

MARKET ANALYSIS AND NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT



2018

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH
iCHAT	Quality Institute for Research, Analyzes and Training
NGO	Non-Government Organization
MEST	Ministry of Education Science and Technology
KAS	Kosovo's Agency of Statistics
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
DIMAK	German information Centre for Migration, Vocational Training & Career

I. BACKGROUND

International emigration from Kosovo is among the highest in the world. Today, every third or fourth household (depending on the information source) has a family member living abroad. Much emigration has been motivated by economic reasons and by the armed conflict in the late 1990s; resolution of the conflict does not seem to have been enough incentive for most migrants to return. Migration and the resulting remittances have been a safety valve for many of those left behind in Kosovo, ensuring their livelihood in a country that has the highest unemployment and poverty rates in Europe. Remittances are the largest source of external financing for Kosovo. Even though their share in GDP fell from 17.5 percent in 2004 to below 13 percent in 2010, it is still high by regional and global standards.

Despite the significant role of migration in Kosovo's economic, political and social landscape, policies to maximize its contribution to economic development are minimal at best. In 2009 the Government of Kosovo adopted a National Strategy and Action Plan on Migration for 2009–12, but it was concerned primarily with irregular migration and administration of returning refugees and implementation falls largely under the Ministry of interior. No government strategic document contains policies that recognize and build on the economic aspects of migration.

For countries that have substantial migration, integrating migration-related policies into national development strategies can promote economic and social development; there is an array of policies and instruments that can be used to maximize the impact of migration on development. Policies can target every step in the migration process: before migrants leave the country, during their time abroad, and upon their return home. Policy makers could thus aim at preparing potential migrants to find the best employment opportunities abroad, facilitating remittances while they are away, offering employment and investment opportunities to those returning, or all three.

Kosovo's rate of unemployment fluctuates around 30% (KAS, 2017), and the 2nd quarterly Labor Force Survey (LFS) conducted by Kosovo's Agency of Statistics (KAS) in 2017, states that "the highest employment rate is to male (46.8%), while female employment is 12.7%" (KAS, 2017), meaning that only one of approximately eight women candidates, is employed. In addition, the LFS reveals that "the most pronounced unemployment rate is in the age group 15-24 with 50.9%" (KAS 2017). Furthermore, while academic institutions in Kosovo continue to produce young professionals, there is a growing gap between labor supply and actual labor demand in the market, because Kosovo's young workforce is "unequipped with the skills demanded by the labor markets" (Bartlett et al, 2016), which makes private firms reluctant to hire and invest in inexperienced young professionals, due to various costs and risks such as volatile markets and employee turnover.

With regard to migration, this is one of the top level topics and policies currently in Europe considering significant number of irregular migrants arriving in the European Union (EU) Member States from Middle East and Africa. As a result, EU's key policies including priorities for the budget 2018 has listed Migration as top priority together with Reinforcing Security, Boosting Growth and Generating Jobs. Western Balkans including Kosovo has not been

exemption from this trend in recent years. Migration is an important policy area for Kosovo, looking at historical context. It remains an area of interest for Kosovo institutions, both in the context European integration process, in particular the reforms required to tackle irregular migration.

In this context, also due to regional and global trends as well as harsh isolation for years, Kosovo has faced 'migration extraordinary crises'. At least 119,767 (source EUROSTAT) migrants have left Kosovo for the EU only during 2014 and 2015 - respectively 45,333 in 2014 and 74,434 in 2015. In total, 189,190 Kosovo citizens have applied for asylum in EU Member States in the period from 2008 to 2016. Nevertheless, the good news is that numbers have dropped significantly in 2016 and the first three quarters of 2017.

Peja, Skenderaj and Drenas appear to be teeming with economic prosperity, but appearances are deceiving as the international presence is reduced and repatriation of refugees and internally displaced persons is expected to further strain the local economy. Market saturation, high unemployment, and a reduction of financial remittances from abroad are ominous economic indicators.

II. SPECIFIC BACKGROUND

The GIZ/DIMAK project, aims to support sustainable socio-economic reintegration of repatriated persons and prevent circular irregular migration among citizens in Pejë, Skenderaj and Drenas with the focus on minority communities (Bosnian and RAE community) through raising their awareness and building their business and employment capacities.

On 16th of November, 2017 the iCHAT signed the contract with GIZ in order to implement the project on "Sustainable reintegration of returnees and prevention of migration among citizens in, Pejë, Skenderaj and Drenas.". The iCHAT start its work effectively on 1st December, 2017.

Kosovo has one of the largest international migration flows in the world. Much emigration has been for economic reasons and to escape armed conflict in the late 1990s; resolution of the conflict does not appear to have offered migrants enough incentive to return. Even though migration slowed with the global economic crisis, a reported 3.5 percent of the working population aged 15 and above have expressed interest in emigrating in the next 12 months.

Migration and the resulting remittances have been a safety valve for many Kosovans, ensuring their livelihoods in a country that has the highest unemployment and poverty rates in Europe. Remittances are the largest source of external financing for Kosovo. Even though between 2004 and 2010 their share of GDP fell from 17.5 percent to below 13 percent, it is still high by regional and global standards.

Despite the significance of migration to Kosovo's economic and social landscape, few if any public policies are designed to maximize its contribution to economic development. In 2009 the Government of Kosovo adopted a National Strategy and Action Plan on Migration for 2009–12,

but it deals primarily with irregular migration and administration of legal migration. No government document of any kind contains policies related to the economic aspects of migration. Economic reasons are the main push factor (35%) for Kosovars to look for alternative opportunities in the EU countries, according to a rapid survey conducted by the Kosovo Ministry of European Integration. The main pull factor is family reunification (46%) as one in three Kosovars have at least one family member abroad, and Kosovars are the only citizens in the Balkans unable to travel to Schengen areas without a visa. The other underlying causes of migration from Kosovo are political reasons or conflict-related (8%), the lack of opportunities to relevant education (1%), and other reasons (10%).

Misinformation spread on social media also played a role in the rise of irregular migrants and asylum seekers. Rumours widely circulated online stated that Germany was accepting seasonal workers from Kosovo, and about France and Germany putting Kosovo on a “safe country” list later in 2015. Moreover, it was broadly taken for granted that asylum seekers would quickly receive housing benefits and the right to employment, which prompted many families to withdraw their children from school and sell their properties in order to afford the fees demanded from smugglers.

Kosovo citizens’ new ability to travel through Serbia with local identity documents – a point of negotiation during the EU-backed Brussels Agreement between Pristina and Belgrade in 2013 – further contributed to the spike in irregular migration.

