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THE STATE OF RESEARCH IN KOSOVO

financed by

Austrian
 Development Cooperation

Pristina, November 2012



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1. Content, goals and project's methodology

1.1. Project's relevance and goals

This project is of great **relevance** for a number of reasons. It is proven that research and innovation are the backbone of any process of socio-economic and political transformation and development. Therefore, research is essential and irreplaceable not only for itself (to exist as such), but also for the benefit of the whole society. The need for a report like this becomes even more immediate in the face of the present unsatisfactory state of academic and scientific research in Kosovo.

The main goal of this project is to understand the presence and scope of the academic and scientific research in Kosovo, as well as the importance and practical use of research results, including identification of present problems and recommendation of alternative and suitable solutions.

The final result of this research project is this study in the form of a comprehensive report, which aims at serving as a reliable information tool for decision-making processes. RIDEA Institute will undertake all the necessary steps to ensure that that this report's recommendations reach decision-makers and relevant and influential *actors* in the field of research.

1.2. Brief description of the project

This project examines the existing state of academic and/or scientific research in Kosovo. It aims at understanding problems and shortcomings in this sphere, as well as the best ways for improvement of the current state of affairs.

Present conditions, in particular regarding investments in the field of research, are not very favourable, whereas improvements in this field (be it with respect to the increase in allocated resources or wider social apprehension) can produce exceptional economic and social effects and results.

The project's background, therefore, is conditioned by a general lack of research activities or relevant research activities and, as a result, lack of expected results.

The target group comprises mainly researchers, scholars and scientists from Kosovo. Nonetheless, the project aims at acting as platform for discussion and change regarding approaches and processes of decision-making by relevant public and private institutions in the field of research.

Finally, as already mentioned, the project's aim is to cross-examine the existing situation in the field of research and innovation in Kosovo in order to identify problems and offer proper solutions.

The expected result is a revived institutional and social discussion regarding the state of research, its societal role, increase of public awareness, as well as various institutional steps in reaction to the project's findings and recommendations.

1.3. Methodology

This project aims at conducting a qualitative and objectively identifiable assessment of the state of research in Kosovo. In order to do this, we have carried out a broad discussion with relevant institutions and representatives from various university and post-university spheres, including interviews (with local and international representatives) as well as comparative assessments and examinations of relevant documents. At the same time, these represent the main methodological tools used to answer the research question. Undoubtedly, while using these methods, this study aims at identifying and exposing various paths that lead towards development and prompting of research and innovation in Kosovo.

In this study we have utilised three main research methods:

- ***First***, interviews with policymakers and various professors and scholars from public and private institutions of higher education (from the fields of social and natural sciences). However, it must be emphasised the fact that a solid number of public and private, university and governing institutions are included in the group of actors interviewed for this study. Thus, people interviewed for this study come from or represent the following institutions:
 - (1) Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MEST);
 - (2) National Research Council (NRC);
 - (3) University of Pristina (UP) (Provost's Office, Steering Council and University Senate);
 - (4) Individual academic units (Deans' offices as well as, at least, one member of the academic staff per academic unit). While selecting the units, RIDEA has made sure that the targeted units are as diverse as possible – including social sciences, humanities and natural sciences - in order to get a wider picture of the state of research;
 - (5) A substantial number of private higher education institutions¹;

¹ A small number of these institutions did not respond to RIDEA's invitation.

- (6) Kosovo Accreditation Agency (KAA); and
 - (7) International institutions that operate in Kosovo and that are or were involved in supporting projects in the field of higher education and research in Kosovo.
- ***Second***, examination of results and findings of reports prepared by the Kosovo Accreditation Agency with regard to research; and
 - ***Third***, collection and examination of data from project reports of international organisations (such as the European Commission annual progress reports) and/or reports or strategies of the respective national institutions (such as the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology or universities themselves).

1.4. Questionnaire

In order to implement the first and crucial methodological step of the project – interviews – it became necessary to formulate a series of specific questions, which in turn would help to achieve the aims of the project. In this way, in order to be able to gather the necessary information and achieve project's goals, RIDEA has drafted a comprehensive questionnaire with 20 questions. The complete text of the questionnaire is attached in the form of an annex in this report.

1.5. Target groups and beneficiaries

The main target group comprises researchers, scholars and scientists who are based or work in Kosovo. A related sub-group is that of students enrolled in research-focused programs, such as MA and PhD programs.

On the other hand, when it comes to potential beneficiaries of the study, it is those key institutions involved in the sphere of research or designated to do so that are expected to profit the most. The main institutions that benefit from this study are: the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology; the National Research Council, the University of Pristina, as well as other public and private institutions of higher education in Kosovo.

In addition, findings and information gathered as part of this project could potentially be useful for various foreign donors and other investing institutions.

2. Research in Kosovo: Meaning, problem and legal and institutional processes

2.1. Terminology

Before going deeper into the analysis of the state of research in Kosovo and for the purpose of clarity with regard to this report's subject, it is essential to provide a brief discussion of the concept of 'research'. As is the case with many other notions, there exist multiple definitions and understandings of the term. In a broader context, 'research' refers to the process of collection of data and information that helps to deepen knowledge. In this respect, reading a book or gathering information on Internet could be considered a sort of research activity.

A more detailed and concise definition of scientific or academic research (which is the subject of this report) involves conducting a methodological study in order to prove a hypothesis or to give an answer to a specific problem. So, the main aim of a research activity is to provide a clear answer or solution to an issue or problem. Moreover, research should be systematic and follow a series of steps and high standards; research is well organised and planned, and includes reading and revision of the existing literature in the light of the posed problem. These rules are more or less standard, although they can vary depending on the discipline or area of study. In any case, a proper research, be it in exact sciences, history or economics requires development of an original interpretation and idea or thought by the person undertaking research.

In Kosovo, the Law no. 2004/42 on Scientific Research Activity defines the meaning of the term 'research' and various types of research. Thus, according to article 2.2, 'Scientific-research activity presents systematic creative work, with [the] goal [of] researching and developing new acknowledgments [knowledge], using and implementing them [it] in practice.'² Therefore, in this study, the term 'research' refers to a systematic undertaking, which follows a series of strict planning and writing steps, with the aim of researching new knowledge or developing existing knowledge, as well as its utilisation and implementation in practice. This meaning, in a more detailed format and specific sub-division, could take the form of the following three types of research, similar to the one defined in the law on Scientific Research Activity: (1) fundamental research; (2) applicative research; and (3) development research.³

According to article 3.2 of the Law 2004/42, fundamental research includes deep theoretical research, experimental or combined, undertaken to achieve new knowledge, or to research new fields of study, aiming at explaining the occurrences and physical models in the long-term

² Official Gazette of the Republic of Kosovo (2006) *Law No. 2004/42 on Scientific Research Activity*. Available at: http://www.gazetazyrtare.com/e-gov/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=35&lang=en (accessed on 30. 10. 2012).

³ *Ibid.*, p. 2.

interest of their implementation.⁴ The next paragraph of the same disposition (3.3) offers the following definition about applicative research – ‘Applicative researches present creative work, backed on results from fundamental researching, undertaken to solve the appointed practical issues.’⁵ The third category of research – development research, according to article 3.4 of this law, includes ‘creative work based on results of fundamental and applicative research undertaken with the aim of applying new processes or perfecting the existing one’.⁶

As already stated, this study deals with the three aforementioned categories of research (both the basic research and its proportions, as well as the importance of its practical implementation) that will altogether be used as part of the notion of ‘research’.

