

Mapping of VET educational policies and practices for social inclusion and social cohesion in the Western Balkans, Turkey and Israel

Country report: Kosovo¹

A project implemented with the support of LSE Enterprise



¹ This designation of Kosovo is without prejudice to positions on status and is in line with UNSCR 1244 and the International Court of Justice's advisory opinion on Kosovo's declaration of independence.

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KOSOVO

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The primary objective of this research study has been to understand the barriers and opportunities for building inclusive and equitable vocational education system in Kosovo. The second aim was to provide new evidence on the role of VET in combating social exclusion and building a more cohesive society and finally the study sought to investigate the role of vocational schools as an integral part of the local community and a key actor in the local skill development system. The study addressed six main themes (i) policies towards VET, social inclusion and social cohesion, (ii) the influence of selection and tracking on social inclusion, (iii) the extent of dropout from vocational education, (iv) patterns of vocational education and apprenticeship systems, (v) the transition from vocational education to work and (vi) the role of VET in promoting social cohesion. The participatory action research used both qualitative and quantitative methods, based on desk research, consultative meetings, in-depth interviews, focus groups and student and teacher questionnaires. The research carried out three case studies of vocational schools in Prishtina, Prizren and Gjakova. The research results revealed the existence of both barriers and opportunities for inclusive vocational education in Kosovo. It was found that while vocational education plays an important role in addressing social inclusion because of the policies and measures in place, the vocational education system also contributes to some extent to the exclusion of marginalized groups partly due to the unfavourable labour market situation, but also due to ineffective policies and inadequate practices applied within the schools and in the community surrounding the school. The research revealed that several policies aim at promoting inclusive vocational education, but there are many implementation barriers. *First*, the legislation and strategic priorities set by the MEST are not interlinked with those of other line Ministries and do not respond effectively to the economic situation; *Second*, some recent reforms have not yet been implemented, so their impact is not yet known (i.e. the role of National Qualifications Framework and Accreditation system in providing a flexible and equal system for all). *Third*, the mechanisms created by national level policy makers do not correspond to the capacities available at the local level and in schools (i.e. the administrative order adopted for preventing dropout at schools requires additional financial resources for prevention and response teams within schools, while the new responsibilities devolved to municipalities lack capacities to deal with them). *Finally*, some of the opportunities available to vocational schools are not being used effectively (e-learning to meet the needs of disabled students, textbooks to all with no extra costs and other measures are not adequately used by schools, and the role of practice firms in providing opportunities to different marginalized groups).

The study revealed the extent of community involvement in school issues and schools efforts to promote their values in building a more cohesive local society, though this differs across schools. The vocational school in Prizren provides a good example of the dual role of vocational education in contributing to the employability of students as well as in supporting the local community. The school puts much effort in responding to minority needs, boosting talents in certain fields and in the high level of voluntary work and community services offered by its students. The business association, the civil society representatives, the parents and students themselves engage in proactive initiatives towards challenging the traditional beliefs that a school is simply an isolated education institution. Despite the economic and financial barriers that the school faces, it is making effective use of the available resources to provide a better environment for socially excluded groups.

None of the schools face high dropout rates. However, all three schools reported a higher rate of dropout after the 10th grade, leaving most dropouts without any certificate. The potential risks for the drop-out were measured through a number of factors, such as: the happiness of students with the school, welcoming environment by teachers, the school environment, the level of learning from courses, and school rating based on the teaching methods, subject knowledge, friendliness of other students and friendliness of teachers. No drop-out preventive mechanisms were identified, despite the legislation in place. On the contrary, the school in Prishtina penalised the bad-behaved students whose return into the school is not an option. This suggests a need for prompt action to design measures to prevent dropout and provide more opportunities for students outside the system (in addition to adult education courses).

The research has provided several significant insights into the relation between vocational education and social inclusion. Firstly, none of the case study schools have a formal system for tracking within the schools, which offers equal opportunities to all groups of students. Secondly the three schools are less likely to select girls, students with disabilities and students with learning difficulties. Thirdly, vocational students choose a school less for the reputation it has but rather more for the support that it provides for their further study opportunities and future employment opportunities. Fourthly, students in two out of three case study schools provide limited opportunities to learn practical skills, as they lack workshops and equipment for practice. Fifthly, students have few opportunities for placement at local enterprises for their professional practice. These last two observations imply that, studying in poorly equipped schools and without much access to the world of work, vocational students are not adequately prepared for the labour market. This in turn leads to employment below their level of qualification, or in jobs outside their field of study. Employment of disabled people and those with learning difficulties is even more difficult. It was found that vocational schools may be less effective in providing employment opportunities for girls as many plan to continue their education and few to

look for a job. Finally, the level of qualification and the reputation of the school were found to be the main barriers to future employment, highlighting the crucial importance of vocational schools in the employability of graduates.

We propose several actions for schools based on findings of the study. Firstly, schools should develop specific plans to attract students with disabilities and learning difficulties in profiles that suit these two groups; schools should develop plans to place such students in suitable companies for professional practice. Secondly, career guidance services should serve better students with disabilities, from minority groups and girls. Thirdly, schools should focus their efforts to prevent dropout on the first level of vocational schooling or the 10th grade. Fourthly, teachers should be better trained in student-teacher relationships and in dealing with socially excluded students.

Our main recommendations are as follows (i) municipalities should analyse local labour market needs and understand the potential for employment of students with special needs and disabilities and ethnicities; (ii) practice firms should better address individual student needs; (iii) schools should better promote the profiles and degrees they offer and local job opportunities; (iv) schools should provide mentoring and coaching for the practical part of the vocational schooling to both promote but also address the inclusiveness in the education experience; (v) with the support of donors, NGOs dealing with issues of social exclusion should cooperate with vocational schools and address their specific needs, and (vi) schools and the system itself should encourage more the business associations to offer placements in companies for vocational students from disadvantaged groups.

ACRONYMS & DEFINITIONS

Professional practice: In Kosovo practice-based learning at secondary level in vocational schools is organised in two forms: practice-based learning in schools’ workshops and practice-based learning in enterprises. This second form in Kosovo is widespread referred as “professional practice”.