Main countries of origin of immigrants to Kosovo Applicants for temporary residence permits: (2005): Turkey (24%), China (12%), Bulgaria (9%), USA (7%), Albania (4%), the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (4%), Moldova (6%), and other countries (34%). (2006): citizenship data is not available (2007, until July): Turkey (17%), China (13%), Bulgaria (6%), USA (5%), Albania (10%), the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (7%), Moldova (8%), and other countries (34%).

III. QUALITATIVE ASPECTS OF REMITTANCES

There are few precise figures on the Diaspora’s recent and/or current contributions to Kosovo’s economy. However, the information that is available indicates that the Diaspora’s involvement to Kosovo’s post-conflict economic recovery has been substantial. Housing, construction, the revitalization of agriculture as well as the establishment of private enterprises has been closely linked to the remittances inflow.

Remittances are the most important external source of financing for Kosovo’s economy and people. In many transition countries, remittances are a major source of external financing (Figure 12). For poorer transition countries, they are the largest source and cushion against economic and political turbulence during the transition period (Mansoor and Quillin 2006). In Kosovo remittances, the largest source of external financing, were equivalent to 17.5 percent of GDP in 2004; they fell to below 13 percent of GDP in 2010 but were still high by regional and global

standards. For near neighbors Moldova, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Albania remittances are also a significant share of GDP.

According to the World Bank's Kosovo Poverty Assessment of June 2005, remittances from abroad constitute 15.2% of household income in Kosovo, making them the second largest source of revenue for families, preceded only by income from cash wages and salaries, which equals 59.9% of household income.⁷⁵ The report's statistics also indicate that rural households rely on remittances to a greater extent than urban households. 18.2% of rural households indicated remittances as the second source of income (following salaries) as compared with 11.4 % of urban households.

According to the World Bank Kosovo Economic Briefing of February 2005, the importance of remittances stems from them compensating for declining international donor assistance as well as low levels of foreign direct investments and exports.⁷⁶ The briefing points out to the decline of remittances over time. According to the European Stability Initiative (ESI), the flow of remittances has been decreasing from its 1999-level, since large numbers of Kosovars returned from host countries and the present possibilities of legal emigration are very limited.⁷⁷ The World Bank's Kosovo Economic Memorandum 2004, also states that remittances, including income from seasonal workers, have decreased since the immediate post-conflict period. Thus, as foreign

Recorded remittances have surged since the late 1990s, growing about 270 percent between 2000 and 2004. The Migration Survey shows Western Union to be the main vehicle for transferring remittances to Kosovo, followed by remittances hand carried back to Kosovo by relatives and friends. The official balance of payments figure for remittances is an underestimation, since it may not be fully capturing informal flows. Improvements in data collection methodology in recent years, such as use of estimation models for informal flows, have helped capture remittance flows better, but the large errors and omissions category in balance of payments reports might include unrecorded remittances.

Because less than 10 percent of remittances are transferred through banks, they do not directly contribute to development of the banking sector. Almost half of remittances come via private businesses, such as Western Union, though often that is the most expensive method of transferring funds. If more remittances came through bank transfers, they would help expand the deposit base of banks, which in turn could expand credit and might motivate people to use more bank services.

The high transfer fees charged by local banks are probably one reason for the low use of bank transfers; they are much higher in Kosovo than elsewhere in the region. Some of the leading banks have a set fee for transfers up to a certain amount, which means sending small amounts (as is common) has a high relative cost. For example, the fee for receiving €100 via bank transfer is €5—5 percent of the value of the transaction—but the fee for receiving €500 amounts to just 2 percent of the value. Transfer fees in the rest of the region range from zero in FYR Macedonia to not more than 4 percent for a €100 transaction and 0.5 percent for a €500 transaction in the other countries. Lower bank fees and more remittances flowing through the banking sector

would increase both the deposit base and revenues from transfer fees. For example, if most remittances (e.g., €500 million) came through banks and fees were reduced to an average of about 1 percent, banks would earn €5 million in transfer fees alone (more than a fifth of total bank profits in 2009). However, to stimulate a substantial shift to the use of banks as a remittance channel, expansion of bank branch networks and increased financial literacy would be necessary.

IV. MIGRATION AND REMITTANCES IN KOSOVO

Kosovo has one of the highest emigration rates in Eastern Europe (Figure 1). According to the Migration Survey 2009 (World Bank 2010), one of every four households has at least one member living outside Kosovo.¹ The emigration rate for Kosovo does not show net emigration because immigrants are not subtracted; however, net emigration does not differ much from gross because most immigrants to Kosovo are temporary residents who return home once their assignment is completed.

Moreover, interest in migrating is high. About 2.1 percent of those surveyed stated that they are likely to migrate within the next five years (though self-reported data on intention to migrate often overestimate future flows and there is often very small correlation between intended and actual migration²). In 2008 about 0.6 percent of the working population became emigrants. Even in 2007, when emigration peaked, only about 11,000 Kosovans left (about 1 percent of the working population).

Rural areas, where 63 percent of the population lives, contribute 73 percent of migrants (Figure 2). Regional differences are not very large; the largest number of migrants originates in the rural areas of Prishtina and Prizren.³ About 25 percent of current migrants originate in Prishtina. People in the region, which includes the capital city, Prishtina, may include some who have moved from other parts of Kosovo to Prishtina before migrating beyond Kosovo. This interim step of internal migration has been observed in other countries

Traditionally almost 60 percent of migrants from Kosovo have gone to Germany and Switzerland. The number of Kosovan migrants there has not changed significantly since 2005. However, other European countries have also become destinations (Figure 3). Compared to 2005, in 2009 10 percent more migrants headed to other destinations in Europe, especially Italy (for the same pattern, see also UNDP 2010). This trend suggests that Kosovans are building networks in other European countries, which contributes to further diversification. Destination countries are similar to those of neighboring Balkan countries.

It is hard to estimate the size of Kosovo Albanian Diaspora, since in many countries' statistical records Kosovo Albanians are not distinguished from Serbs and Montenegrins, or (former) Yugoslavs. Differentiating between Kosovar Albanians, Albanians from Albania, and ethnic Albanians from the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia can also be problematic and underscore the necessity for precise information-gathering techniques using standardized definitions and terminology.

Figures vary from source to source. For example, according to the United Kingdom Parliament's Foreign Affairs Committee report on Kosovo⁷⁹ in 2000, the Kosovar Albanian Diaspora is concentrated in the United States (approx. 350,000), Germany (approx. 300,000-350,000) and Switzerland (approx. 280,000). Between 80,000 and 100,000 Kosovo Albanians reside in other western European countries, with around 17,000 persons in the United Kingdom including an estimated 5,000 who are irregular immigrants.

Other sources, such as the previously mentioned European Stability Initiative 2006⁸⁰ report, suggest that Germany currently hosts 82,348 Kosovo Albanians, 72,448 are in Switzerland and 12,300 in Austria. Kosovo Albanians also reside in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Albania and Montenegro.