2.2. Problem analysis

The main problems that call for actions and measures (in this case, in the form of this study) are almost exclusively related to the low volume of research and research activities. As stated in the National Program of Science of the Republic of Kosovo ‘research and technological development (RTD) is still a marginal undertaking in Kosovo’.⁷ In the first instance, even basic science and technology statistics are lacking. Likewise, there is no structured system which requires that relevant institutions organise and report their research activities.

For example, in the case of the institutional accreditation of the Faculty of Economy, University of Pristina (June 2012), it becomes clear that the issue of research is something that depends almost solely on ‘individual initiatives’⁸. This is evident also in the case of the analysis of the results from the questionnaire (see the next chapter of this report). For this reason, the Institutional Accreditation Report recommends the establishment of a scientific research centre that would engage the personnel and academic staff concentrated on research and which the institution would support.

In the case of the Faculty of Law, however, the Final Evaluation Report emphasises lack of plans for personal research and therefore it recommends that ‘All academics should have personal

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ National Research Council (2010) – *The National Research Programme of the Republic of Kosovo*, Pristina 30. 03. 2010. Available at: http://www.masht-gov.net/advCms/documents/NRP_FINAL_%20English.pdf (accessed on 30. 10. 2012).

⁸ Kosovo Accreditation Agency (2012) *Public University Pristina: Faculty of Economics Institutional and Programme Accreditation Report*, June 2012. Available at: http://www.akreditimi-ks.org/sq/?Evaluation_of_University_of_Prishtina:Economic_Faculty%26nbsp%3B:Evaluation_Procedure_2012 (accessed on 30. 10. 2012).

research plans which are reviewed regularly by the Faculty of Law'.⁹ The results of this study show a low and unsatisfactory level of research activities, both with regard to the scope and quality and value of the undertaken research. In addition to institutional accreditation reports and interviews (see the next chapter of this report), other relevant international organisations confirm the deplorable state of research in Kosovo.

Moreover, the European Commission Progress Report on Kosovo (2011) noted only 'limited progresses in the field of research and innovation and their approximation with the EU standards'.¹⁰ In reality, as regards the issue of investment in research, the Report notes that 'there was no progress whatsoever'. Further the report states that 'Substantial efforts are thus necessary to contribute to the objectives and targets of the European Research Area and Innovation Union'¹¹.

Consequences of the problem go deeper and further than the mere fact of the existence or relative absence of research. A similar problem is the issue of research quality and relevance. Results from this study show that there is a considerable amount of research of low quality and relevance. Furthermore, there are no studies that show the outreach and circulation of research results as well as their wider societal impact. These issues were discussed with the interviewees involved in this research; thus, the following sections present results from these discussions.

2.3. Institutional and legal structure

Kosovo has put in place a set of legal and institutional structures that regulate and help govern issues related to education and research.

Law No.04/L-037 on Higher Education in the Republic of Kosovo constitutes the core legislation in the field of higher education.¹² The law requires that institutions (and programs) of higher education fulfil all the internationally recognised quality standards, which are assessed by the Kosovo Accreditation Agency. According to article 15 of this law, all providers of higher

⁹ Kosovo Accreditation Agency (2012) *Evaluation Report by the Team of Experts Assessing the Faculty of Law of the University of Pristina*, June 2012. Available at: http://www.akreditimi-ks.org/?Vlersimi_i_Universitetit%26nbsp%3Bt%EB_Prishtin%EBs:Fakulteti_Juridik:Procedura_e_vlersimit_2012 (accessed 30. 10. 2012).

¹⁰ European Commission (2011) *Kosovo* 2011 Progress Report*. Available at: http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/key_documents/2011/package/ks_rapport_2011_en.pdf (accessed on 30. 10. 2012).

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Official Gazette of the Republic of Kosovo (2011) *Law No.04/L-037 on Higher Education in the Republic of Kosovo*, No. 14/9. Available at: [http://gazetazyrtare.rks-gov.net/Documents/Ligji%20per%20arsimin%20e%20larte%20\(anglisht\).pdf](http://gazetazyrtare.rks-gov.net/Documents/Ligji%20per%20arsimin%20e%20larte%20(anglisht).pdf) (accessed on 30. 10. 2012).

education shall be subject to audit procedures and quality evaluation by the KAA in accordance with this Law and sub-legal acts.¹³

When it comes to research, the Law on Scientific Research Activity provides the institutional basis and strategic orientation regarding research and innovation.¹⁴ This law also establishes the National Research Council, which is mandated to promote and manage development of scientific-research activity of Kosovo (article 53). The Council has 15 members and, according to article 54 of the Law on Scientific Research Activity has the following competences:

(a) Presents to the Government of Kosovo the National Research Program proposal;

(b) Evaluates, in a comparative manner, situation regarding scientific-research activity, its position and development at the national and international level;

(c) Gives its opinion on the need to establish scientific-research institutes;

(d) Proposes and encourages measures aiming at advancement of scientific-research activity;

(e) Reviews and gives opinions about important issues regarding general development in Kosovo, as requested by the Kosovo Assembly.

KRC has developed the National Research Program of the Republic of Kosovo, a five-year program that aims at improving the state of research in Kosovo. This program has been adopted by the Kosovo Assembly. The program has identified 5 plus 1 priorities, although it notes that there is need for investment to revive scientific research in almost all fields.¹⁵ The National Research Programme has identified the following five research priorities:

- (1) Natural Resources, Energy and Environment
- (2) Agricultural Production and Food Safety
- (3) Medical Research
- (4) Social and Economic Studies
- (5) Linguistic, Cultural and Historic Studies.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ See footnote 1.

¹⁵ See footnote 7.

In addition, the field of Information and Communication Technologies is considered as cross-horizontal priority that may occur in any of the abovementioned fields. The planning team in charge of drafting the program has used the following six criteria for priority setting: relevance to economic and social development of the country; number and quality of human resources for within the country and Diaspora; condition of research infrastructure; contribution to preservation and promotion of national identity of Kosovo; potential to achieve research results and apply them within the country and abroad; existing international cooperation in a field.¹⁶

Overall, it could be said that the necessary institutional and legal framework regulating issues in the field of research and innovation has been put in place.

However, in order to achieve objectives deriving from an eventual Stabilisation and Association Agreement (SA) with the European Union, in addition to the existing legal and institutional framework, there is an acute need for investment in the field of research and innovation. This is also a pre-condition for economic and social development of the country. Therefore, as stated in the European Commission's 2012 Analytical Report on Kosovo, there is a need to establish a research fund to support the activities of researchers and build the capacity of research institutions in Kosovo.¹⁷ Thus, it can be concluded that the main remaining challenges are the lack of scientifically qualified personnel, the low number of PhD students, insufficient laboratory equipment and inadequate technical know-how. Moreover, the research community in Kosovo remains rather isolated vis-à-vis the international scientific community.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ European Commission (2012) *Kosovo Analytical Report 2012*. Available at: http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/key_documents/2012/package/ks_feasibility_2012_en.pdf (accessed on 30. 10. 2012).

3. The state of (academic and/or scientific) research in Kosovo – Presence or scope of research activities in various fields of study

As argued in the previous sections of this study, scientific and academic research is essential for the overall progress and development of any given society. Clearly, this is valid in the case of the Kosovar society as well. But, how was in the past and how is the state of research in Kosovo nowadays?

Due to the overall political and social context present in Kosovo in the last decade of the 20th century, as well as earlier, the state of research in Kosovo was poor and underdeveloped. However, in the aftermath of the war in Kosovo in 1999, the new emerging reality has created more positive circumstances for research and scientific work and activities. So, the following question arises: was this new opportunity used and, if so, what was its impact in prompting and advancing research activity in Kosovo?