List of Acronyms

ALMP	Active Labour Market Programmes
AVETAE	Agency of Vocational Education and Training and Adult Education
CVET	Council for VET
CSOs	Civil Society Organisations
CBK	Consolidated Budget of Kosovo
DANIDA	Danish International Development Assistance
EC	European Commission
ECLO	European Commission Liaison Office
ECTS	European Credit Transfer System
ECMI	European Centre for Minority Issues
EMIS	Education Management Information System
EPAP	European Partnership Action Plan
EQF	European Qualifications Framework
ETF	European Training Foundation
EU	European Union
FDI	Foreign direct investment
GoK	Government of Kosovo
GDP	Gross domestic product
GIZ	German International Cooperation
GTZ	German Agency for Technical Cooperation
IDEP	Institutional Development in Education Project (World Bank)
IDs	In-depth interviews
IPA	Instrument for Pre-Accession to European Union
ICT	Information and communications technology
JAR	Joint Annual Review
KAS	Kosovo Agency of Statistics
KCC	Kosovo Chamber of Commerce

KEK	Kosovo Energy Corporation
KOSVET	Kosovo Vocational Education and Training Project (EU)
LAB	Local Advisory Board
LFS	Labour Force Survey
MAFRD	Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Rural Development and Food
MED	Municipal Education Directors
MEF	Medium Expenditure Framework
MEST	Ministry of Education Science and Technology
MF	Ministry of Finance
MLSW	Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare
MTI	Ministry of Trade and Industry
NAB	National Advisory Board
NCF	National Curriculum Framework
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
NQA	National Qualifications Authority
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
PTK	Post Telecom of Kosovo
PWD	Persons with Disabilities
RAE	Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian
RPL	Recognition of Prior Learning
SOK	Statistical Office of Kosovo
SIDA	Swedish International Development Agency
SME	Small and medium-sized enterprise
TTU	Teacher Training Unit
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNKT	United Nations Kosovo Team
UNMIK	United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VTC	Vocational Training Centre
VET	Vocational education and training
WB	World Bank

INTRODUCTION

Kosovo is among the last countries to embark on the transition process. As elsewhere, the education system has been subject to continuous change during the transition. Kosovo has the youngest population in Europe and this puts pressure on both the education system and the labour market. According to the latest Census 2011, the unemployment rate in Kosovo is 44% and higher for women (according to latest 2009 LFS unemployment rate for men was 41% whereas 56% for women). People with disabilities, those with special needs, and minorities such as Serbs, Roma, Ashkali, Egyptians, Turks and Bosnians are at a disadvantage in labour market.

At secondary level, almost 60% of students enrol in vocational schools. However many students choose vocational schools after having failed to enrol in general education and so vocational education is seen as a less desirable choice. Evidence suggests that vocational students originate from poor socio-economic backgrounds, which implies that they are at risk of social exclusion. Vocational schools in Kosovo struggle with poor infrastructure, poor image, and low attractiveness to young people. The government acknowledges that low skill levels and poor educational attainment lead to poorer labour market experiences and higher poverty rates, which contribute to disadvantages for socially excluded groups. The key findings of the Torino Process Review of 2012 were that most economically, socially and politically marginalised youth sub-groups miss out on vocational education and employment. The inadequate quality of the vocational education system implies that it does little to alleviate social exclusion.

A general finding from the interviews is that there is a weak link between vocational schools and businesses. Businesses complain that they are not actively involved in the design of curricula. Poor cooperation with enterprises has two consequences: first it results in a limited number of places for students to have professional practice in enterprises and secondly it fails to support students in finding a job. This latter observation is based on the fact that students who carry out their professional practice in companies have a better chance of being hired by employers. To date, there is no sound labour market needs analysis to inform policy design and underpin education reform. Additionally there is no available data on the school-to-work transition to provide information on the labour market experience of VET graduates. The lack of solid evidence and analysis poses barriers for policymaking in the field of social inclusion.

The aim of this study is to deepen understanding of the main barriers and potential opportunities for building an inclusive and equitable vocational education system in Kosovo. New evidence is provided on the role of vocational education in combating social exclusion and contributing to building more

cohesive societies. The research addressed six main themes: (i) policies towards vocational education, social inclusion and social cohesion and assessing the relationship between them; (ii) the influence of selection and tracking on social inclusion; (iii) the extent of dropout from vocational education and assess the influence of drop-put on social inclusion; (iv) the different patterns of school-based vocational education and apprenticeship systems and assessing their influence on social inclusion; (v) the transition from vocational education to work and assessing the different ways in which this transition reflects differences in social inclusion; and (vi) the role of vocational education in promoting social cohesion.

Three vocational schools were selected for this study: 28 Nentori in Prishtina, Kadri Kusari in Gjakova and 11 Marsi in Prizren. The project applied the method of participatory action research (PAR). As explained in the Appendix this is a process of investigation that involves both the researchers and the subjects of research in a joint endeavour designed to make the research findings relevant and applicable. The implementation of this approach incorporated consultations with national and local advisory boards. Part of these boards were national and local level stakeholders including government officials, NGOs, business association, school directors, teachers, students, and parents students from case study schools and representatives from academia. The two boards were consulted with regards to research tasks, methodological approach and validation of questionnaires.

Desk research was initially conducted by analysing government documents, laws, administrative data and strategies and existing literature (though limited on social inclusion issues) explore the relationship between VET policy social inclusion and social cohesion. Moreover, a number of in-depth interviews were undertaken both at national and local level with relevant stakeholders in vocational education and social inclusion and cohesion areas. A focus group at national level was organised and finally survey with teachers and students in three case study schools were carried out.