The 2005 World Bank's Review of Workers' Remittances to Kosovo indicates a Diaspora figure between 250,000 and 500,000.

The key reason for leaving Kosovo is jobs, though previously war was a major cause of migration (IASCI 2011, UNDP 2010). Since the war ended migration for family reasons (such as marriage) has been rising. A significant drop in migration in 2008 partly reflecting the global economic slowdown that began late that year.⁷ There is some evidence that since the beginning of 2009 the pace of migration for job reasons may have recovered to 2007 levels. According to the 2010 UNDP survey, 43 percent of migrants left Kosovo for economic reasons.

Indeed, migrants come from the age group most likely to be unemployed. More than 90 percent are aged 20 to 35, which corresponds to the age group with higher unemployment (Figure 6). While this correlation does not imply a causal relationship between age, unemployment and migration, it does show that a significant part of Kosovo's prime-age work force is leaving the country.

However, since very few women migrate for jobs, migration is doing little to alleviate the high female unemployment rate. Only 35 percent of migrants are female and most leave for reasons like marriage or family reunification (Figure 7). It appears that the low female participation in the labor market and their lack of skills are partly due to social and cultural norms biased against women working outside the house (World Bank 2009d). Most women in Kosovo work without any formal contract, and more women than men were fired between 2006 and 2007. The Kosovo Country Economic Memorandum (World Bank 2010) discusses this issue in detail.

The monthly amount of remittances per household is close to the monthly average gross salary in Kosovo, which was estimated to be €340 in 2009 and in net terms is lower than average remittances per household. According to the UN Development Programme (UNDP, 2010), remittances contribute about 40 percent to the total monthly income of recipient household

V. ASSESSMENT AND ANALYSIS OF MIGRATION ISSUES

Migration remains a large-scale phenomenon in Kosovo, and many asylum seekers in European Union countries claim it is their place of origin. Nevertheless, there are very few reports and studies conducted and published on this issue; hence, reliable figures are exceptionally hard to obtain. The lack of exact numbers of persons from Kosovo living abroad is partly due to the fact that they are registered as citizens of Serbia (Serbia and Montenegro; former Yugoslavia).

Trends and causes of migration from Kosovo have undergone several changes. In the 1960s and early 1970s, the first migration wave occurred to the Western countries, which required cheaper labour force. This flow involved predominantly low skilled and uneducated people from rural areas. In the decades prior to the outbreak of the conflict in 1998/1999, Kosovars, primarily Kosovo Albanians, but also considerable numbers of other ethnic communities, left Kosovo for either economic or political reasons, in particular in the 1990s. The latter migrants tended to be better educated and skilled and came from urban areas.

The third flow developed with the outbreak of the conflict in 1998. Until its end in June 1999, hundreds of thousands of people were forced to leave Kosovo and found refuge primarily in the neighboring countries of Albania and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. Most of these people have returned to Kosovo in the subsequent years. In addition, a very large number of people found asylum in Western European countries; including members of the Roma, Ashkali, Egyptian (RAE), Bosniak and Gorani communities. In the aftermath of the conflict, starting from July 1999, there was a continued exodus of people⁸⁴, on a smaller scale and composed largely of ethnic minority community members, particularly Kosovo Serbs, but also RAE, Bosniaks and Gorani left Kosovo. Another outflow of Kosovo residents occurred in the wake of the riots in March 2004.

Throughout all the emigration waves, the main destination countries included Germany, Switzerland, UK, Scandinavia, USA, Canada, Serbia and other former Yugoslav republics.

Currently, it is estimated that every year approximately 30,000 persons reach age 18, complete secondary school and enter the labour market with limited opportunities. In the last years, youth migration and migration of heads of families from Kosovo increased. These kinds of migrations are usually illegal and expose the persons involved to the risks of smuggling and trafficking. Migratory decisions are connected to the increasing need to seek material improvements for the individual and/or family's livelihood, as migration from Kosovo, working abroad and sending remittances back is regrettably seen by many to be the only means of ensuring the well-being of the family.⁸⁷ Remittances are usually used to cover basic living expenses and they often fail to contribute to development of the home community. This dynamic also contributes to another negative impact of migration, namely the so-called "brain drain".

Many of those persons who have left Kosovo since the beginning of the 1990s either received refugee status or received protection under the non-refoulement clause and were granted the right to remain in their host countries. Those who did not receive refugee status or whose legal status (temporary protection) has expired/been cancelled, are in the situation that they have to leave their host countries. They therefore either return voluntarily (with special return assistance

packages provided by some European countries) or are forcibly returned. In recent years, irregular migrants apprehended in Europe are also been forcibly returned.

VI. GOVERNMENT BODIES RESPONSIBLE FOR MIGRATION POLICY IN KOSOVO

The United Nations Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) is progressively transferring responsibilities to the Provisional Institutions of Self-Government (PISG). Numerous institutions within the PISG are involved, to varying degrees, in implementing the voluntary returns policy with UNMIK maintaining a supervisory and/or monitoring role over their actions. Some of the PISG Ministries were recently established and are still in the process of developing their internal structures, which must be conducted further before they can address the scope of duties that will fall within the ultimate competency. Due to budgetary constraints, not all issues relevant to migration can be adequately addressed at this time. There are insufficient funds to establish new departments, employ staff and obtain the necessary technology and other resources that are needed within the Ministries to make them fully functional. The PISG cannot negotiate or enter into agreements with countries or international institutions on its own authority, as UNMIK maintains this competence.

On the basis of information collected by IOM, it appears most likely that, as in many countries, it will be the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MoIA) that will progressively take the lead in addressing migration management, particularly for the issues of asylum and refugees (with UN structures still maintaining key responsibilities related to return migration). Supervision over the Kosovo Police Service (KPS), which is one of the law enforcement authorities regulating border traffic in Kosovo, has been already transferred to the Ministry of Internal Affairs. The MoIA's Department for Border Management, Asylum and Migration is becoming a focal point for the migration-related issues. The work of Department of Repatriation, which currently falls under the UNMIK Office of Communities, Returns and Minority Affairs (OCRM), will also be transferred to MoIA's DBAM. Therewith the MoIA will be involved in processing the forced returns of Kosovars who were illegally residing in other countries. However, the Ministry was established only in mid-2006 and the organizational processes to structure the institution is not yet complete.

