, certification of the competences of vocational teachers and trainers) and the establishment and maintenance of a register of accredited training providers. In addition, it will build on work already started in Kosovo on the development of vocational curricula and modular course provision.
- 11.22 Over the ten-year period of the strategy, a system to accredit the competences that adults have acquired through non-formal and informal learning will need to be developed so that these competences can also be recognised and validated. The measure will, therefore, promote the exchange of experience and good practice in this field with the EU25, especially in respect of the experience and outcomes of the EU's 'Copenhagen process' to increase transparency through the development of a European-wide system to recognise vocational qualifications.

- 11.23 Whilst the current focus of the Kosovo authorities is on developing formal public provision rather than on developing the private training market for adults, it will also be important to promote the growth and quality of the latter. In the future, the remit of the INSB (or its successor institution) will need to be widened to include certification of relevant private training provision, in-company training and community-based training.

Measure 3.4 - Development of flexible formal and non-formal adult learning opportunities with delivery and methodology appropriate to adults where supply and demand are balanced and equal opportunities mainstreamed

- 11.24 This measure concerns the supply and quality of a wide range of flexible formal and non-formal learning opportunities for adults in public institutions, enterprises and in the community. With technology advances, the expansion of open, flexible and internet learning is very likely to develop in Kosovo during the period of the strategy. The Government needs to be pro-active in initiating these developments. This measure could support, in addition to formal vocational training developments, open learning centres in public institutions, enterprises and in community facilities, particularly in isolated rural locations. The measure would cover set-up costs, including physical infrastructure, equipment costs, the development of learning materials and the professional updating of teachers and trainers to manage and develop open learning centres.
- 11.25 Methodologies would need to be adapted to different kinds of adult learners, including specific target groups and steps taken to mainstream equal opportunities. In addition, the measure could support opportunities for the exchange of experience and good practice in these developments in the region and with the EU25.

Measure 3.5. Development and implementation of a quality assurance system

- 11.26 Some aspects of quality are being addressed in vocational training through the assessment processes of the INSB that cover inputs and outputs (e.g. certification of competences, accreditation of institutions). In addition, other areas could be included linked to implementing lifelong learning principles: increasing participation of under-represented adults, improved relevance of skills for the market economy and global knowledge economy, in-service teacher-trainer development, universal access to high quality information, counselling and guidance, development of systems to recognise outcomes from non-formal or informal learning and increased ability of individuals to take responsibility for their own learning.

11.27 The measure will support the development of a set of quality indicators for adult learning and opportunities to share good practice with EU Member States in implementing quality assurance systems. The work of the European Quality Working Group may be a useful reference point.

Objective 4

Sustainable data, information and research base on adult learning

Measure 4 - Creation of a sustainable system for data gathering and analysis of labour market skill trends, training demand and needs

- 11.28 This measure will attempt to reconcile the supply-demand concerns of adult learning. It covers actions to set up a national data collection system on adult learners and a research base that would carry out labour market analyses, skill needs' analyses of economic sectors or specific groups of learners. It would also allow for research into issues affecting participation, motivation and learning methodologies for adults. The capacity to forecast skill needs will also be developed. The measure will support the development and introduction of management information systems.
- 11.29 Measure 4 would support the tripartite Workforce Development Research Centre for research and analysis on labour market, skills and manpower issues which is planned by MLSW. However, development of a research base related to learning processes (covering, for example, learner-centred approaches, appropriate learning methodologies for adults, ways of making learning attractive for adults, motivating adults to learn and improving incentives) is also needed as these relate to the quality of the learning offered, to its effectiveness and appropriateness for different kinds of adult learners.
- 11.30 Kosovo needs to develop its capacity to analyse and promote the demand for learning through research into the needs and characteristics of specific kinds of learners in order to plan and implement effective learning. Research into learning processes and the linkages between this research and labour market-oriented research would also be supported under this measure.

Objective 5

Increased value of learning and promotion of a learning culture

Measure 5 - Organisation of promotional activities to raise awareness of the value of adult learning

- 11.31 An increase in the value placed on learning by adults is expected to stem from improved inputs and outputs of learning and from more attractive learning environments (see the measures for Strategic Objective 4).
- 11.32 Measure 5 will support promotional activities and the production of promotional materials to increase awareness of adult learning, of the potential returns on investment in learning and to raise its value among all groups. Envisaged here are activities such as learning festivals, 'learning matters' workshops and seminars, national adult learning events, learning campaigns in economic sectors to encourage and to reward learning and mass media campaigns to stimulate learning through demonstrating the return on learning. These events and initiatives will involve a range of partners.