The report is structured as follows. The **first chapter** presents the institutional framework and policy process at national level including sections on mapping policies towards vocational education, social inclusion and social cohesion and the relationship between them. **Chapter 2** describes the PAR process, and it analyses the research findings of the three case studies. In this chapter research findings for the following research tasks are provided: the influence of selection and tracking on social inclusion; mapping the extent of dropout from vocational education and assessment of the influence of dropout on social inclusion; mapping of different patterns of school-based vocational education and apprenticeship systems and assessment of their influence on social inclusion; and findings for the research task which sought to analyse the transition from vocational education to work and an assessment of different ways in which this transition reflects differences in social inclusion and cohesion. **Chapter 3** also elaborates similarities and differences among three case study

schools on vocational education, social inclusion policies and social cohesion. Based on research findings actions proposals for schools are outlined in **Chapter 3**. A number of policy recommendations are separately presented in **Chapter 4**. Recommendations are directed towards: national level institutions, local level institutions, donor organisations and NGOs/CSOs.

1. INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK AND THE POLICY PROCESS AT NATIONAL LEVEL

1.1 Situation analysis

1.1.1 Education system and the labour market

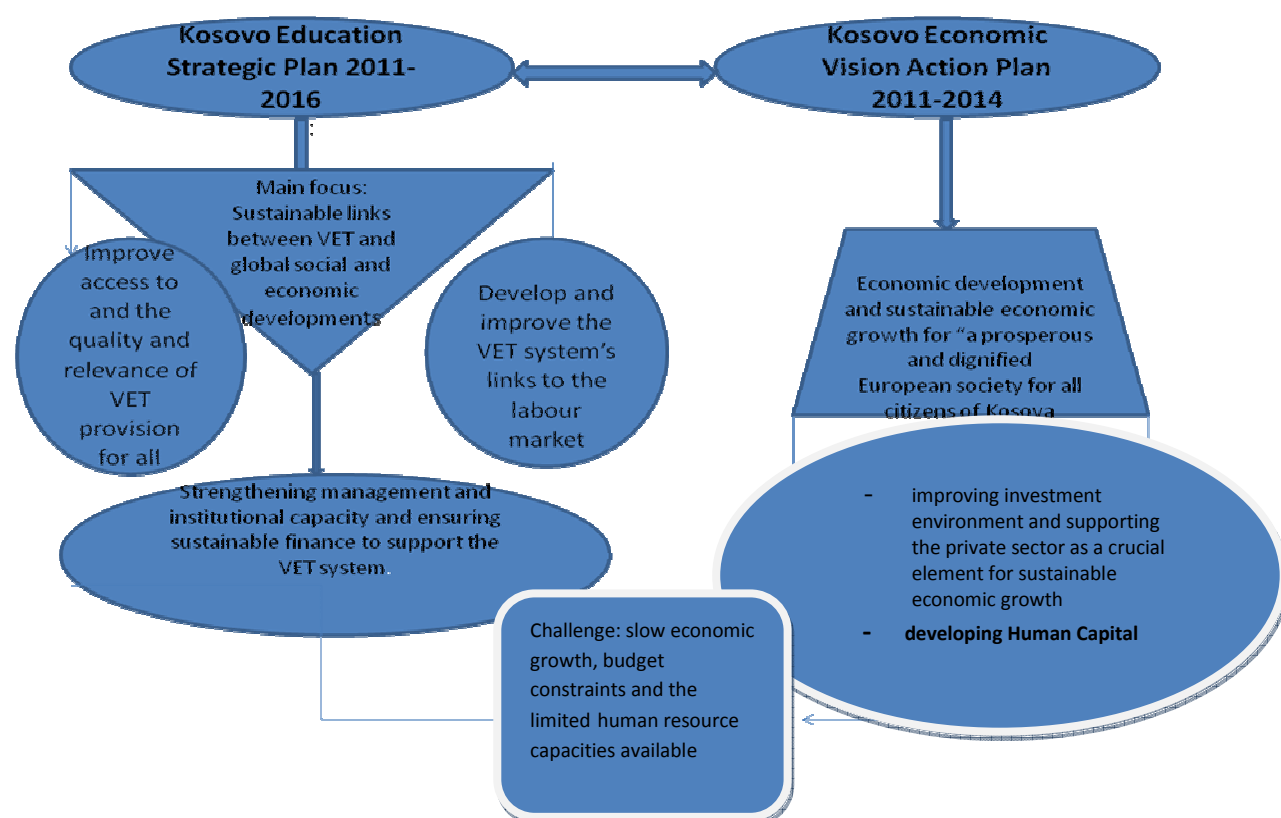
Kosovo's vision for the development of vocational education is largely determined by the socio-economic situation (Fig.1). The main purpose of vocational education in Kosovo is to prepare students for the labour market (see Kosovo Education Strategic Plan - KESP 2011-2016). Recent policy discussions are leaning towards shifting the main aim of VET reform to a mutually beneficial and supportive partnership between the VET system and the business sector (MEST, Draft Strategy on Professional Practice 2013-2016, 2012 and policy discussions from different discussion platforms).

In the light of continuous reforms in vocational education, MEST is focused on the implementation of standards, curricula, assessment and certification as well as the development of the necessary vocational qualifications in line with National Qualifications Framework. As of 2011 the establishment of National Qualifications Authority has paved the way to quality assurance processes, although the quality assurance process is still in its initial phases.

Recent institutional reform policies have been concentrated on the system level. The decision to establish a VET Agency and the re-constitution of the Council of VET (CVET) are clear policy decisions towards the systematic development of VET governance. However, the role of the re-constituted CVET (2012) is not clear, yet and the VET Agency is yet to be developed.

Considering the perspective of vocational education in addressing social inclusion, another objective of national policies is the improvement of access to and the quality and relevance of VET provision for all.