This study's finding regarding developments in the field of academic and scientific research in the last decade in Kosovo are not very promising. In reality, it seems that there is a general consensus among scholars from different fields that the state of research in Kosovo has reached its lowest point.¹⁸ This statement is valid for both the sectors of the higher education in Kosovo: a) public sector and b) private sector.

This severe state of research in Kosovo stretches across disciplines, including economic and social sciences, as well as natural and technical ones.

¹⁸ Interview with Arben Hajrullahu – Professor at the Faculty of Philosophy (Pristina: 8/10/2012); Interview with Arbnora Krasniqi-Loshaj – Coordinator of the Economics Program – Victory College (Pristina: 11/10/2012); Interview with Basri Çapriqi – Professor at the Faculty of Philology (UP) and former Head of the Steering Council of the University of Pristina (Pristina: 12/10/2012); Interview with Bujar Dugolli – Dean of the Faculty of Philosophy (UP) (Pristina: 4/10/2012); Interview with Eda Vula – Professor at the Faculty of Education and member of the National Research Council (Pristina: 24/10/2012); Interview with Ferdije Zhushi – Head of the National Quality Council and professor at the Faculty of Biology (Pristina: 9/10/2012); Interview with Fetah Podvorica – Professor of demography at the University of Pristina (Pristina: 15/10/2012); Interview with Ismet Potera – Deputy Director of the Pedagogical Institute (Pristina: 8/10/2012); Interview with Kimete Canaj – Project Coordinator at Tempus (Pristina: 11/10/2012); Interview with Mo Vaziri – Vice President for academic issues and development at the University for Business and Technology (UBT) (Pristina: 17/10/2012); Interview with Rrahman Paçarizi – former Vice Dean for Teaching at the AAB University and current coordinator for science and lecturer at the Faculty of Philology (UP) (Pristina: 08/10/2012); Interview with Safet Merovci – Professor of entrepreneurship and financial markets at the Faculty of Economy and former Vice Dean for academic issues (UP) (Pristina: 22/10/2012); Interview with Zejnullah Gruda – Professor of International Law (Pristina: 17/10/2012); Interview with Sali Bashota – Director of the National and University Library of Kosovo (Pristina: 11/10/2012); Interview with Valmir Krasniqi – Publisher of articles in Math Problems Journal (UP) (Pristina: 16/10/2012).

Moreover, this study's findings suggest that in various fields of study the state of research in Kosovo is even below the level of other countries of the Western Balkans.¹⁹ This implies that it cannot even be compared to the Western European standards. Likewise, there seems to be a common consent among researchers and scholars in Kosovo that academic and scientific research in Kosovo as well as eventual achievements in this field are mostly results of individual initiatives, thus proving a general lack of institutional initiatives or endeavours.²⁰ Thus, although there are certain individuals within the Kosovar society and academic sphere who take the initiative to do research and write studies of a decent quality and in accordance with international standards, there is a general lack of institutional initiatives in this direction. In this respect, the 2010 National Research Program of the NRC states that the existing research activities are of basic character and in many cases are characterised by individual initiatives, although currently there are about 90 academic and research staff involved at the University of Pristina and other research institutes in Kosovo.²¹

When it comes to research activity of the academic staff in various disciplines, in general it is considered to be of poor quality. Save some individual cases, one can notice a lack of

¹⁹ Interview with Arben Hajrullahu – Professor at the Faculty of Philosophy (Pristina: 8/10/2012); Interview with Basri Çapriqi – Professor at the Faculty of Philology (UP) and former Head of the Steering Council of the University of Pristina (Pristina: 12/10/2012); Interview with Bujar Dugolli – Dean of the Faculty of Philosophy (UP) (Pristina: 4/10/2012); Interview with Eda Vula – Professor at the Faculty of Education and member of the National Research Council (Pristina: 24/10/2012); Interview with Ferdije Zhushi – Head of the National Quality Council and professor at the Faculty of Biology (Pristina: 9/10/2012); Interview with Fetah Podvorica – Professor of demography at the University of Pristina (Pristina: 15/10/2012); Interview with Ismet Potera – Deputy Director of the Pedagogical Institute (Pristina: 8/10/2012); Interview with Safet Merovci – Professor of entrepreneurship and financial markets at the Faculty of Economy and former Vice Dean for academic issues (UP) (Pristina: 22/10/2012); Interview with Zejnullah Gruda – Professor of International Law (Pristina: 17/10/2012); Interview with Sali Bashota – Director of the National and University Library of Kosovo (Pristina: 11/10/2012); Interview with Vjollca Komoni – former Vice Dean for Teaching Issues, Vice Dean for Financial Issues at the Faculty of Electric and Computer Engineering (Pristina: 17/10/2012); Interview with Fadil Musa – Vice Dean for Teaching Issues at the Faculty of Agriculture (Pristina: 11/10/2012).

²⁰ Interview with Arben Hajrullahu – Professor at the Faculty of Philosophy (Pristina: 8/10/2012); Interview with Basri Çapriqi – Professor at the Faculty of Philology (UP) and former Head of the Steering Council of the University of Pristina (Pristina: 12/10/2012); Interview with Bujar Dugolli – Dean of the Faculty of Philosophy (UP) (Pristina: 4/10/2012); Interview with Eda Vula – Professor at the Faculty of Education and member of the National Research Council (Pristina: 24/10/2012); Interview with Ferdije Zhushi – Head of the National Quality Council and professor at the Faculty of Biology (Pristina: 9/10/2012); Interview with Fetah Podvorica – Professor of demography at the University of Pristina (Pristina: 15/10/2012); Interview with Ismet Potera – Deputy Director of the Pedagogical Institute (Pristina: 8/10/2012); Interview with Rrahman Paçarizi – former Vice Dean for Teaching at the AAB University and current coordinator for science and lecturer at the Faculty of Philology (UP) (Pristina: 08/10/2012); Interview with Safet Merovci – Professor of entrepreneurship and financial markets at the Faculty of Economy and former Vice Dean for academic issues (UP) (Pristina: 22/10/2012); Interview with Zejnullah Gruda – Professor of International Law (Pristina: 17/10/2012); Interview with Sali Bashota – Director of the National and University Library of Kosovo (Pristina: 11/10/2012); Interview with Vjollca Komoni – former Vice Dean for Teaching Issues, Vice Dean for Financial Issues at the Faculty of Electric and Computer Engineering (Pristina: 17/10/2012); Interview with Fadil Musa – Vice Dean for Teaching Issues at the Faculty of Agriculture (Pristina: 11/10/2012); Interview with Milazim Krasniqi – Head of the Department of Journalism at the Faculty of Philology, former member of the Steering Committee of the University of Pristina (Pristina: 04/10/2012); Interview with Kimete Canaj – Project Coordinator at Tempus (Pristina: 11/10/2012).

²¹ See footnote 7.

institutional practice of reporting on research plans or projects, as well as on research results. While reporting about research plans is missing completely, some institutions report about research results only in the cases of the re-appointment of professors, which take place every four years.²² One of the main reasons for this lack of reporting about research plans and results is related to the lack of funding for research projects.²³

In addition, there are some institutions that conduct research in certain fields, but at very low levels. Also, there are research initiatives at the private institutions of higher education in Kosovo, but most of them remain in a stage of infancy. Likewise, there are some modest initiatives to do research at various departments and programs at the Faculty of Agriculture and Natural Sciences. However, one can also find faculties where research is not even discussed and there are no results whatsoever.²⁴

Indeed, there is plenty of evidence that points to the fact that there is a lack even of basic and easy-to-do and inexpensive research. For instance, most of the trees in the streets all around the country are planted without an initial research. As a result of the lack of prior research, we do not have any idea which trees (linden or hornbeam) would be more useful in absorbing dust and gases.²⁵

In short, based on the elaboration so far, the state of scientific and academic research in Kosovo is grave and alarming. Therefore, the following section discusses this study's findings that shed light on the factors and causes of this situation.