Objective 6

Sustainable partnerships in adult learning

11.33 Two measures should be considered to support the creation of sustainable partnerships: partnership capacity building and introduction of a national integrated policy framework.

Measure 6.1 - Capacity building of stakeholders

11.34 This measure supports initiatives (e.g. workshops, joint activities, specific training on reconciling differences) to develop capacity of stakeholders (e.g. ministry officials, regional and local authorities, Employment Office officials, social partners, NGOs, researchers, providers of training and counselling and guidance services, bodies responsible for local economic development initiatives) to strengthen partnership working in adult learning at all levels.

11.35 However, partnership development is very much a question of learning by doing and there are certain principles that need to be observed (such as having a shared vision, respecting the equality of the partners, commitment to working together to make a difference, effective administrative support). In the early phases, formal authority and finance are also factors. There has also to be a "return" on the investment of time and effort and win-win situations created so that each partner benefits from collective action. The important issue is that partnership working in adult learning has to be given serious attention and tripartite partnerships, such as those for the INSB and the planned Workforce Development Centre, will need to be supported.

11.36 It is not by accident that in the European Commission's Communication, *Making a European area of lifelong learning a reality*, partnership working is the first building block. Different partnerships will emerge, for example at national, regional, local and international levels. They provide a forum for collective action, bring together diverse expertise, are a catalyst for change and facilitate development and the pooling of resources. Adult learning developments in Kosovo should therefore be based on partnership.

11.37 Partnership working and cooperation at the wider regional level, in line with the EU's Stabilisation and Association process for the countries of the Western Balkans, should also be considered.

Measure 6.2 – National Economic and Human Resource Development Council

- 11.38 The primary partnership should be the National Economic and Human Resource Development Council (see para. 11.11 for more detail). This will require good technical assistance and draw on experience from better performing Member States of the EU25.

Objective 7

Improved financial resources for adult learning

Measure 7.1. Technical assistance for funding of adult learning

- 11.39 Whilst it is reasonable to assume that there will be an increase in financial resources from a variety of sources for adult learning in Kosovo during the 10-year period of the strategy, key questions remain on how to increase substantially funding for adult learning in the short and medium term. Additionally, consideration must be given to how to move from dependency on donor funding towards greater self-sufficiency and longer-term sustainability of financial resources for adult learning, although this may happen anyway with clear evidence of 'donor drift'.³⁸
- 11.40 Kosovo is not alone in grappling with these problems. Sustainable finance for adult learning will need further investigation at different phases and will involve dialogue with stakeholders, particularly the social partners. There are several factors that will need to be borne in mind. The lifelong continuum is one of them.
- 11.41 Financing adult learning cannot be seen only in terms of increasing private contributions, although these will become important. The continuum raises questions of optimising public funding for lifelong learning, especially adult learning, and of some redistribution of public funding to adult learning. Targeting public finance on specific government priorities (for example, retraining for the unemployed, improving access to learning for specific target groups, tackling low skills and inadequate education attainment levels) will be necessary and this is where good partnership will help.
- 11.42 Factors, such as return on investment and capacity to pay are also important considerations in allocating public funds. Making decisions on school-based vocational education and adult learning may need to be brought together, rather than taken separately. In the future, Kosovo may wish to provide for free access to a ISCED level 3 qualification (considered to be the minimum needed for the knowledge economy) for all but may not have the funds. Choices will need to be made: free access for all to level 3 or free access for the few to tertiary level education. See footnote 34 for detail.

38 op cit. Maçastera (2004), p.8

- 11.43 The EU literature on lifelong learning is quite clear that lifelong learning, and as a central part of that, adult learning, will require substantial additional investment by governments, enterprises and individuals.³⁹ It is clear that the public purse in Kosovo cannot meet the costs alone and that donor funding will continue to be an important source. A new paradigm of investment in human resources will be required where partnership, critical to sharing the burden of cost between those who benefit from learning, needs to be investigated.⁴⁰
- 11.44 Whilst the prevailing economic conditions will make the development and introduction of co-finance mechanisms difficult, as a first step, this measure will provide technical support to assist the Kosovar authorities to develop capacity in the area of financing adult learning, which is a complex and technical issue. MLSW plans for a national employment and training fund will be important in this context.