The PISG institutions that play the most active roles include the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM), which is responsible for coordinating and facilitating the work of the PISG, including monitoring the implementation of the Government's decisions regarding a variety of issues including those related to migration. Other key institutions, significantly involved in migration-related issues are the: Ministry of Communities and Returns (MCR) and the Ministry of Local Government Administration (MLGA). Ministries that are partially or indirectly involved in the returns process are the: Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare (MLSW) and the Ministry of Finance and Economy (MFE). Within the MLSW, the Department of Social Welfare is responsible for providing temporary housing and social welfare⁸⁸ assistance to social cases, which includes vulnerable returnees. Furthermore, the Department of Social Welfare was

recently engaged in an IOM capacity building project. By the end of the project, the Department assumed the responsibilities, previously handled by IOM, for the provision of reception assistance at the airport to all returnees, with additional services for the most vulnerable among them.⁸⁹

The Ministry of Communities and Returns, which is currently in the process of taking over responsibilities from the UNMIK Office for Communities, Returns and Minority Affairs, plays a vital role in implementing and coordinating returns policies. However, its attention is focused mainly on IDPs. It coordinates the implementation of returns with the municipalities, other ministries, local and international institutions, and strives to develop and influence policies so that they are well tailored to the needs of IDPs, refugees, and women and children and other groups with specific needs.

The basic social welfare payment in Kosovo amounts to approximately 40 Euros per month. ⁸⁹ IOM will retain responsibilities for receiving and assisting people who return within the framework of an IOM Assisted Voluntary Programme.

The MCR chairs the Central Review Mechanism (CRM), i.e. a body, which reviews all voluntary returns projects and other initiatives endorsed by individual Municipal Working Groups to ensure they are consistent with the existing return policies. Thus, the CRM oversees/reviews all of the Municipal Returns Strategies and other concept papers on returns submitted and endorsed by individual municipalities (after they are developed by the respective Municipal Working Group). In addition, it often functions as a liaison to the donor community on returns and reintegration projects. It consists of members nominated by the: MCR, OPM, MLGA, UNMIK, UNHCR, and UNDP; other members have an observer status.

A Steering Board on the Development of a Strategy for the Reintegration⁹⁰ of Repatriated Persons was established on 25 October 2006 by a decision of the PISG. Its task is to reach consensus on the roles and responsibilities of Ministries in the field of reintegration of repatriated persons through a consultative and inclusive process. The Steering Board is composed of representatives of MLSW, Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning (MESP), MLGA, MIA, Ministry of Health (MoH), Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MEST), Municipal Community Officers, and international organizations (UNMIK, UNHCR, IOM, and OSCE). Within the Steering Board, an Expert Group was established in order to draft a strategy for the reintegration of repatriated persons. (See Section 6.3(a) for information about this strategy)

The achievement of a sustainable return i.e. the ability of repatriated to secure the political, economic and social conditions to maintain their life, livelihood and dignity. A process which enables returnees to regain their physical, social, legal and material security needed to maintain life, livelihood and dignity, and which eventually leads to the disappearance of any observable distinctions vis-à-vis their compatriots.(IOM) ⁹¹ Pursuant to section 206 of the Criminal Procedure Code (CPC), the Victim Advocacy and Assistance Unit (VAAU) shall act to safeguard the rights of victims of crime, including trafficked persons. The VAAU is responsible for appointing a Victims' Advocate to act as the authorized representative of the alleged victim

during all stages of criminal proceedings pursuant to Articles 81 and 82 of CPC, ensuring that translation and interpretation services are available throughout criminal proceedings, as well as legal information and legal assistance. In cases of child trafficked persons from Kosovo requiring reintegration and social inclusion plan, the VAAU shall perform above tasks in cooperation with the other Direct Assistance partners, as required by legal proceedings.

VII. MIGRATION POLICIES IN PLACE

The issue within migration management drawing the most consistent attention in Kosovo is the returns process. Pursuant to UN Security Council Resolution 1244, returns policy is informed by the premise that all refugees and IDPs have the right to return to their home, and to recover their property. The framework for addressing other issues in the field of migration management, such as asylum, is still being developed. The PISG cannot negotiate or enter into agreements with countries or international institutions on its own authority, as UNMIK maintains this reserve power.

In 2006, The PISG updated its returns policies, based on the UNMIK's 'Right to Sustainable Returns' paper with the view to simplify and streamline the steps for return and the delivery of social services for returnees, increase IDPs/refugees' access to assistance, improve protection mechanisms for minority returnees to ensure nondiscrimination, and incorporate return needs and concerns in municipal and central development and budget planning.

Standards established benchmarks for the further development of Kosovar's political, judicial, and civil/administrative institutions, which were used in the process of negotiating Kosovo's future status. In respect to migration policy, the following standards are relevant: Standard III: Freedom of Movement; Standard IV: Sustainable Returns and the Rights of Communities and their Members; Standard VI: Property Rights; Standard VII: Constructive and continuing dialogue between the PISG and Belgrade over practical issues. .

The Protocol signed by Kosovo's Provisional Institutions of Self-Government (PISG), the Government of Serbia, and the United Nations Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) on 6 June 2006, is an example of a tri-partite agreement, which is structured in this way given the aforementioned limitations of the PISG's authority. The Protocol is a powerful statement of the commitment by the Kosovar and Serbian authorities to continue the returns process.

The Manual, drafted for the first time in 2003, stipulates UNMIK's policy and operational guidelines for returns. It reaffirms international standards and best practices and incorporates the main objectives of the Protocol of Cooperation on Voluntary and Sustainable Return. The Manual specifies the guiding principles of the returns process

It establishes the Kosovo Property Agency, as the administrative authority, functioning as an independent body, with the competence to receive, register, and assist the courts in resolving the following categories of conflict-related claims resulting from the armed conflict that occurred between 27 February 1998 and 20 June 1999: a) Ownership claims with respect to private immovable property, including agricultural and commercial property, and b) Claims involving property-use rights in respect of private immovable property, including agricultural and commercial property

The Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) of the PISG, in coordination with UNMIK, organized a Steering Board composed of international and local experts in order to develop a strategy for addressing the needs of persons, who originated from the various communities living in Kosovo, did not meet the criteria of respective countries for obtaining asylum status or citizenship, and as a result, will be returned non-voluntarily to their place of origin. Central and local governmental institutions/agencies are required to focus their efforts on the priorities specified in the Strategy, allocate funds in order to meet obligations and implement activities through an operational plan designed to fulfill the obligations foreseen in the Reintegration Strategy of Repatriated Persons.

The Repatriation Working Group was also established in order to advise to the PISG on the future migration policies in line with these of EU and neighboring states.

According to the UNMIK April 2007 Fact Sheet published online, thanks to the progress of both, i.e. the Steering Board and the Working Group, both co-chaired by UNMIK and PISG, the operational framework comprising of readmission and reintegration policies/procedures will soon be reviewed and discussed. Moreover, the PISG, and MoIA in particular, is also expected to soon take over the operational responsibilities for readmission of repatriated persons.