3.1. Causes or factors of the severe state of research

Based on the interviews conducted with scholars and researchers from different disciplines, this study has identified a set of factors, from financial ones to those related to the lack of resources, which have contributed to the present state of affairs in the field of research. In reality, similar findings can be encountered in other analytical documents, including the EC Analytical Report on Kosovo (2012), which identifies the lack of scientifically qualified personnel, the low number of PhD students, insufficient laboratory equipment and inadequate technical know-how as the main challenges in the field of research in Kosovo. Moreover, the research community in Kosovo remains rather isolated vis-à-vis the international scientific community.²⁶

²² Interview with Vjollca Komoni – former Vice Dean for Teaching Issues, Vice Dean for Financial Issues at the Faculty of Electric and Computer Engineering (Pristina: 17/10/2012).

²³ Interview with Fadil Musa – Vice Dean for Teaching Issues at the Faculty of Agriculture (Pristina: 11/10/2012).

²⁴ Interview with Ferdije Zhushi – Head of the National Council of Quality and professor at the Faculty of Biology. (Pristina: 9/10/2012).

²⁵ Interview with Ismet Potera – Deputy Director of the Pedagogical Institute (Pristina: 8/10/2012).

²⁶ See footnote 17.

The main findings regarding factors and causes of the unfavourable state of research in Kosovo are listed here. The following discussion as well as ranking is presented in a logical fashion.

a) Lack of budget for academic/scientific research

According to this study, the main cause of the severe state of research is the lack of funding. In fact, most of the interviewees point to the fact that there is a general lack of funding for research, which should be provided by the Kosovo Government and MEST. It is worth mentioning that according to the Lisbon Agenda all the EU Member Countries should allocate 3 per cent of their GDP for scientific research. Kosovo, as well as other countries in the Western Balkans, lag behind when it comes to compliance with the conditions set by this agenda. To be more concrete, even Croatia - the state that allocates the highest budget for science (0.7 of its GDP) among the states of the region – falls very short of the 3 per cent criteria set in the Lisbon Agenda.

However, among all the countries of the region Kosovo occupies the last place allocating only 0.1 per cent of its GDP for science and research. MEST allocates a budget of 1,000,000 Euro which should be used to fund research projects in the six priority sectors identified in the National Research Program of the Republic of Kosovo.²⁷ Most of the projects funded from this budget are in the fields of social sciences, economy and agriculture.²⁸ However, as noted previously and according to the interviewees, 0.1 percent of the total GDP dedicated to science and research is a very small, if not insignificant budget.²⁹ Consequently, there is a general lack of

²⁷ European Commission (2011) *Kosovo* 2011 Progress Report*. Available at: http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/key_documents/2011/package/ks_rapport_2011_en.pdf (accessed on 30. 10. 2012).

²⁸ Interview with Mensur Neziri – Expert at the Centre for Innovation and Technology Transfer (CITT) (Pristina: 10/10/2012); Interview with Murteza Osdautaj – Department of Science and Technology MEST (Pristina: 17/10/2012).

²⁹ Interview with Arben Hajrullahu – Professor at the Faculty of Philosophy (Pristina: 8/10/2012); Interview with Arbnora Krasniqi-Loshaj – Coordinator of the Economics Program – Victory College (Pristina: 11/10/2012); Interview with Besnik Limaj – Director of National Projects at WUS Austria (Pristina: 15/10/2012); Interview with Basri Çapriqi – Professor at the Faculty of Philology (UP) and former Head of the Steering Council of the University of Pristina (Pristina: 12/10/2012); Interview with Bujar Dugolli – Dean of the Faculty of Philosophy (UP) (Pristina: 4/10/2012); Interview with Eda Vula – Professor at the Faculty of Education and member of the National Research Council (Pristina: 24/10/2012); Interview with Ferdiqe Zhushi – Head of the National Quality Council and professor at the Faculty of Biology (Pristina: 9/10/2012); Interview with Fetah Podvorica – Professor of demography at the University of Pristina (Pristina: 15/10/2012); Interview with Ismet Potera – Deputy Director of the Pedagogical Institute (Pristina: 8/10/2012); Interview with Kimete Canaj – Project Coordinator at Tempus (Pristina: 11/10/2012); Interview with Rrahman Paçarizi – former Vice Dean for Teaching at the AAB University and current coordinator for science and lecturer at the Faculty of Philology (UP) (Pristina: 08/10/2012); Interview with Safet Merovci – Professor of entrepreneurship and financial markets at the Faculty of Economy and former Vice Dean for academic issues (UP) (Pristina: 22/10/2012); Interview with Zejnullah Gruda – Professor of International Law (Pristina: 17/10/2012); Interview with Sali Bashota – Director of the National and University Library of Kosovo (Pristina: 11/10/2012); Interview with Vjollca Komoni – former Vice Dean for Teaching Issues, Vice Dean for Financial Issues at the Faculty of Electric and Computer Engineering (Pristina: 17/10/2012); Interview with Fadil Musa – Vice Dean for Teaching Issues at the Faculty of Agriculture (Pristina: 11/10/2012); Interview with Milazim Krasniqi – Head of the Department of Journalism at the Faculty of Philology, former member of the Steering Committee of the University of Pristina (Pristina: 04/10/2012); Interview with Frashër Demaj – Institute of History of Kosovo (Pristina: 9/10/2012).

funds for studies in the archives, libraries, museums and different archaeological parks both in Kosovo and abroad.³⁰

Equally, the Evaluation Report (2009) of the Kosovo Accreditation Agency argues that the lack of funding de-motivated academic staff and scholars to engage in research activities.³¹ In a similar vein, European Commission's 2012 Analytical Report on Kosovo identifies lack of funding as a major problem and argues for the need to establish a research fund to support the activities of researchers and build the capacity of research institutions in Kosovo.³²

In addition to the lack of funds allocated by the government, there is a general lack of funds for research allocated by private and public institutions of higher education in Kosovo. Taking about this issue of grave concern, the Head of the National Council of Quality said:

The lack of funds for research is of great concern for us as an agency. In other words, there are no incentives for the academic staff and scholars to embark on research. In the case of institutions in other countries (which cooperate with us), in addition to their funds, there are funds allocated at the national as well as international level. Thus, in Kosovo too there should be more investments in science and research because without such investments Kosovo can't develop its economy.³³

In the last years there have been some initiatives by international organisations to enable local institutions to apply for small grants for research. A case in point is the 'Higher-Kos' project, which encourages research at the University of Pristina in cooperation with Austrian institutions. Currently, 'Higher-Kos' provides funds for 10 different research projects in the form of grants.³⁴ Notwithstanding this, research funds remain scarce.

In brief, the present situation in Kosovo is characterised by a general lack of funds for science and research both at the national level (0.1 percent of the GDP) and at the level of private and public providers of higher education.

b) Lack of political will, policies and applicable strategies

According to the scholars and researchers interviewed in this study, another important cause of the grave state of research in Kosovo is the lack of political will, policies and applicable strategies in the field of research. Although MEST and other relevant institutions in Kosovo have drafted various qualitative and contemporary documents and strategies (for example, the Kosovo Education Strategic Plan 2011-2016), no major steps were taken to implement them. Another line of argumentation is that the present situation is conditioned by the fact that most of the

³⁰ Interview with Gëzim Aliu – Independent Researcher at the Language Department, Institute of Albanology (Pristina: 17/10/2012).