Measure 7.2. Development and introduction of co-finance mechanisms for adult learning

- 11.45 Serious consideration should be given to the development a range of transparent, co-finance mechanisms for adult learning that may include tax incentives, income contingent repayment loans, payroll levies, voucher schemes and individual learning accounts. Financial mechanisms for adult learning will need to take account of efficiency (e.g. increasing participation and learning outcomes) and equity factors (ensuring a higher proportion of under-represented groups access learning).

39 [Making a European area of lifelong learning a reality](#), Communication of the European Commission, 2001.

40 The concept of a new investment paradigm features in the European Commission's 2003 communication: [Investing efficiently in education and training: an imperative for Europe](#). See also: OECD's, [Economic and finance of lifelong learning, 2001: Mechanisms for the co-finance of lifelong learning, seminar documentation, 2003](#); [Conference reference paper on financing learning, 2003](#).

Part III

Issues for consideration and conclusions

12. *Pre-conditions, assumptions, sustainability*

- 12.1 A pre-condition for the development of adult learning is the willingness of the stakeholders, in partnership, to participate at all levels, national, regional and local. Cooperation with fellow partners within South Eastern Europe and the European Union should be considered.
- 12.2 Partnerships will be pivotal to the strategic development of adult learning in Kosovo. Adopting a partnership approach will enhance leadership, initiative and commitment to reforms and provide a ready-made forum for pooling ideas, expertise, experience as well as finance as well as facilitating policy development.
- 12.3 The long-term sustainability of developments in adult learning will be dependent on raising the policy priority of adult learning, on leadership from government and sustainable partnership working. A national partnership framework will therefore be an essential prerequisite for the implementation of all measures for adult learning.
- 12.4 In addition to a pre-condition of partnership, certain wider assumptions have been made in terms of implementing this adult learning strategy. These include:
- a commitment to positive change in society;
 - political stability;
 - formal education system develops in a lifelong learning perspective;
 - financial resources for adult learning are increased.
- 12.5 Given the complex nature of the challenges, maintaining the momentum of commitment and change engendered in the Adult Learning Strategy Team will be important. Further, continuing dialogue with counterparts in the EU25, particularly on processes rather than on models, will help to reduce the time needed to build local capacity, develop and implement reforms and will provide a necessary stimulus.

13. *Life-long learning: links with other parts of the learning system*

- 13.1 The strategy for adult learning does not foresee the development of a separate adult learning system but a single continuous and integrated learning system extending beyond initial education and training to provide more diverse and appropriate learning opportunities for adults. Ensuring good connections between the education system and adult learning will be important.

- 13.2 The adult learning strategy proposed above needs to build on reforms that are planned for school-based vocational education. The diversification of tertiary level studies to incorporate advanced technical studies linked to employment growth sectors for young people and adults will be useful. They would need to be supported by other developments (for example appropriate learning methodologies, short-course, modular provision and internet-based learning).
- 13.3 The development of professional, in-service training of vocational education teachers needs also to be extended to vocational trainers and teachers of adults. Good co-operation between school-based, vocational teachers and adult learning providers will also be useful for developing flexible, appropriate second-chance opportunities for unskilled or poorly skilled young people who drop out of school early or who do not complete upper secondary level schooling.

14. Information, communications and dissemination

- 14.1 Given the size and complexity of the task for reforming and developing a modern and comprehensive adult learning provision for Kosovo over the next 15 years, and given the number and range of staff within stakeholder institutions, including the constituents - Kosovo society - this strategy should be backed up with a professional information and communication strategy and service. This will be important in the interest of increasing public awareness of the importance of adult learning and the real (or potential) returns on learning.
- 14.2 Stakeholders, through partnership, are encouraged to develop a single, dissemination action plan so that results of implementing the strategy measures and achieving progress in the strategic objectives can be widely disseminated.

15. Next Steps

- 15.1 This strategy will be the primary reference document for all adult learning developments for the period 2005-2015. It should be revised every three years to reflect economic, social and political developments and conditions in the country, including Kosovo's relationship with the European Union.
- 15.2 The strategy should be followed up with a sequence of 2-year work programmes clearly identifying the measures (logical framework planning) to be implemented against agreed time frames and budgets. An indication of possible financial support for the development of the first work programme (technical and financial proposal) from EAR should be followed up in June 2004 with a view to programme implementation to get started in 2005.