Figure 1 KESP 2011-2016 in relation to Kosovo Economic Vision Action Plan 2011-2014



Source: Self-elaborated analysis from the KESP 2011-2016 and the Kosovo Economic Vision Action Plan 2011-2014

Labour market trends and employment challenges in the country

Data from the latest available *Labour Force Survey - 2009*

Information on labour market trends is provided on an irregular basis. The latest data from the Labour Force Survey are only available from 2009, while administrative data on registered unemployment are provided by the MLSW for 2012. The data show a very low activity rate for women (26%) (SOK - LFS, 2009) (see Fig.2). Unemployment, at 47.5% (women 59.6% and young people 73%) is the highest in Europe. Despite the high rates of long-term unemployment (82% have been unemployed over 12 months) the majority of the employed take jobs under temporary contracts (SOK-LFS, 2009: 21). The relationship between employment and education demonstrates that the higher a person's level of education, the more likely he or she is to be employed. The employment rate for those that

have completed upper secondary level of education is 34.9% compared to 77% for those that have completed tertiary education (SOK-LFS, 2009) (Fig. 3). About 30,000 young jobseekers join the labour market every year, with little opportunity to find a job, as there are only 3,000-4,000 vacancies (MLSW, 2012; UNKT, 2012; USAID, 2009: 6).

Registered unemployed - Administrative data from MLSW – Public Employment Services

Administrative data provided on a regular basis by the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare (MLSW) show a three per cent decrease in registered unemployment in 2010-11 (Fig. 6). According to the same source (MLSW, 2012), the registered unemployment rates are around 35-39% of the economically active population; long-term unemployment was 93.8% in 2011. Around 60% of the registered unemployed have no qualification. Youth (aged 15-24) faces the highest entry into unemployment with about 0.7%. However, compared to 2010 (+2.4%), data indicate a decrease in registered unemployment of this age group.

There was a significant increase in 2011 in the participation rate in vocational training but the increase was relatively low amongst the unemployed. The levels of qualifications expressed in this report refer to those of ISCED (which does not provide clear reference to VET levels) rather than NQF levels. Therefore analysis referring to vocational education is difficult to be carried out (Table 2)

1.1.2 Mapping policies towards vocational education, social inclusion and social cohesion

Table 4 maps the different policies towards vocational education, social inclusion and social cohesion and assess the relationship between them (Research Task 1). It analyses (i) the main VET policies in place, (ii) how these policies have articulated specific elements related to social inclusion and social cohesion and (iii) the findings in a comparative perspective between these policies and how they are perceived by national level stakeholders (including policy makers).

Table 1 Policies towards VET, social inclusion and social cohesion and the relationship between them

Policies towards VET in place (legislation and strategies)	Articulated policies on social inclusion and social cohesion in VET legislation and strategies	Findings
<p>KESP 2011-2016 articulates the inclusive education (not social inclusion though)</p>	<p>Gender issues, disabled persons, RAE communities and sometimes social economic background clearly articulated (a random set of socially excluded groups). New mechanisms on social inclusion in VET arising (upon MEST's request – MEST – VET Division)</p>	<p>No clear messages and isolated policies and mechanisms among different line ministries and lack of communication between central and local level (focus group & MEST) Mechanisms in place not coordinated among relevant departments even within the same ministry (e.g. Human rights Unit with VET Division or Diaspora office) (finding from a gender analysis and confirmed by asking directly the unit representatives) There is also need for more flexible and multi-dimensional policies (addressing marginalized groups not by categorizing them as everyone can at a certain encounter be a marginalized person) (in-depth interview – KPI and national focus group).</p>
<p>New VET Law (2013)</p>	<p>Main principles: inclusiveness, access, transfer and progression, Support to career development as integrated part of lifelong learning considered as main principles of the entire VET Law</p>	<p>No reference to any socially excluded group but rather referred to as opportunities given to all, with a focus on inclusiveness. Most of national level interviewees confirm the existence of legislation that addresses VET and social inclusion <i>per se</i> but report low level of implementation.</p>
<p>Kosovo Curriculum Framework</p> <p>Teacher Training</p>	<p>Special Curriculum Provisions: The curriculum policy of inclusion requires that all students in attached classes and in integrated classes follow the same core curriculum requirements as students in mainstream classes, but on the basis of individual education plans (IEP), followed by individual assessment and evaluation procedures. (NCF, 2011:n.p.)</p> <p>Need for VET teacher training (in</p>	<p>However, it was found that the IEP have not been developed, yet due to the delayed decentralization in municipalities</p> <p>Some VET teacher trainings on social inclusion (concept and research methodology for addressing social inclusion in VET – SIVET project; there is tendency</p>

	social inclusion issues, to deal with socially excluded students as well as more emphasis on practical part of training.	to ground such initiatives in the system level and avoid the pilot level)
National Qualifications Framework and the Law on National Qualifications	The NQF caters for lifelong learning opportunities for all and therefore prevention of dropout due to the flexible system, people can enter or leave at anytime) (Interviewee - NQA director).	The extent to which NQF has met individual learners' needs remains to be seen.
Guidelines on Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)	The Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is a very appropriate mechanism for addressing individual learners' needs	The implementation of the RPL has not started, yet. The guideline is being drafted and consulted with relevant stakeholders. Results to be seen.
Administration Order (AO) on "Creating and strengthening of teams for prevention and response toward dropout and non-registration in compulsory education" Training of staff that deals with prevention of dropout in schools Development of a training manual for the prevention of dropout and early-school leaving in 6 pilot municipalities National Action Plan against the school Abandonment 2009-2014	Team for informing, preventing, monitoring dropout and non-registration in compulsory education. A team for prevention and response to dropout and non-registration (PRTAN) is foreseen as a body within school level and not part of administrative structures inside the official administration of school. The team's main tasks comprise the communication within the school among students, parents and teachers and outside school institutions among children, youth and their families with the aim to reduce, prevent school dropout and increase the no. of registration of children and youth in school. The same team needs to be established in the municipal level as well. The objectives set to be achieved by 2014 are directly related to prevention and handling of dropout. Each strategic objective of this national plan has its specific activities that are distributed to relevant institutions and partners in charge, time period, financial sources, indicators and evaluation and monitoring mechanisms.	The dropout prevention mechanisms in place do not take into consideration the financial limitations in vocational schools. Both schools and municipalities (MEDs) are required to provide funds for the teams' work. In addition, schools do not seem to be informed about the existence of such and an AO. Nevertheless, regardless the very ambitious goals set in this plan, it was found (KPI, 2011) that it is not being implemented in line with its set timeframe. Some of the activities pending are the following: nomination of an officer in the MEST that would deal with the school dropout; drafting of the Administrative Order (AO) for reviewing the standard forms for student transfer from one school to another and the penalty/fines measures for the dropout cases (KPI, 2011:38).