³¹ Kosovo Accreditation Agency (2009) *Evaluation report by the team of experts assessing the University of Pristina in the process of re-accreditation by the Kosovo Accreditation Agency*. Available at: [http://www.akreditimi-ks.org/sq/?download=FR%20UP%20Inst.%202009%20\(e\).pdf](http://www.akreditimi-ks.org/sq/?download=FR%20UP%20Inst.%202009%20(e).pdf) (accessed on 30. 10. 2012).

³² See footnote 17.

³³ Interview with Ferdije Zhushi – Head of the National Council of Quality and professor at the Faculty of Biology. (Pristina: 9/10/2012).

³⁴ Interview with Besnik Limaj – Director of National Projects at WUS Austria (Pristina: 15/10/2012).

people in charge of policy-making in the field of science and research have never been involved in research activities and/or do not have higher education.³⁵ Likewise, as a result of the lack of willingness and professional skills in research management, research has become a formality.³⁶

c) Infrastructure

Another major factor that hinders development of research in Kosovo is related to the bad infrastructure and lack of physical infrastructure for professional research activity. More concretely, there is a general lack of physical space, tools, instruments and labs (the existing ones are too old) necessary for modern and qualitative scientific and academic research.³⁷ Therefore, it can be said that there are no pre-conditions for proper research activities.³⁸

d) Doctoral programs

This detrimental factor can be explained through two interconnected issues: (i) lack of proper doctoral research programs in various fields of study; and (ii) possibility of getting diplomas from universities in neighbouring countries in the fields of study considered to be worthless. To begin with, the existing doctoral programs in Kosovo are not compatible with the market and economic demand.³⁹ Second, even in the cases when there are doctoral study programs, the level of research seems to be below the required academic and scientific criteria.⁴⁰

For example, at the Maths Department (UP) some 70 per cent of professors did not supervise until graduation a single PhD student; this seems to come as a result of the lack of concrete study program thus forcing students to go to Tirana to pursue their PhD studies.⁴¹ On the other hand, opportunities for students to get diplomas at private universities in Ohrid (Macedonia) or in Novi Pazar (Serbia) are seen with great suspicion by a number of interviewees. There are individuals among the interviewees who argue that degrees and academic titles granted to students who do not have a single publication or in cases when dissertations are not published are worthless and as such contribute to the devaluation of academic and scientific research.⁴²

³⁵ Interview with Arben Hajrullahu – Professor at the Faculty of Philosophy (Pristina: 8/10/2012);

³⁶ Interview with Safet Merovci – Professor of entrepreneurship and financial markets at the Faculty of Economy and former Vice Dean for academic issues (UP) (Pristina: 22/10/2012).

³⁷ Interview with Frashër Demaj – Institute of History of Kosovo (Pristina: 9/10/2012); Interview with Mensur Neziri – Expert at the Centre for Innovation and Technology Transfer (CITT) (Pristina: 10/10/2012); Interview with Agim Gashi – Professor at the Department of Pedagogy at the University of Pristina (Pristina: 17/10/2012); Interview with Besnik Limaj – Director of National Projects at WUS Austria (Pristina: 15/10/2012); Interview with Fetah Podvorica – Professor of demography at the University of Pristina (Pristina: 15/10/2012).

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Interview with Besnik Limaj – Director of National Projects at WUS Austria (Pristina: 15/10/2012).

⁴⁰ Interview with Eda Vula – Professor at the Faculty of Education and member of the National Research Council (Pristina: 24/10/2012); Interview with Valmir Krasniqi – Publisher of articles in Math Problems Journal (UP) (Pristina: 16/10/2012).

⁴¹ Interview with Valmir Krasniqi – Publisher of articles in Math Problems Journal (UP) (Pristina: 16/10/2012).

⁴² Interview with Safet Merovci – Professor of entrepreneurship and financial markets at the Faculty of Economy and former Vice Dean for academic issues (UP) (Pristina: 22/10/2012).

e) Teaching vs. Research

Another related cause of the unfavourable state of research in Kosovo is lack of awareness among most of the public and private providers of higher education about the interconnectedness between teaching and research. In other words, most of the professors are engaged in many departments or universities. Also, some of the universities overburden their staff with teaching thus neglecting the research component.⁴³

So, universities are mostly focused on teaching (teaching as priority) whereas members of the staff are not required to do any research or publish.⁴⁴ In recent years, MEST has initiated the organisation of the ‘Science Week’ that, despite of the fact that it represents a good initiative, it remains a symbolic act, thus reflecting MEST’s wrong approach and ineffectiveness in the field of research.

f) Lack of research tradition

Another major factor is lack of tradition. In comparison to other European countries, Kosovo has been lagging behind (in particular in the last 20 years), also due to the fact that research work requires dedication and time – it often takes 5-6 years to complete a research project and come up with results.⁴⁵ Likewise, there is a lack of tradition of team and institutional work where universities or departments would apply for bigger research grants. In particular, there is an acute lack of institutes and research groups that function within departments or universities, as is the case in the Western European countries. It is essential to have core research units or priority fields or research due to the fact that it is almost impossible for an institution to conduct research in all the fields of study.⁴⁶ In reality, such groups and research institutes do not exist within faculties and departments in Kosovo. For instance, even one of the newest academics units at the University of Pristina – Faculty of Education – lacks a research centre. In general, there is a lack of organisation tradition, including division of competences, as well as lack of research centres or offices; hence the situation where scholars deal with everything.⁴⁷ When the academic staff at the Faculty of Education was organised a study visit to Italy in the aftermath of the establishment of this institution, they could see organisation of work there, as well as close connections between research institutions and academic units (which is missing in Kosovo).⁴⁸ Likewise, a similar situation in the field of research groups and institutions dominates at one of the oldest

⁴³ Interview with Mensur Neziri – Expert at the Centre for Innovation and Technology Transfer (CITT) (Pristina: 10/10/2012); Interview with Ragip Gjoshi – Political Adviser at MEST (Pristina: 11/10/2012).

⁴⁴ Interview with Agim Gashi – Professor at the Department of Pedagogy at the University of Pristina (Pristina: 17/10/2012); Interview with Besnik Limaj – Director of National Projects at WUS Austria (Pristina: 15/10/2012); Interview with Eda Vula – Professor at the Faculty of Education and member of the National Research Council (Pristina: 24/10/2012); Interview with Arben Hajrullahu – Professor at the Faculty of Philosophy (Pristina: 8/10/2012).

⁴⁵ Interview with Kimete Canaj – Project Coordinator at Tempus (Pristina: 11/10/2012).

⁴⁶ Interview with Ferdije Zhushi – Head of the National Council of Quality and professor at the Faculty Biology (Pristina: 9/10/2012).

⁴⁷ Interview with Eda Vula – Professor at the Faculty of Education and member of the National Research Council (Pristina: 24/10/2012).

⁴⁸ Ibid.

faculty in Kosovo – the Faculty of Law. For instance, this faculty lacks a centre or institute of criminology, which could contribute in the overall development of the Kosovar society.⁴⁹ Equally, this study has revealed the fact that throughout the providers of the higher education in Kosovo research groups or institutes exist only formally but are dysfunctional. Partly, this is a legacy from the earlier period in which research was done based on individual initiative and without proper institutional support and coordination.⁵⁰ But, unfortunately, the situation has not changed significantly in the aftermath of the end of the war in Kosovo in 1999.