The policy introduces the strategy and procedures in Kosovo for handling the readmission of persons originating from Kosovo and residing without legal status in host countries. This policy will become effective and apply in Kosovo soon after it is approved by Special Representative of Secretary-General (SRSG) following the PISG's endorsement. It will be put in place during the UNMIK transition period, following the determination of status. The readmission procedures shall effectively and smoothly,

This may include underage children and other dependant family members of persons originating from Kosovo, who have the right to reside in Kosovo. Their readmission will be accepted during the transition period depending on verification of their identity and their relationship to the person originating from Kosovo. In future, these matters will further be regulated by the Law on Citizenship and the Law on Foreigners. The term "persons residing in host countries without legal status" includes those who no longer fall under the scope of temporary international protection in host countries, as well as rejected asylum seekers and those who have entered the host countries illegally and/or overstayed their visa.

The policy may be changed or improved, during/after the transition period, as needed. However, such action shall be taken only after a thorough discussion on why such changes are necessary and how the policy should be amended. All stakeholders should ensure that any changes are in line with international standards and, laws and regulations in force in Kosovo at the time of the

changes.

Although the obligation of states to accept returning nationals is generally accepted to be a norm of international customary law, until now, due to the post-conflict situation and to the specific situation that Kosovo is under the UN administration, UNMIK allowed only a certain number of returns to Kosovo from a humanitarian point of view.

According to the UN SC Resolution 1244, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) has the mandate to supervise the safe, dignified and free return of all refugees and internally displaced persons (IDP). It regularly assesses the situation of ethnic minorities and international protection needs of ethnic groups and other categories of persons in Kosovo, and has issued a number of position papers.⁹⁶ PISG authorities take UNHCR's views into account, are committed to improving the security situation in Kosovo, and prepared to readmit persons originating from Kosovo in accordance with international norms.

In principle, no person will be readmitted to Kosovo unless the person has been confirmed to originate from Kosovo. To prepare and readmit its persons, PISG/Kosovo authorities will cooperate with the host countries to realise safe and dignified returns of its persons. Such cooperation will include signing of procedural agreements and eventually, formal readmission agreements with these host countries.

PISG/Kosovo Authorities will seek to reach official agreements with host countries to attain durable returns of all residents of Kosovo by implementing readmission procedures and monitoring such readmission procedures in compliance with relevant international human rights standards. At present, while Kosovo has no formal agreements on readmission of Kosovars denied legal status abroad, it does have Memoranda of Understanding and letter agreements with Sweden, Switzerland, Germany and Denmark.

The Law on Civil Status Registers adopted by the Assembly of Kosovo (Promulgated by the SRSG through Regulation No. 2005/21 of 7 May 2005) • The Family Law adopted by the Assembly of Kosovo (Promulgated by the SRSG through Regulation No. 2006/7 of 16 February 2006.)

The most recent UNHCR Position Paper (July 2006) states that the inter-ethnic environment for members of both Ashkali and Egyptian communities has improved and as such, UNHCR considers that persons belonging to these ethnic minorities are no longer at risk. UNHCR does consider however the security situation of persons belonging to Kosovo Serbs, Roma and, Albanian in a minority situation as sensitive and therefore warrants continued protection for these categories of persons. In addition, it should be noted that individuals should not be returned to face the risk of torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment or other violations of their human rights under international human rights law including Article 3 of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR), Article 7 of the ICCPR, and Article 3 of the Convention against Torture (CAT). Article 19 (2) of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the

European Union also states, “no one may be removed, expelled or extradited to a state where there is a serious risk that he or she would be subject to the death penalty, torture or other inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment”.

VIII. LABOUR MARKET AND IDENTIFIED SKILL SHORTAGES BY SECTOR

Kosovo has very high rate of unemployment. According to UNDP, it is as high as 55%⁹⁷ and according to USAID, has reached levels of 60-70%⁹⁸. UNMIK estimates unemployment rate between 35-50%, without including variations due to seasonal work and grey economy. The World Bank’s estimates range from 23 to 33%.⁹⁹

Kosovo suffers from under investment and there is very little export. Kosovo’s foreign exchange balance is dominated by imports, despite the potential availability of goods locally.¹⁰⁰

The majority of Kosovo’s population lives in rural areas. According to the 2005 Labour Market Statistics, agriculture is in fact the most important branch of the economy, with an employment share of 18.8% of the total active population, followed by trade (13.8%), education (10.8%) and manufacturing (9.6%). Finance and insurance, as well as real estate and business services constitute the smallest sectors in the Kosovo economy.

Over half of the Kosovo population is under 25. It is estimated that every year approximately 30,000 persons reach age 18, complete secondary school and enter the labour market with limited opportunities. In an effort to promote empowerment as well as employment of youth, the PISG drafted Kosovo Youth Action Plan 2007-2010 and Youth Employment Action Plan 2007-2010. The PISG has been striving to promote access to and better education e.g. the 2007 budget for education is EUR 7 million.

International migration can have major effects, static and dynamic, on domestic labor markets by affecting (a) the labor market participation of those left behind, (b) the probability of employment of returned migrants based on skills or information gained while abroad, and (c) the demand for labor due to remittances. The following section describes how migration affects several aspects of Kosovo’s labor market, including participation, wages, and skill development.

Households with migrants participate less in the labor market than households without. Labor force participation⁸ by households with migrants is 45 percent, 14 percentage points lower than households that do not have migrants (59 percent). And the rate of those 15 and older who have not worked for 6 months or more is almost twice as high for households that have migrants than for those without. The lower rates may be explained by the fact that typically the most able members of a household migrate. Hence, the heads of households receiving remittances are more likely to fall into a category that has less chance of finding employment in Kosovo: female, older, or living in a rural area.⁹ Lower participation may also be due to the higher reservation wage for individuals who receive remittances. The literature contains offers ample evidence of remittances increasing the reservation wage, but additional analysis is needed to confirm whether this is true of Kosovo. Some results of the Migration Survey (World Bank 2010) actually point in the opposite direction: for example, the same share (14 percent) of inactive individuals, i.e.

people who have given up on seeking employment, with and without a migrant connection said they would be willing to work.

Having migrated is correlated with a perception of better employment prospects upon return to Kosovo: 43 percent of migrants surveyed (World Bank 2010) who had returned reported that migration had improved their prospect of finding a job in Kosovo, and 10–15 percent reported that their migration experiences had given them ideas for starting a business in Kosovo or promoted partnering with businesses in the country to which they had migrated.

There is some evidence of a brain gain in Kosovo. Among returned migrants, those in highly skilled occupations especially have advanced their education and are contributing to Kosovo's labor market. Of those in highly skilled occupations, 25 percent gained more education, as did 10 percent in medium-skilled occupations and 6 percent in low- skilled occupations. Of all migrants who returned, 8 percent advanced their education while abroad, particularly women.