Draft Strategy on Career Guidance 2011-2016	Social inclusion issues articulated in the existing strategies but there is low level of cross-integrated mechanisms evolving of these strategies.	- The strategy on career guidance makes an important document for articulating policies that also tackle the dropout in the VET (Interviewees – IPK)
Draft Strategy for improvement of professional practice in Kosovo 2013-2016	Vocational Education and Training system in Kosovo aspires to have a high quality competency-based professional practice that support business growth and give for all students the knowledge and skills they need in a safe and healthy work environment.	- Practice firms considered as important practices where a socially inclusive environment could be provided. (NAB and in-depth interview – donor organization)
E-learning Policy and Strategy 2011-2015	“Computer laboratories are generally open only for computer classes during the day and closed after classes. Just a few schools allow students to access computer labs outside regular IT classes” (MEST, 2011).	It is apparent that vocational schools are best equipped (E-learning strategy, p.32) and this has to be taken advantage of as a useful mechanism to tackle some of the socially excluded groups (NAB).

Source: Self-elaborated, 2013.

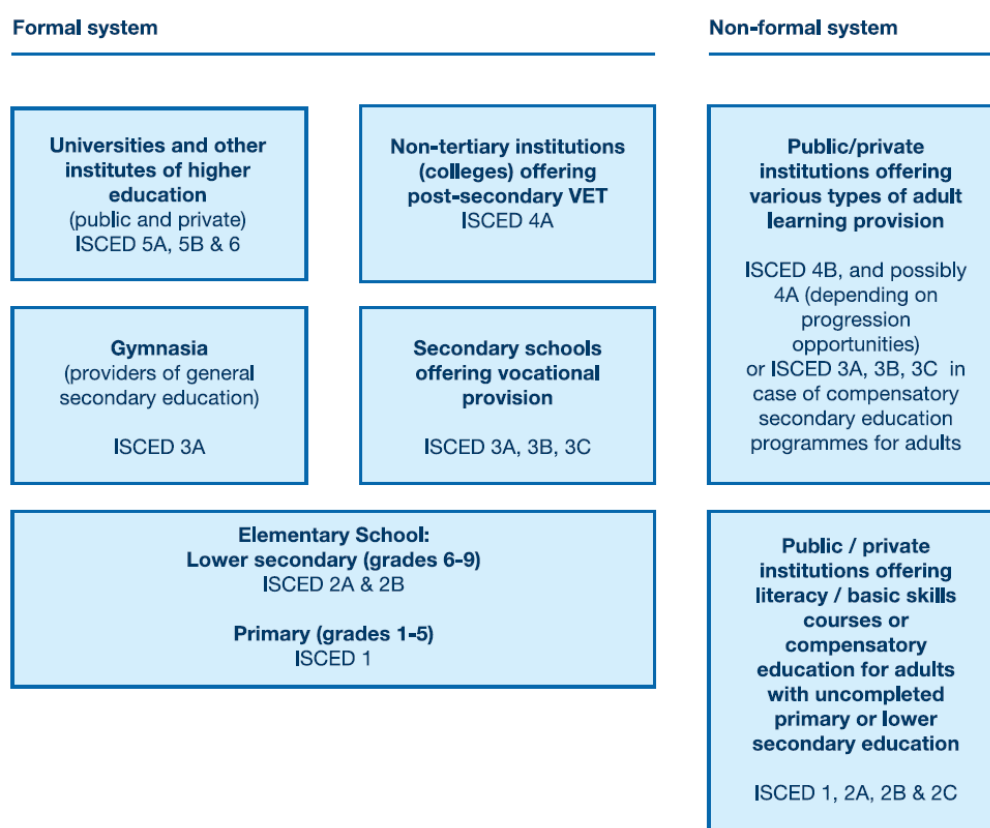
The Institutional framework of VET in Kosovo is not different compared to others in the region. The Vocational education is the responsibility of VET Division in the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MEST), while vocational training is the responsibility of the Vocational Training Division in the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare (MLSW). MEST is responsible for strategic developments of education. The Municipal Education Directorates (MEDs) cover the local governance of the education system and are in charge of budget distribution to schools based on the school budget planning (in line with decentralized policy initiatives for the devolution of finances), as well as for statistics and legal issues (depending on the structure of MED personnel) (Gowing and Saqipi, 2010: 15), employment of teachers and other school personnel, payment of the managerial staff as well as other employed personnel, construction and maintenance of the school buildings.

The Kosovo Education Strategic Plan 2011-2016 is set out in line with the Medium Term Expenditure Framework. Yet, due to slow economic growth, both central and local governments face barriers in human resource capacities (EC, 2011) and budget constraints that prevent the implementation of the ambitious goals set out in the KESP 2011-2016.

The Network of vocational schools

The vocational sub-sector is part of the upper-secondary level education system (ISCED 3 or levels 2, 3 and 4 of the NQF) and serves the age group 15-18 (see Figure 7). The vocational schools are in charge of budget planning and management within the school. The public vocational schools that function under the MEST have their own governing structure composed of the School Board and the School Director/Principal. The School Board consists of the key school stakeholders: teacher, parent, student and there are intentions to include also two business representatives, although currently it is only the Centers of Competence (CoC) that make such boards.

Figure 2: The education and training structure mapped against ISCED



Source: National Qualifications Authority (NQA)- National Qualifications Framework (NQF), 2011

In addition, two bodies are involved in VET policy making:

1. The Council for Vocational Education and Training (CVET) is an advisory body established by MEST mandated to “advise on policy development, establish permanent professional committees and temporary working groups to undertake specific activities and approve

occupational standards” (Art.14). The CVET is composed of representatives from MEST, MLSW, MTI, MAFRD, MH and Social Partners (KCC and BSPK).