Rare exceptions to this poor reality are the fields of *language, literature, culture* and *history*, which are characterised by the existence of a more solid and older research tradition. Existence of a larger number of research projects in these fields is also conditioned by the fact that they do not require a large budget and physical conditions such as labs and other specific instruments which often cost a lot. A very positive example is the annual seminar of the Albanian language and literature, which has a very long and rich tradition.

g) Lack of coordination between research, market and institutions

Another reason for the grave situation in the field of research in Kosovo is related to the lack of interaction and closer coordination between researchers, market and institutions. Most of the interviewees in this study argue that they have never been contacted by relevant institutions regarding their expertise and consultation. Only a small number of scholars interviewed attest to have been contacted by international institutions such as GIZ, USAID, UNICEF, etc., and asked to offer their expertise and professional services.

In a similar vein, only a small number of interviewees mention the fact that they are in contacts with and offer their professional services and advice to MEST.⁵¹ However, the trend continues to be negative. There is a general lack of awareness among public and private institutions and companies in using and profiting from research work and activates. As argued by one of the interviewees, so far there are no cases when reforms were planned and implemented based on results and findings of a research study or project.⁵²

Overall, it seems that there is a lack of social and institutional awareness about the relevance of interaction and connection between research activities, market and institutions. For example, in many developed countries, political parties and institutions organise regular studies and surveys to measure their impact and performance, as well as public's stance on various issues. In contrast, in the case of Kosovo, most of the organisations and institutions do not request studies or surveys, whereas political parties arrange for studies and surveys only during electoral

⁴⁹ Interview with Rexhep Gashi – Professor at the Faculty of Law (Pristina: 16/10/2012).

⁵⁰ Interview with Bajram Kosumi – Member of the National Council of Quality and Professor at the Department of Journalism (Pristina: 9/10/2012);

⁵¹ Interview with Eda Vula – Professor at the Faculty of Education and member of the National Research Council (Pristina: 24/10/2012); Interview with Kimete Canaj – Project Coordinator at Tempus (Pristina: 11/10/2012).

⁵² Interview with Eda Vula – Professor at the Faculty of Education and member of the National Research Council (Pristina: 24/10/2012);

campaigns and in most of the cases they are formality and politically biased.⁵³ Along these lines of argumentation, another important concerning issue is the quality of research. More often than not, research methodology and originality is unreliable; hence the lack of connection between research, market and institutions. Due to the fact that many research projects do not use all the relevant sources and often do not correspond with reality, their results are not implemented in practice.⁵⁴

On the other hand, there are cases when there are relevant and reliable studies but they are not used by Kosovar institutions and society. For example, there have been several studies in the field of education (i.e. studies on school drop-out rates among children), or studies on evaluation of ecological state of waters, which were not used at all by relevant institutions or those who requested them.⁵⁵ In other words, even in the cases of reliable research projects, their results and recommendation are not used and implementing in practice. Irrespective of the quality of a research project, if its results and recommendation are not used and implemented, it can be said that they had no societal use or impact whatsoever.⁵⁶

h) Lack of international peer-reviewed academic journals

Another related problem in the field of research in Kosovo is lack of international peer-reviewed academic journals that have impact factor. Even the University of Pristina, which is the oldest university in Kosovo (established in 1970), does not have a single peer-reviewed journal with impact factor where students and professors could publish their research and work.⁵⁷ This has been requested several times by the Publishing Council of the University of Pristina but hasn't been achieved yet.⁵⁸ Similar situation is present at the private providers of higher education in Kosovo, which do not have international peer-reviewed journals or ones that have an international impact factor. In this context, Kosovo's disputed status poses an obstacle for the country which cannot have its International Standard Serial Number (ISSN). This unique eight-digit number is used to identify a print or electronic periodical publication. As a result of this, articles and research published in Kosovo cannot reach international audiences. Also, this demotivates researchers in Kosovo to publish their research and work inside the country. On the other hand, although there are some journals which are published by private or public providers of higher education in Kosovo, they are not international and peer-reviewed and do not have an impact factor. For instance, Faculty of Law (UP) publishes a journal with articles from all related fields of studies. However, the problem is that the journal does not have enough people who could submit their manuscripts and also struggles to get more readers. Another crucial and

⁵³ Interview with Milazim Krasniqi – Head of the Department of Journalism at the Faculty of Philology, former member of the Steering Committee of the University of Pristina (Pristina: 04/10/2012).

⁵⁴ Interview with Zejnullah Gruda – Professor of International Law (Pristina: 17/10/2012).

⁵⁵ Interview with Ferdije Zhushi – Head of the National Council of Quality and professor at the Faculty Biology (Pristina: 9/10/2012); Interview with Ismet Potera – Deputy Director of the Pedagogical Institute (Pristina: 8/10/2012).

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ Interview with Bujar Dugolli – Dean of the Faculty of Philosophy (UP) (Pristina: 4/10/2012).

⁵⁸ Interview with Sali Bashota – Director of the National and University Library of Kosovo (Pristina: 11/10/2012).

related problem is lack of funding for publication of this journal which is published tri-annually.⁵⁹ However, academic journals (which are not peer-reviewed and do not have an impact factor) which are published regularly are ‘Albanological Traces’, ‘Albanian Language’, ‘Albanology’ etc., all published by the Institute of Albanology.

The situation at the Department of Journalism of the University of Pristina is even worse. This institution does not have a single academic journal where students and professors could publish their work.⁶⁰ Equally, at the Faculty of Arts there were some journals which published 10-12 issues and then ceased to exist as a result of the lack of funds.⁶¹ As regards the issue of funds, there is a general lack of funding even for university textbooks thus forcing authors to publish textbooks with their own money; so, in addition to the lack of copyright, authors are not assisted by their institutions even when it comes to publications.⁶² Although MEST has a budget dedicated for publications and research, it is very low and cannot cover publication costs of many research and book projects. Overall, it could be said that the lack of international peer-reviewed journals and ones that have an impact factor has a negative impact on the state of research in Kosovo.

i) Inability to access international academic journals and other relevant scientific sources

Another aggravating factor in relation to the severe state of research in Kosovo is researchers’ lack of access to international academic journals and other relevant scientific sources. In other words, local scholars and researchers do not have access to international relevant and updated academic resources and publications.⁶³ Ironically, there are individual scholars in Kosovo that have access to more online journals and libraries than the institution where they work.

To begin with, while the University of Pristina is not subscribed to any journal in the field of politics, there are individuals who could have 2-3 different subscriptions.⁶⁴ Nonetheless, regardless of personal dedication and passion, an individual scholar cannot build a personal library compatible or equal to that of a normal Western European university. As a result, 13 years after the end of the war in Kosovo, instead of having a solid base for academic research activities, we still talk about the ways of tackling the existing critical situation in the field of research.

⁵⁹ Interview with Zejnullah Gruda – Professor of International Law (Pristina: 17/10/2012).

⁶⁰ Interview with Bajram Kosumi – Member of the National Council of Quality and Professor at the Department of Journalism (Pristina: 9/10/2012).

⁶¹ Interview with Ilire Vinca – Professor at the Faculty of Arts, University of Pristina (Pristina: 19/10/2012).

⁶² Interview with Zejnullah Gruda – Professor of International Law (Pristina: 17/10/2012).

⁶³ Interview with Mo Vaziri – Vice President for academic issues and development at the University for Business and Technology (UBT) (Pristina: 17/10/2012); Interview with Besnik Limaj – Director of National Projects at WUS Austria (Pristina: 15/10/2012); Interview with Arben Hajrullahu – Professor at the Faculty of Philosophy (Pristina: 8/10/2012).

⁶⁴ Interview with Arben Hajrullahu – Professor at the Faculty of Philosophy (Pristina: 8/10/2012).