Returned migrants are working in more skilled jobs than current migrants, suggesting a skills brain gain. This may be due to a skill mismatch in places where they migrated. These migrants may have gained skill abroad but decided to return to Kosovo rather than accepting lower-skilled work elsewhere.

Qualitative Institute for Researches, Analyses and Trainings has realized a research for need assessment before implementing the planned activities, with a sample of 56 youngsters. From this sample, 62% were female, and 38% were male.

Gender					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Female	35	62.5	62.5	62.5
	Male	21	37.5	37.5	100.0
	Total	56	100.0	100.0	

From those, 42% were from Skënderaj, 37.5% were from Drenas, and 19.6% were from Peja.

Municipality					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Skënderaj	24	42.9	42.9	42.9
	Drenas	21	37.5	37.5	80.4
	Pejë	11	19.6	19.6	100.0
	Total	56	100.0	100.0	

From the sample, only 25% of them have attended trainings in the Business field so far and 75% have not attended any training in the business field so far.

Have you attended any training in the business field so far?					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	14	25.0	25.0	25.0
	No	42	75.0	75.0	100.0
	Total	56	100.0	100.0	

From those who answered Yes-that they attended training in the business field only 21.4% of them attended a training in the business plan.

If yes, what types of training have you attended?					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Not responded	44	78.6	78.6	78.6
	Business Plan	12	21.4	21.4	100.0
	Total	56	100.0	100.0	

When asked to select the area which they would prefer during direct counseling respondents have listed the areas as below:

Please select which areas below you would prefer during direct counseling?		
	Frequency	Percent
1. Negotiating skills in business	25	44.6
2. Financial planning	26	46.4
3. Business plan	34	60.7
4. Marketing and marketing plan	15	26.8
5. Risk Management	16	28.6
6. Strategic planning	11	19.6
7. Investments planning	23	41.1
8. Issues and legal services	15	26.8
9. General management of the enterprise	16	28.6
10. Strategy and Sales Plan	27	48.2
11. Accounting and Taxes	27	48.2

Based on these results i-CHAT has analyzed the data on which it has developed its activities through this project.

IX. IRREGULAR MIGRATION ROUTES AND POLICIES TO ADDRESS IRREGULAR MIGRATION

Kosovo is considered to be one of the main gateways for entering into Western Europe, especially from the countries of East Europe, Middle East and Asia. The usual routes adopted are¹⁰²: - for citizens of Turkey, Middle East and Asian countries: entry into Kosovo through Pristina airport (as no visa is required) –then cross over to Serbia through the porous green border and then to Western Europe - Albanians enter Kosovo via the Border Crossing Points Vrbnica and Qafa Prushit and continue through the green border to Serbia and then to Western Europe

Refusal of Entry¹⁰³ (In 2005): In total, 287 were denied entry into Kosovo and subsequently deported to Turkey, Albania, India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh. (In 2006): In total: 362 persons were denied entry into Kosovo and subsequently deported, including 326 Albanians and 36 Turks. (2007): Until July 2007, one person, i.e. a citizen of Moldova, has been deported from Kosovo on the basis of a court verdict.

X. PRESENCE OF REFUGEES AND INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS IN THE COUNTRY AND POLICIES IN PLACE

United Nations (UN) Security Council Resolution No. 1244 of 10 June 1999 reaffirmed the right of all refugees and displaced persons to return to their homes in safety, and granted UNMIK the mandate, inter alia, to assure the safe and unimpeded return of all refugees and displaced persons to their homes in Kosovo. In 2003, UNMIK and the PISG listed sustainable returns and the protection of the rights of minority communities among the critical standards to assess progress in Kosovo (Standard IV. Sustainable Returns and the Rights of Communities and their Members & Standard VII. Property Rights). Yet, the numbers of returns continued to be “disappointingly low”¹⁰⁶ according to the UN Special Representative of the Secretary General (SRSG). There is, therefore, a strong need for additional support for the sustainable return of refugees and displaced persons to Kosovo, as the return issue remains of significant regional importance. Such support can make a crucial contribution towards creating an environment in Kosovo that is more conducive to the absorption and socio-economic reintegration of returnees, which supports the further stabilization and development of Kosovo as a whole in the longer-term.

According to the UNMIK Kosovo Fact Sheet issued in April 2007, the total number of voluntary minority returns is estimated at 16,458 with 1,622 persons returned in 2006.¹⁰⁷ According to UNHCR statistics¹⁰⁸, 15,682 members of Kosovo’s ethnic minority communities returned between 2000 and September 2006. They represent slightly over six percent of the total minority population estimated to live in Kosovo, which amounts to 250,000 people, according to currently used official figures. The majority remains displaced in Serbia and in Montenegro, with smaller

numbers in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, and Bosnia Herzegovina. In 2005, 2,126 ethnic minority members came back to Kosovo, representing a decrease compared to 2004, with 2,469 returns and a significant reduction in contrast to 2003, when 3,801 ethnic minorities came back to Kosovo. The decrease in returns is strongly connected to the violent events of March 17th 2004, which regressed conditions for ethnic minorities to a state they had not been at in years and brought back inhibiting factors including: instable security conditions and a sharply decreased freedom of movement, combined with the persistent burdens of unemployment and lack of income generating opportunities.

Limited employment and income generation opportunities are considered to be among the main factors accounting for relatively low return figures. Despite the considerable achievements of UNMIK, the PISG, and international and local NGOs in stabilizing and reconstructing post-conflict Kosovo, the challenges of economic development and poverty reduction remain enormous¹⁰⁹. The extremely high rate of unemployment -- which according to UNHCR is “estimated at over 50%”¹¹⁰ (see also section 6.1 (a) -- remains one of the most debilitating and widespread problems facing both residents and returnees. However, vulnerable populations, such as returnees and especially, returning members of ethnic minority communities, experience these precarious socio-economic conditions even more intensely, as they still are confronted with varying levels of prejudice and discrimination. Compounding the situation, the freedom of movement of some ethnic minority communities continues to be restricted as a result of an actual and perceived unstable security situation. In addition, ethnic minorities often return to isolated villages, which have a very limited absorption capacity due to their remote locations and disadvantaged socio-economic conditions, with limited possibilities for income generation.

Low returns levels are also related to the hostile attitude (both real or perceived) of the receiving community, limited access to housing and agriculture land, limited availability of public services for minorities and persistent lack of a functioning infrastructure. Moreover, the unresolved political status of Kosovo continues to concern both potential returnees and communities in Kosovo alike.

In the short to medium term, the central challenge is to foster an environment that provides incentives to displaced persons to return and motivates ethnic minorities, already residing in Kosovo, to remain and invest in their future here. This objective must also be pursued with concrete responses for creating sustainable income generating opportunities not only for returnees, but also for members of the receiving communities they come back to. This necessarily implies balancing the intervention to include assistance measures for the population already residing in the area.