2. The Agency of VET and Adult Education (AVETAE) as based on the draft VET Law is a newly proposed body by MEST, established by the government and yet due to its very recent establishment no clear functions of its members are assigned. Nevertheless, based on the draft VET Law this body will be responsible for “Administration and leadership of VET and Adult Education (AE) institutions, Development of VET, Coordination of research and studies concerning VET and AE, Coordination of international projects, engagement of social partners in VET and AE, research on the needs of labour market, and supervision and coordination of the development of occupational standards” (Art. 13). The Agency will draw members from all line Ministries, social partners and business community representatives.

As shown above, the main purpose of the VET system is to prepare students for the labour market (KESP 2011-2016). In addition, recent policy discussions are leaning towards shifting the main aim of the VET reform to a reciprocal and mutually beneficial and supportive partnership between the VET system and businesses (Draft Strategy on Professional Practice 2013-2016, 2012).

Concerning the skills acquired in vocational schools versus those required in the labour market it is found that there is a horizontal mismatch related to practical component of studies. A study conducted by GTZ in 2009 argued that the practical part of vocational education should be improved in order to meet employers’ needs (Gashi, Dostal, Reich, 2009:35). The same was reported in the in-depth interviews carried out in this research. A series of MEST, KCC and GIZ baseline studies (2011) on employers’ skill needs and satisfaction with graduates of vocational schools and vocational training centres in some profiles (Construction, Metal, Sales, Tourism and Wood) conveyed similar messages. More than 50% of employers do not employ vocational school graduates due to: (i) lack of quality among graduates (ii) inappropriate or insufficient machinery and equipment for practical training and lack of experienced teachers and trainers; (iii) graduates/trainees are not sufficiently qualified; (iv) mismatch between skills required and those available (mainly reported deficits in practical skills and technical competences). **The same opinion is shared by the representatives of institutions interviewed for this study** (MLSW and MED in-depth interviews) articulating the mismatch between VET curricula and labour market needs.

From the central policy level, one of the main determinants of skill mismatch is the lack of professional practice which is provided either to only a limited number of students through Active Labour Market Programme (ALMPs) internship programme or within the school premises through

Virtual Practice Firms (available only in Economic schools)² and the limited resources of workshops available in schools. This is attributed to poor cooperation between vocational schools and the business community, although efforts have been made in this respect but with poor results. Few initiatives have been made to motivate the business community to provide vocational students with professional practice or latter on a job. The ALMP provides some financial support to both students and hosting companies. However, this covers a low percentage of vocational school graduates. The sustainability of this programme is flawed and many schools complain about the employers being “spoiled” with direct financial incentives. In addition, it was made clear that the donor-supported projects implemented to support internships leads to confusion among employers and students (as a result of not being able to cover the entire system but rather just a limited number of beneficiaries) (B.Mustafa, Business association, in-depth interview, Prishtina).

At a recent conference, three proposals to encourage employers to employ more graduates from vocational schools were made: 1) tax exemption for business companies employing vocational graduates (which is followed by a number of critiques by the international community) 2) the continuation of ALMPs with larger financial support from the Government and 3) no financial incentives should be offered but rather the strengths of VET should be promoted, hence services/tasks provided by students at the enterprises (in form of professional practice) to be used as a value and further as a potential benefit to the company (MEST, KCC, GIZ international conference, June 11 2012). Nevertheless, results from the three case studies of the PAR research at hand provide some more insight into the relationship with local businesses. First, it is clear that the local businesses do show interest and responsibility in accommodating students for the purpose of the practical hours - professional practice – but due to the high supply of students from some profiles on the one hand and low demands by the companies/enterprises, students often end up rather watching only and barely learning by doing (In-depth interview, employer, Gjakova). A general problem is that most enterprises are micro-enterprises providing limited number of places for professional practice (Haulica and Morina, 2012: 9).

Haulica and Morina (2012) have identified several key weaknesses of the VET system in Kosovo in regard to professional practice including a lack of essential management skills in establishing effective school-enterprise partnerships; a large number of students do not participate in professional practice; participation of vulnerable groups of vocational students is unsatisfactory, being far from the corresponding proportions in the working age population; a lack of promotional materials on what is

² Practice firms also known as “fictitious firms”, virtual enterprises, training firms or practice enterprise comprise a new form of learning which provides simulation of processes of a “real” enterprise in different level of achievements and learning outcomes (Xhelili-Krasniqi et al., 2011)

offered by vocational students to the enterprises; professional practice programmes are not designed through genuine working partnerships between vocational schools and employers; occupational health and safety training is marginally addressed; child protection policies are not seen to be of high importance by vocational schools; low involvement of vocational schools in community programmes; and a lack of clear vision about responsibilities, support and the way professional practice will be organized. Tackling most of these weaknesses would pave the way to clear policy initiatives to address social inclusion through professional practice. One of the examples clearly stated by the national advisory board members of the current study is that by organizing professional practice and/or the school-based practice learning (practice firms or other workshops).

Apart from issues related to professional practice, vocational education does not pave a smooth way to further education opportunities either. Many vocational graduates seek to progress to higher levels of education. Therefore, two options remain at the disposal of graduates of vocational schools: either seek to enter the constrained world of work or attempt to receive a higher education degree not necessarily relevant to what they have learned or acquired in their previous studies. The existence of only one Matura exam for both streams – vocational and general education is a barrier to vocational students who are less prepared than those enrolled in general education in gymnasium.

1.1.3. The main dimensions of social exclusion and social cohesion at national level

Social inclusion is among main priorities of the government (in-depth interview, MEST and KPI and national level focus group), which acknowledges that low skill levels and poor educational attainment contribute to social exclusion since those with low skills are more prone to be unemployed and perform worse in the labour market (MEST, speech from the Minister). However, issues of equity and inclusion have not been central to most vocational schools. Such issues have usually been considered as something ‘extra’ (usually supported by donors) rather than as an integral part of the day-to-day functioning of the VET system (ETF, 2012). The 2012 Torino Process report states that the concepts of social inclusion, social cohesion and equity are unfamiliar or relatively new and the capacities of the existing system for dealing with social inclusion are limited. Previous analysis by OECD (2011) also indicated slow developments in this direction.