As a matter of fact, there has been an increase in publications, both in Albanian and English, at the National and University Library of Kosovo.⁶⁵ However, with respect to journal subscription, there is a complete stagnation, save access to EBSCO digital platform.

j) Lack of necessary skills to write successful applications for international projects/grants

Research and scholarship in Kosovo is characterised by a noticeable lack of tradition when it comes to international project application. So, there is a lack of skills and knowledge about the know-how when it comes to absorption of various international research funds (including funds from the European Commission).⁶⁶ Such situation is also conditioned by lack of English language skills by many scholars and researchers, especially the ones who are older than 50 or 55 years of age. Consequently, these researchers cannot complete an application in English. Likewise, even in cases when they have access to foreign literature, it will be of no use to them due to the lack of knowledge in foreign languages.

k) Limited international cooperation in the field of research

Cooperation between local and international institutions is mostly oriented towards the implementation of joint study programs, or BA or MA student exchange programs. TEMPUS program between Universities of Pristina, Graz and Galway is a case in point. In addition, there are other joint programs between private universities in Kosovo and international universities to design and develop joint curricula.⁶⁷ However, this study's findings suggest that local institutions in Kosovo do not cooperate with international institutions in the field of research.

This study also found out that institutions of higher education in Kosovo do not provide funds for their staff's participation at international conferences and symposiums. As a result, many scholars and researchers have to cover participation at international conferences privately, those revealing the sheer lack of investment and engagement of Kosovar institutions of higher education (in particular, the University of Pristina) in academic exchange.⁶⁸ There are cases when scholars represent their institutions at international conferences and meetings but still have to cover their own expenses.⁶⁹ As a result, many scholars who are invited to participate at international conferences cannot attend them due to the lack of funding.

⁶⁵ Interview with Sali Bashota – Director of the National and University Library of Kosovo (Pristina: 11/10/2012).

⁶⁶ Interview with Bajram Kosumi – Member of the National Council of Quality and Professor at the Department of Journalism (Pristina: 9/10/2012); Interview with Murteza Osdautaj – Department of Science and Technology MEST (Pristina: 17/10/2012); Interview with Agim Gashi – Professor at the Department of Pedagogy at the University of Pristina (Pristina: 17/10/2012).

⁶⁷ Interview with Arben Hajrullahu – Professor at the Faculty of Philosophy (Pristina: 8/10/2012); Interview with Rrahman Paçarizi – former Vice Dean for Teaching at the AAB University and current coordinator for science and lecturer at the Faculty of Philology (UP) (Pristina: 08/10/2012).

⁶⁸ Interview with Safet Merovci – Professor of entrepreneurship and financial markets at the Faculty of Economy and former Vice Dean for academic issues (UP) (Pristina: 22/10/2012); Interview with Rrahman Paçarizi – former Vice Dean for Teaching at the AAB University and current coordinator for science and lecturer at the Faculty of Philology (UP) (Pristina: 08/10/2012).

⁶⁹ Interview with Ferdije Zhushi – Head of the National Council of Quality and professor at the Faculty Biology (Pristina: 9/10/2012); Interview with Rexhep Gashi – Professor at the Faculty of Law. (Pristina: 16/10/2012).

Some of the interviewees, however, seem to have established connections and cooperation with foreign scholars, including publication of their work in academic journal as co-authors. In general, international academic activities include participation at various international conferences and symposiums, as well as publication of articles in international peer-reviewed journals. However, lacking institutional financial support, most of the scholars have to rely on their own forces and resources, which in turn limits their mobility and activities.

4. Conclusions and recommendations

Kosovo has set up basic institutional and legal structures that have a potential to revive and intensify further research activities, evaluate and implement them in practice for the common good of the Kosovar society. Although the present structures could be improved, they provide a solid foundation for basic academic and scientific research activities. However, as in many other fields, development and implementation in practice of the normative and institutional structure remains a problem.

This study's conclusions reveal the existence of serious limitations with regard to the quality of existing research. This conclusion is based on findings of different reports, empirical information gathered during interviews with representatives of academic, government and international institutions in Kosovo.

In brief, this study came to the conclusion that Kosovo is characterised by a low level of research activity, which plays a very modest role in the overall social and institutional processes in the country. As discussed throughout this study, the present problems result from a multiplicity of factors, such as: lack of funding for research; lack of operationalisation of existing institutional structures in order to increase effectiveness through the creation and functionalisation of research centres and groups within universities which, in turn, would coordinate and prompt research activities; lack of qualified staff (people who have a good command of foreign languages) that is committed to research activity; lack of necessary mobility or cooperation with international institutions; lack of labs and instruments for research, etc. Moreover, there are no institutionalised practices of personal research plans or analysis of the practical value of completed research projects. Also, there is no data or statistical evidence regarding publications and academic and research results and products.

As a result, at present Kosovo is characterised by a limited number of scholars involved in research, low quality of research in many fields (as identified in the National Research Plan), low or insignificant impact of research on the overall social and economic, as well as medical, energy and environmental development.

In order to change the present situation, this study offers a number of recommendations which are coherent with the causes and factors that determine the present severe state of research in

Kosovo. Above all, these are recommendations to the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology of Kosovo, the National Research Council, as well as to the University of Pristina and other public and private providers of higher education in Kosovo. In addition, these recommendations can be useful to various international donors and other institutions interested in drafting projects and strategies in the field of research in Kosovo. In essence, the following recommendations aim at identifying the best ways to improve the present unfavourable situation in the field of research in Kosovo.

- Establishment or allocation of a special public *fund* for research is a matter of great urgency. This fund would support and encourage academic staff at (private or public) universities and other research institutions to focus on academic research activities. In addition to the support in the form of prizes and awards for great achievements in various fields of science, this fund could encourage competition and allocate funds on the basis of merit. The same fund should also have a component dedicated to the gradual consolidation of research institutions' *infrastructure* and physical space (including necessary labs and research instruments) in order to increase the intensity and quality of research;
- Similarly, private providers of higher education should allocate special funds or budgetary lines dedicated to research and improvement of their *infrastructure* and labs. In practice, this issue could be regulated through the amendment of any relevant legal acts that govern the field (i.e. Law on Scientific Research Activity), or adoption of a special administrative instruction;
- Since the Law on Scientific Research Activity is in the process of being amended, RIDEA proposes that the following recommendation is included in the new version of the law: it is recommended that when it comes to access to MEST's or other institutional funds, apart from public institutions, other independent institutions, such as NGOs and Think-Tanks should have access as well. This would lead to more competition in the field for research, thus resulting in increased quality of research studies;
- Academic units at universities are recommended to establish various professional research *centres* or *institutes*, which would act as a forum for academic staff's coordination of activities, as well as taking care of application process for research grants and providing consultancy services in their respective areas of expertise. Depending on the number of academic staff and their qualification, it is recommended that academic units establish more than one research centre. Among other things, these centres and institutes would serve as a link between research work, market and private and public institutions;
- Academic units at universities should *structure* the process of research activities of their members of the staff more effectively through individual members' *planning reports*

submitted to their respective departments, as well as through the organisation of regular staff meetings dedicated to the presentation of research results;