16. Conclusions

- 16.1 A report in April 2003 on employability in Kosovo concluded that there were 'no quick fixes'. Successful reform would take time and concerted effort by key stakeholders to ensure sustainable impact.⁴¹ One year on, the first Kosovo adult learning strategy presented in this paper echoes those sentiments.
- 16.2 Promoting a quality workforce able to meet new demands from enterprises exposed to greater levels of competition will take time. Accordingly, Kosovo has a two-pronged challenge: dealing with the immediate human factor of market transition, particularly rising unemployment and new skills' requirements, while simultaneously establishing an enabling environment to ensure Kosovo's young people and workers are able to continuously and effectively contribute to a competitive and dynamic economy.
- 16.3 This paper set out with a detailed inventory of constraints to the development of an efficient and effective adult learning service in Kosovo. These are no different from the challenges faced by many transition economies: inadequate financial resources, poor data, quality concerns and little synergy in policy development.
- 16.4 A central tenet of the strategy is that the market agenda and equity agenda are inextricably linked. They must go hand-in-hand in Kosovo to ensure balanced and sustainable growth where human capital will be the bedrock of its development. A second issue is that promoting a competitive and inclusive economy, with a competent and talented workforce, needs to be taken more seriously by the Kosovo administration and social partners. And the issue goes deeper: balanced and inclusive economic policies are required to lessen the risk of a more serious social crisis and further instability.⁴²
- 16.5 At issue is how the problems can be confronted in a coherent and strategic manner. The strategy advocates the fullest possible cooperation between all stakeholders concerned with Kosovo's economic and social development – progress through partnership.
- 16.6 Partnership will be essential if stakeholders are to successfully accommodate the complexity and range of policy issues, structures, financing lines and institutional and cross-stakeholder interests. The key recommendation in this paper is that the successful partnership process established for the elaboration of the strategy be brought forward to the highest levels of government and social partner institutions with the establishment of a National Economic and Human Resource Development Council.

41 op cit. ESOK (2003), p.33

42 Glemy, M. (2004). Violence in Mitrovica. International Herald Tribune. 22 March 2004. p.6

- 16.7 This forum would provide the necessary enabling framework for coherent and sustainable policies to support economic growth, social progress and balanced development. In so doing, Kosovo will make the shift from what is essentially project-driven reform for employment and human resources at present to a more systemic reform where employment and manpower issues are central to future economic strategy.
- 16.8 It is important to underline that the issues raised in this strategy only address how education and training of Kosovo's existing workforce (both employed and unemployed) can be enhanced to meet existing and future demands from the economy. Primary, secondary level and university education, including the fledgling research and development environment, require separate and detailed consideration. There will be clear inter-dependencies between the different parts of the learning system. These will have to be identified and brought forward to the broader debate and eventual development plans for lifelong learning and human capital development.
- 16.9 On the eve of EU's biggest enlargement, the accession of 10 new Member States in May 2004, where economic development, competition and employment are central concerns, it not by accident that this adult learning strategy is launched in Kosovo. All three issues equally apply to Kosovo and will be critical in its bid to join mainstream Europe.
- 16.10 While the adult learning strategy encourages Kosovo to borrow on the guiding principles of EU employment, entrepreneurship and lifelong learning policies, it does so in full appreciation that readiness to follow EU practice will evolve over time as institutional and administrative capacities of government, social partners and civic society develop. However, making relevant policy connections, where possible, at an early stage of reform in Kosovo should pay off. Meeting the EU's 'Copenhagen' competitiveness criteria will not be easy.⁴³ The hard work starts now.
- 16.11 In March 2000, the EU set the objective of 'more and better jobs' for its people as part of a wider bid to establish the most dynamic economic area in the world. Heads of State and Government in Lisbon concluded that 'people are Europe's main asset and should be the focal point of the Union's policies'.⁴⁴ Kosovo is no different. People are Kosovo's main asset and should be the focal point of its policies. Success in Kosovo's economy will be a function of the quality of its manpower. The adult learning strategy should go some way to making this possible.

43 Copenhagen European Council (June 1993) defines the political and economic criteria for countries wishing to join the EU. With respect to economic criteria, countries must have a functioning market economy, as well as the capacity to cope with competitive pressure and market forces within the EU.

44 Lisbon European Council (March 2000): Presidency Conclusions, point 24.

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Annexes

Annex 1

Preparatory workshops - list of participants

Workshop 1, 29 October 2002

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Workshop 2, 13 January 2003

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Annex 2

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Consultation meeting – draft adult learning strategy

9 March 2004

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