Social exclusion in the labour market is reflected in very high long-term unemployment rates and high inactivity rates, especially among women; high youth unemployment, and deep inequalities in particular between urban and rural areas, and poverty in particular of ethnic minorities (ETF, 2012). In Kosovo, social exclusion is the “majority condition, experienced by a wide range of people across many dimensions of life” such as “exclusion – from economic life, social services or civic engagement” (SOLIDAR, 2011, p.4).

The female employment rate is very low (28.7%) and only about 12% of those employed work under a permanent full-time contract (SOK - LFS, 2009). Women's low representation in the labour market can be explained by a combination of family and household obligations and the low chances for women for finding a job (ETF, 2010, p.13). In addition, when it comes to VET in addressing women's preferences it has been reported that technical fields are typically male-dominated fields where women comprise only around 28% of the student body, mostly in the region of Prishtina (Framework Programme for Gender Equality 2008-2013; Kastrati, 2010:14). Despite some donor initiatives in cooperation with MEST (the so-called "Girls' day" and "Open days") which aim at informing girls about male-oriented profiles, occupational selection is still very gender stereotyped (Kita, 2008).

Ethnic minorities also suffer from higher unemployment and economic inactivity than the general population (ETF, 2012:24) as a result of low skills, hence majority of them live in extreme poverty, influencing their low rates of their education attainment (KFOS/COMPASS, 2009).

Poor people face additional barriers in education opportunities and attainment (UNDP, 2012, p.11), which in turn pose difficulties for their inclusion in the society and employment (ETF, 2012). Poverty rates are higher among children, female-headed households and members of Kosovo's Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian ethnic minority (RAE) (UNDP, 2012, p. 11).

Vocational education for a number of students with disabilities (intellectual impairments, blindness, speaking or hearing impairment) is organized in five Resource Centres. Their numbers increased by 12% compared to the previous year (2010) (MEST- EMIS, 2011). In the 10th grade of vocational education, there has been a 42% enrolment rate of this group. However, there is a very low inclusion level of students from Resource Centres into the regular schools (only three students from Resource Centres of all five regions in Kosovo). This group faces major barriers to inclusion in education. Less than 2% of the MEST budget is allocated for education for children with special needs (Landsman and Maloku, 2009). Children outside the education system are of major concern to most of the policy makers, practitioners as well as donor community (JAR, February, 2013). A suggestion to harmonize the EMIS with those of civil registration offices has been proposed as a response to this problem. Nevertheless, this would yet not respond to a number of vulnerable groups (the registration offices do not necessarily report the disabilities – either physical or mental disabilities – as well as a number of other characteristics that might identify the marginalized groups or persons at risk, which are not asked due to ethical reasons).

Evidence provided by key informants in this research revealed that the majority of students enrolling in the three vocational schools come from poor socio-economic backgrounds (in-depth interviews with schools directors). On the other hand, the parents interviewed reported quite a high satisfaction

with their children's schooling and think they have made the right decision to choose these schools. The parents who took part in the LAB meetings for this research project expressed the same satisfaction. One of the main daily barriers to attend courses identified by some of the key informants (trade union and employment centre) is transport, in particular for those commuting from rural to urban areas. Nevertheless, distance from home to school was reported as one of the lowest rated reason for choosing the school, indicating that distance (or potentially transport) is not an important issue for students. An important finding revealed in the teachers' questionnaire (see section 2.3.1) is schools' high interest (more than half of respondents) in attracting students from minorities and poor families.

1.2 The institutional framework for vocational education

1.2.1. The institutional framework of vocational education at national level

The Vocational Education and Training sub-sector in Kosovo is part of the upper-secondary level (ISCED 3) and serves the age group 15-18 (see Figure 7 at section 1.1). These students are distributed among 61 vocational schools including 2 Centres of Competence that operate under shared responsibility between Ministry of Education Science and Technology and Municipal Directorates for Education. These vocational schools are spread in 26 main towns of Kosovo, and systemized in 6 main regions (see Figure 8). The total number of students that have attended the vocational schools during the school year 2011/12 was over 59,600 students (MEST, EMIS, 2011), which represents around 57% of the overall number of students of upper secondary schools. In total there are 80 VET providers, counting in (apart from public upper-secondary provision) the adult VET providers, NGOs and private providers. However, it should be noted that the study at hand analyses only three vocational schools that function under the MEST.

Figure 3: Geographical distribution of vocational schools in Kosovo



Source: VET Wiki Platform – vetkosovo.org

According to the new Kosovo Curriculum Framework (KCF), professional practice programs form part of the VET secondary school curriculum, which focuses on competence-based education and learning outcomes, building the following structure: Grade 10: Theory 60% vs. Practice 40%; Grade 11: Theory 50% vs. practice 50%; Grade 12: Theory 40% vs. practice 60%. VET secondary schools in Kosovo offer two main types of work-based learning programs – work-based learning in vocational schools own workshops and professional practice in enterprises (MEST, 2013, Draft Strategy on Professional Practice in Kosovo 2013-2016, p.4).

1.2.2 Relationship between vocational education and social inclusion

Vocational schools in Kosovo suffer from a bad image and low attractiveness to young people, marking a default exclusion upon the initial encounter of students with the VET system, that of enrolment period. Both policy makers and practitioners claim that enrolment in VET is a second option after failing to enrol in general upper-secondary schools (gymnasia) (ETF 2012). Whereas some stakeholders report the lack of quality of vocational education as the main determinant for such image, recent policy discussions have identified the lack of marketing and promotion of some VET institutions' strengths to the community and wider scope (M.Koenig, Prishtina, Focus group). The same opinion is shared by a recent SWOT analysis undertaken for the purpose of Strategy for Professional Practice in Kosovo, pointing out that “vocational schools lack of promotional materials

to strengthen their message when approaching employers for establishing new partnerships” (MEST, 2013 p.11).