- In order to increase the *quality of research*, academic staff should integrate and enrol post-graduate and doctoral students in their research projects. In this direction, it is recommended that universities organise short trainings on research methodology, foreign languages and other related issues, as a way of enhancing research capacities;
- It is recommended that on the basis of profile and focus (but not ethnic belonging), existing research centres of private or public universities, establish joint *research associations* in order to prompt their mutual cooperation, harmonisation and coordination in the field of research activities in Kosovo;
- Universities and other higher education institutions should establish a *single promotion system* where research activity and publications are part of the overall evaluation criteria for staff's promotion. In other words, *promotion* of academic staff should be in accordance and compatible with their research work and results;
- Academic units should concentrate on quality increase through the use of public or other funds and establish or, in cases where they exist, reactivate publication of *academic journals*. Moreover, in cooperation with international universities and other research institutions, Kosovar universities should aim at publishing international peer-reviewed journals;
- Kosovar institutions of higher education are recommended to find alternative ways to acquire the *ISSN* code for the purposes of internationalisation of academic and scientific journals published in Kosovo. The fact that ISSN is not assigned based on the geographic space of a certain country could be utilised by publishers in Kosovo to acquire the code. Another solution would be to have an agreement with a friendly country (Austria or Albania) which would imply that for the time being academic journals from Kosovo would contain the ISSN of that country. In a similar vein, it is recommended that academic journals in Kosovo become integrated in various international digital platforms (such as CEEOL, SSRN, Web of Science, etc.);
- Those institutions accredited to offer doctoral studies should aim at increasing international cooperation and promote joint *doctoral* programs;
- It is recommended that universities and other educational or research institutions establish and intensify international cooperation in order to increase *mobility* of students and academic staff;

- Public and private providers of higher education in Kosovo should increase investment in manual and digital *libraries*, including subscription to at least those international journals of their field, through the use of public or private funds;
- Finally, it is recommended that MEST and other actors organise short trainings for researchers and scholars about preparation of applications for various international grants and research projects (such as EC's FP7 framework, RRPP funds, or other similar Austrian funds).

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Interview with Agim Gashi – Professor at the Department of Pedagogy at the University of Pristina (Pristina: 17/10/2012)

Interview with Arben Hajrullahu – Professor at the Faculty of Philosophy (Pristina: 8/10/2012)

Interview with Arbnora Krasniqi-Loshaj – Coordinator of the Economics Program – Victory College (Pristina: 11/10/2012)

Interview with Bajram Kosumi – Member of the National Council of Quality and Professor at the Department of Journalism (Pristina: 9/10/2012)

Interview with Bajram Ukaj – Dean of the Law Faculty, Professor of Penal Law (Pristina: 16/10/2012).

Interview with Basri Çapriqi – Professor at the Faculty of Philology (UP) and former Head of the Steering Council of the University of Pristina (Pristina: 12/10/2012)

Interview with Besnik Limaj – Director of National Projects at WUS Austria (Pristina: 15/10/2012)

Interview with Bujar Dugolli – Dean of the Faculty of Philosophy (UP) (Pristina: 4/10/2012)

Interview with Eda Vula – Professor at the Faculty of Education and member of the National Research Council (Pristina: 24/10/2012).

Interview with Fadil Musa – Vice Dean for Teaching Issues at the Faculty of Agriculture (Pristina: 11/10/2012).

Interview with Ferdije Zhushi – Head of the National Quality Council and professor at the Faculty of Biology (Pristina: 9/10/2012)

Interview with Fetah Podvorica – Professor of demography at the University of Pristina (Pristina: 15/10/2012)

Interview with Frashër Demaj – Institute of History of Kosovo (Pristina: 9/10/2012).

Interview with Furtuna Mehmeti – Officer in the Council for Quality, ISPE College (Pristina: 13/10/2012).

Interview with Gëzim Aliu – Independent Researcher at the Language Department, Institute of Albanology (Pristina: 17/10/2012).

Interview with Ilire Vinca – Professor at the Faculty of Arts, University of Pristina (Pristina: 19/10/2012)

Interview with Ismet Potera – Deputy Director of the Pedagogical Institute (Pristina: 8/10/2012)

Interview with Kimete Canaj – Project Coordinator at Tempus (Pristina: 11/10/2012)

Interview with Milazim Krasniqi – Head of the Department of Journalism at the Faculty of Philology, former member of the Steering Committee of the University of Pristina (Pristina: 04/10/2012)

Interview with Mensur Neziri – Expert at the Centre for Innovation and Technology Transfer (CITT) (Pristina: 10/10/2012)

Interview with Mo Vaziri – Vice President for academic issues and development at the University for Business and Technology (UBT) (Pristina: 17/10/2012)

Interview with Murteza Osdautaj – Department of Science and Technology, MEST (Pristina: 17/10/2012)

Interview with Ragip Gjoshi – Political Adviser at MEST (Pristina: 11/10/2012)

Interview with Rexhep Gashi – Professor at the Faculty of Law (Pristina: 16/10/2012).

Interview with Rrahman Paçarizi – former Vice Dean for Teaching at the AAB University and current coordinator for science and lecturer at the Faculty of Philology (UP) (Pristina: 08/10/2012)

Interview with Sali Bashota – Director of the National and University Library of Kosovo (Pristina: 11/10/2012)

Interview with Safet Merovci – Professor of entrepreneurship and financial markets at the Faculty of Economy and former Vice Dean for academic issues (UP) (Pristina: 22/10/2012)

Interview with Valmir Krasniqi – Editor in Math Problems Journal (UP) (Pristina: 16/10/2012).

Interview with Vjollca Komoni – former Vice Dean for Teaching Issues, Vice Dean for Financial Issues at the Faculty of Electric and Computer Engineering (Pristina: 17/10/2012)

Interview with Zejnullah Gruda – Professor of International Law (Pristina: 17/10/2012)

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6. Annex

Questionnaire

1. According to you, what is the present state of (academic or scientific) research in Kosovo?
2. On a scale of 1 to 10, with 10 being the most positive, how would you measure presence and scope of research activities in general or of those in your field of expertise in particular?
3. How relevant are present research projects in Kosovo to your field of study or competence?
4. How important is research conducted in your field of study, competence or expertise, for the overall social and economic developments in the country?
5. On a scale of 1 to 10, with 10 being the most positive, how would you evaluate the importance and relevance of existing research in Kosovo in your field of study (based on originality, practical implications or impact)?
6. On a scale of 1 to 10, with 10 being the most positive, how would you evaluate the importance of existing research in your field of study for the overall (social, economic etc.) development in Kosovo or for developments in the specific field in a country wide scale?
7. What are the main present shortcomings in prompting and increasing research activities in Kosovo?
8. On a scale of 1 to 10, with 10 being the most positive, how do you evaluate research activity of the colleagues from your field of study?
9. Personally, do you have any working plan regarding research and publications?
10. Is there an institutional reporting practice at your institution regarding (a) research project plans and (b) plans about the results in the field of research for different intervals (six months, one year, or less)?

11. Does your institution have a specific fund dedicated to research activity and publication?
Does it have an academic journal that publishes articles from the field?
12. In case your institution publishes an academic journal, in a scale from 1 to 10, how would you evaluate its quality? Is this journal peer-reviewed by international professors from your field?
13. Does your institution have cooperation with other (international) institutions in the field of research and, if so, how close and intensive is this cooperation?
14. Personally, do you cooperate with other foreign scholar and researchers? Have you co-authored articles published abroad together with other international scholars and if so, how often or how many of them?
15. Have you ever been contacted by public or private institutions in Kosovo in relation to your expertise, publications or results? In other words, were you consulted by national institutions (private or public) in the capacity of an expert and researcher?
16. In case you were consulted by local institutions, do you think the process was substantial and fruitful? In other words, was your expertise advice taken into consideration, and did it produce any results and if so, what was the results/impact?
17. According to you, what institutional actions and measures should be taken to improve quality and increase the volume of research in your field of study?
18. If we were to limit the number of priorities, according to you, what would be *the three main areas* in the field of research that require urgent institutional intervention?
19. Do you have any suggestion about any document that could be relevant for this study's topic? Do you have any suggestion about any person who could contribute to this research?
20. Do you agree that we quote your full name and position? Or, would you prefer that we quote only your position or by a generic name?