XI. PROJECTS AND PROGRAMMES ON MIGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT IN KOSOVO

The Dutch-funded Temporary Return of Qualified Nationals (TRQN)'s objective is to contribute to the Kosovar post-war reconstruction by supporting the development of the enhanced capacity in selected sectors, such as education, health, infrastructure development, as well as within the government through shared expertise of qualified Kosovars who temporarily return from the Netherlands.

In an effort to further enhance capacities and indirectly prevent brain drain, the EU through EAR offers scholarships to Kosovars for master programs on European issues at various European universities. Frequently pursued studies include Political Sciences, Economics as well as European Studies. The Young Cell Scheme has been implemented since 2003 under a broader goal of enhancing capacities of Kosovar institutions to adopt EU standards and policies. Students receive their grants under the condition that upon their return they will work with Kosovo's government for at least three years. So far, 59 persons have benefited from EAR scholarships.

Other initiatives include the EAR-funded and UNDP-implemented Capacity Building for European Integration, whereby international as well as local experts are employed to work with various institutions, including ministries. Among international experts, there have been a few Kosovo Albanians with citizenship of EU member states, who have been seconded.

Capacity Building Facility for Kosovo (CBF) (<http://www.cbf-ks.org>) is a joint initiative between the UNDP and Kosovo's Foundation for Open Society (KFOS), endorsed by the Office of the Prime Minister and financed by the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. It was initiated in 2004. In light of the need for expertise within the nascent Kosovo's institutions, CBF addresses gaps in ministries, governmental agencies and municipalities by seconding experts to provide a combination of on-the-job coaching and advisory services. The CBF experts come from Kosovo, the Balkan region as well as from abroad. In fact, the support of the Diaspora Kosovars has been sought in particular.

XII. OTHER IMPORTANT MIGRATION ACTORS IN KOSOVO

The following information comes from 'Revised Manual for Sustainable Return' (2006) as well as corresponding websites of the described organizations.

The amount of EU funding under contract in Kosovo to over €1 billion. In 2005 alone the Agency was given responsibility for €77 million of European Commission assistance funds for Kosovo. EAR continues to assist the PISG, the Assembly and the municipalities in drafting and implementing coherent policies, strategies and EU-compatible legislation. Assistance also focuses on advancing economic reform and reducing unemployment - for the benefit of all of

Kosovo's communities. The Agency continues to support the return and reintegration of minorities to help build the foundations of a multiethnic society in Kosovo.

Danish Refugee Council <http://www.drc.dk/> DRC has been present in Kosovo since the beginning of the armed conflict in 1998. The main objective for DRC in Kosovo is to contribute to the return and reintegration of IDPs and refugees and to the prevention of renewed conflict in Kosovo. This is done by ensuring that the IDPs are presented with a free and informed choice when deciding on a solution for their future - and by facilitating the return and reintegration in Kosovo for those who wish to return. DRC is involved in the return process every step of the way, from the initial decision to return to the actual resettlement place of origin and reintegration into the community.

Kosovo Force (KFOR), (<http://www.nato.int/kfor/>) As a NATO-led international force KFOR is responsible for establishing and maintaining a secure environment in which refugees and displaced persons can return home in safety, as stipulated in UN SC 1244 Resolution. It is therefore responsible for all security matters which arise in the returns processes.

OSCE Mission to Kosovo, (<http://www.osce.org/kosovo>) The OSCE Mission in Kosovo, the largest OSCE field operation, forms a distinct component of the United Nations Interim Administration. It is mandated with institution- and democracy-building and promoting human rights and the rule of law. It plays a key role in creating environment in which sustainable returns can occur. Its Department of Human Rights and Rule of Law as well as Department of Democratization make efforts to ensure Kosovar legislation's compliance with international human rights standards. In the context of return process, OSCE supports inter-ethnic dialogue; monitors and reports on human rights violations; advises authorities on measures to address any concerns in the human rights' field; contributes to institution-building and conducts outreach and public awareness activities in the area of human rights and rule of law

IOM Kosovo (www.iomkosovo.org) IOM Kosovo has been among the three largest IOM Missions worldwide since its inception in June 1999. It has joined the efforts of the international community to invest in a durable peace process and assist the population in rebuilding their lives and working for the future. IOM's strategy, consistent with that of the United Nations Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK), had to go beyond short-term reconstruction and rehabilitation efforts, whereby long-term development is supported bearing in mind that programmes as the return and reintegration process cannot be separated from decisive socio-economic factors such as social services, employment opportunities, civil society development and the rule of law.

UNHCR (www.unhcr.org) UNHCR's mandate is to protect refugees and to find durable solutions to refugee situations. In Kosovo, UNHCR works for the creation of the conditions conducive to return. It oversees returns process and plays a central role in making and implementing returns policy at all levels, central, local as well as regional.

United Nations' Development Programme (UNDP), (<http://www.kosovo.undp.org>) After the initial period of post war reconstruction, UNDP has helped establish and develop local institutions. It strives to improve the strength of Kosovo's institutions, enhance people's everyday security and improve environmental sustainability. UNDP helps to develop and research policies. It provides statistics and advocates solutions for organizations that need them. Within its Returns Programme, UNDP's responsibilities include: Sustainable Partnership for Assistance to Minority Returns to Kosovo (SPARK) Individual Returns Facility. Since 2003, UNDP has been responsible for managing the only facility in Kosovo providing tailor made support to Individual Spontaneous minority returnees (IDPs) to their place of origin. This was initially done through the Rapid Response Returns Facility (RRRF) which developed into the Sustainable Partnerships and Assistance to Minority Returns SPARK IR Facility in October 2005. Support is rendered to beneficiaries through three service lines which include a) housing assistance b) socio-economic support and c) community development.

UNMIK EU Pillar/UNMIK IV Pillar (www.euinkosovo.org) UNMIK IV Pillar is engaged in modernizing the economic framework of Kosovo by developing the structures and instruments on which the market economy is based. It is responsible for areas ranging from customs and fiscal affairs, to privatization and banking. It also provides capacity building through cooperation with ministries involved in economic development and promotes Kosovo's integration into various regional and European economic structures.

UNMIK Police and Kosovo Police Service (KPS) UNMIK Police and the Kosovo Police Service (KPS) are the law enforcement authorities in Kosovo. Pursuant to Security Council resolution 1244, UNMIK has provided temporary law enforcement by maintaining an international police presence and establishing a professional, independent, and multi-ethnic local police force, the Kosovo Police Service (KPS). UNMIK Police and the KPS focus on maintaining public order, crime prevention, border and immigration controls. The KPS plays a role in maintaining effective security for returnees and visiting IDPs/refugees, enforcing the restitution of residential property rights, and helping to ensure freedom of movement for minorities.

XIII. NGOS INVOLVED IN MIGRATION IN KOSOVO

There are a limited number of local non-governmental organizations (NGOs), which are a part of the slowly emerging civil society in Kosovo, focused on the needs of returnees, IDPs, and/or refugees. The following NGOs are most involved in migration issues:

NGO Returns Coordination Group (NRCG) is a central body addressing the return process and is responsible for coordination and transparency of approaches of local and international NGOs. It functions as a forum which holds regular monthly meetings.

Centre for Research of Migration and Helping Refugees (CRMHR) CRMHR provides aid for activities aimed at stopping further emigration from Kosovo and the region to other countries as well as providing professional reintegration assistance during the return and re-socialization of returnees, refused asylum seekers and refugees. Its areas of focus and potential partnership include: Organizing and conducting trainings, in cooperation with partner organizations, in

different fields, as per returnees' needs; Collecting and providing information for better and easier reintegration of returnees and assistance in social reintegration; Disseminating information on migration, migrant's rights and refugee issues through manuals, books, periodical newspaper and other written materials; Organizing round tables, tribunes, seminars, conferences and TV campaigns in support of easier reintegration of returnees.

Civil Rights Programme – Kosovo, (www.crpkosovo.org) CRP/K is a network of offices within Kosovo – in Prishtinë/Priština, Pejë/Peć, Gjilan/Gnjilane, Mitrovicë/a (north and south) and Prizren (with satellite offices in Gračanica/Graçanicë, Strpce/Shtërcë, Gjakovë/Djakovica, Klinë/a and Istog/k), providing free legal information and assistance to individuals on issues related to the situation of refugees, internally displaced persons, returnees and vulnerable local residents. It provides support to UNHCR activities in Kosovo.

Council for Defense of Human Rights and Freedoms (CDHRF) CDHRF works to defend and promote human rights and freedoms by investigating and testifying on human rights violations and 'demanding from all actors who exercise power to reject abusive practices' and respect international principles on human rights and freedoms. Its areas of focus and potential partnership include: Conducting training activities and different courses through partner organizations, such are vocational trainings, foreign languages courses and computer skills; Providing educational seminars on the human rights of migrants and human rights generally; Providing legal assistance and support, counseling and social support to migrants.

Kosovar Civil Society Foundation: (KCSF) KCSF promotes the strengthening of local civil initiatives by providing information, different services, training, as well as grants to NGOs, individuals and other relevant civic institutions in all sectors of civil society. Its areas of focus and potential partnership include: Capacity building training for civil society organizations and individuals; Strengthening civil society by providing appropriate training and support to NGOs, individuals and other civil society institutions; Assistance in completing education (including facilitating enrollment in the respective schools as well as providing books and financial assistance in transport costs).

XIV. RECOMMENDATION FOR KOSOVO

According to the Report No. 60590 – XK issued by the World Bank on 25 May 2011 the Migration will continue to be an important part of Kosovo’s economic, political and social landscape. The emigration of the young has alleviated labor market pressures, and remittances have helped receiving households enjoy a better standard of living—even, for the poorest households, move out of poverty. Today, a quarter or more of households have a family member living abroad. Moreover, over 10,000 Kosovans are estimated to be leaving the country every year. Hence, strengthening engagement with the diaspora and better utilizing Kosovo’s migration potential could make a significant contribution to its economic development.

From international experience Kosovan authorities can learn more about how migration and development intersect and how policy choices can influence these linkages to the benefit of economic development. Public policies can facilitate the migration process, reduce transaction costs for remittances, increase migrant-related trade and tourism, and promote investment opportunities to (returning) migrants. The authorities might also consider policies for protecting migrants by promoting their social and personal protection and access to health and education.

For example, Moldova is similar to Kosovo: it is a small country with one of the lowest average incomes in Europe; unemployment has historically been high; and a large proportion of its population has migrated abroad for better economic opportunities. A recent study (CIVIS IASCI 2010) presents a detailed list of policy recommendations for Moldova to link migration and development. It suggests that the government should: (a) improve the statistics on migration and the institutions dealing with it; (b) cooperate more closely with destination countries in managing the migration process; (c) establish its diplomatic and consular presence in main destination countries and strengthen its outreach capacity; and (d) in cooperation with financial institutions, promote the financial literacy of migrants and recipients of remittances.

Kosovo’s current migration strategy and action plan (2009–12) set out the objective of increasing the contribution migration makes to its economic development. However, neither document specifies measures that relate to migration-related development policies. Instead, they deal with the political aspects of migration, such as returning refugees and other Kosovans who have made temporary stays abroad. A new migration strategy should both establish a vision for how Kosovo’s diaspora can contribute more to its economic development and set out policies for reaching related strategic goals. The action plan would then elaborate the policies and identify instruments to implement them. Here, the international experiences described in this study may prove useful.

What these findings show is that, first and foremost, Kosovo needs to establish an institutional framework to realize its vision of how migration will contribute to Kosovo’s development. The choice of institutional alternative will depend on the domestic context, including funding constraints, but in any case institutional capacity needs to be considerably reinforced.

Second, because remittances are the largest source of Kosovo’s external funding, measures to facilitate their transfer and reduce costs should be a priority. The authorities should therefore

direct their attention to promoting competition for transfers and enhancing the financial literacy of remittance senders and recipients.

Given the large numbers of migrants, promoting protection of their rights should be another priority. As other countries have demonstrated, this can be achieved by giving potential migrants better information on migration processes and by concluding agreements with main destination countries to ensure their rights and protection.

Since a significant share of Kosovan emigrants retain a link to their home country, improving economic conditions and providing information on investment opportunities could bring more of them back and encourage them to invest in economic activity. Measures could be adopted, for example, to promote the return of academics teaching abroad by offering financial and other incentives to teach at Kosovo's universities.

Finally, if, given Kosovo's demographics and high unemployment, the authorities wish to promote migration they need to expend more effort on managing the process, for instance, by designing policies at each stage of the process prior to migration, i.e. pre-decision making, pre-employment and pre departure. In this context, investing in building up their technical skills would also be highly desirable so that potential migrants have better employment opportunities.

This policy note offer numerous examples of policies and instruments at each level of the migration cycle that other countries have introduced. However, the optimal policy mix for Kosovo depends on its country-specific circumstances, and as such should reflect Kosovo's reality. The first part of this study describes this reality, and the findings of the migration survey, would hopefully facilitate the defining of the optimal policy mix.

References:

- (i) Migration and Economic Development in Kosovo, Report No. 60590 – XK, May 25, 2011, *Poverty Reduction and Economic Management Unit Europe and Central Asia Region.*