Improvements are observed in the image of some profiles offered by VET providers, for example Economics, which is reported to stand out as compared to other profiles. The improved reputation of the Economic schools is explained by the level of practice being offered in these schools, particularly through the Practice Firms (virtual firms) available in all vocational schools of this profile (M. Koenig, Prishtina). Asked about the “Reputation of school”, students reported it as quite an important reason for selecting the school they’re attending (3.5 mean score for school A – Economic school “Kadri Kusari”). In addition, the highest score for the selection of a school because of its reputation is in the Economics profile (analysed for the schools that offer this profile). This might explain the increased reputation of this profile in the country but it does not imply whether the reasons are the Practice Firms or the professional practice outside the school.

Despite the new initiatives undertaken as a response to strategic goals and objectives, looking at the achievements it can be concluded that although social inclusion, integration of socially excluded groups and lifelong learning are guiding objectives of the education strategies, they are not reflected in actions in the world of work (UNDP, 2012). The UNDP observes that “...vocational training programmes do not seem to meet the needs of those most excluded from the workforce – the illiterate, the poor and highly dependent women” (UNDP, 2012: 93). The in-depth interviews of the PAR research at hand also confirmed that most students in the three vocational schools included in the study come from a poor socio-economic background, particularly in Prishtina and Gjakova.

In general, it can be concluded from the reviewed literature (and the comparison in Table 1 between policies and practices) and from the in-depth interviews with school principals, teachers and MEDs that the attractiveness of vocational education for socially excluded groups remains quite low. The increase in enrolment rates of students with disabilities, the attempts to involve the minorities in the system by providing curricula in all minority languages and teacher training for minority staff (ETF, 2012), do suggest that there has been an increased attention to inclusive education policies. However, implementation remains a matter of individual cases, rather than system level effects. Therefore, looking into every single school and identifying the key issues is of crucial importance to grasp a clearer picture of the system’s capacities to address social inclusion. In addition, school-specific research is expected to better identify the needs of municipalities, profiles, groups and communities.

1.3 The policy process and the policy debate

The Government's vision comprises an inclusive education system, based on lifelong learning principles, and quality education for all. The Kosovo Education Strategic Plan (KESP) 2011-2016 links education policy to national development priorities, recognising the aim for the education and training system to be more responsive to labour market needs (MEST – KESP 2011-2016, 2011). The new VET Law foresees the engagement of social partners in the development of a number of VET 'building blocks', such as curricula development, occupational standards, economic cooperation with VET and system evaluation. One mechanism that is currently being considered is mixed funding – from central government, social partners, development partners and municipalities

Funding

Public VET institutions are mainly funded from the Consolidated Budget of Kosovo (CBK). In addition, VET institutions that provide adult education can charge user fees. However, access to and spending of the self-generated income is constrained by rigid administrative procedures. VET is poorly represented or absent in the central structures and the government's budget. The governance and financial mechanisms in VET have traditionally been highly centralised. Continuing efforts have been undertaken to decentralise funding to the regional or municipal levels. There is a general will to give vocational schools more (if limited) financial autonomy (that is, some capacity for retaining and deploying income raised through commercial services). Consequently there is much discussion of the ability of vocational schools and training centres to raise funds on the local market. The currently applied finance formula grants EUR 24 per student at a vocational school and is the same for every profile, irrespective of the needs of different profiles (e.g. the construction profiles does not have the same requirements in practical training as that of graphic design).

Decentralization

Decentralization within Kosovo's education system focuses on three key elements: management, decision-making and the budget. Currently, it is the finance element of decentralization that is being most consistently applied (Gowing and Saqipi, 2010:18). The decision by MEST to give an individual financial code to each school keeps the reform going. This process places new roles and responsibilities to the MEDs, therefore decreases workload in some areas but increases it in others. The responsibility for the planning and implementation of school budgets has been shifted to schools. With the support of VET donors, a number of training packages have been provided to MEDs, Governing School Boards and school directors. Yet, the lack of schools' involvement in budget planning remains a big challenge. It was also found in the international arena that a low level of decentralization provides limited local autonomy in addressing social exclusion (OECD, 2011).

Despite the efforts to increase the capacities of the MEDs, complaints about lack of capacities to handle the responsibilities devolved to municipal level come directly from the MEDs themselves. One of the essential elements at stake related to social inclusion is the lack of inspection and monitoring of either good practices or exclusion-oriented practices (MEST, in-depth interview and national level focus group). The appointment of only one inspector for vocational school per region is certainly not sufficient to maintain the quality of work (MEST, in-depth interview and national level focus group)

Social partners

The role of the social partners in VET is in principal very important for designing legislation and strategies, designing qualifications, financing, planning, monitoring and evaluation. The recently approved VET Law No. 06/118 (06.03.2013) foresees a greater involvement of social partners (as seen from the CVET and AVETAE). However, there is little tradition for social partners to be involved in the design or implementation of VET policy (Likaj and Kasumi, ETF, 2007: 11). Another factor that explains the lack of social partners' involvement in VET development is connected to the related to lack of social partner's capacity to join social dialogue and policy-making processes, although others would argue that it is the lack of interest of the government in organising and financing the tripartite social dialogue that is at the root of this problem.

The voice of students

A study conducted by UNICEF identified the needs of youth in relation to education and emphasized the need for more intensive efforts to respond to inequalities. The study proposed incentives to families to increase youth education enrolment and completion, especially of ethnic minority youth, including RAE youth, as one of the key solutions to this challenge (UNICEF, 2011: 11).

Within the schools' governing structures, the voice of students is only raised through their participation in Board meetings where they do not have a voting right. The Local Advisory Board formed for this project's purpose included a student who had a say in the questionnaire design and the research process.

Civil society organizations

Civil society organizations' involvement in the development of government policies on inclusive education is reported to be relatively high especially for minority issues (specifically RAE communities), gender issues and disabled persons. However, the focus is seen more in basic education rather than VET. The NGOs interviewed were not familiar with VET policies and knew even less about the practices and key issues related to VET in relation to social inclusion. However, their

contribution is mainly found in the provision of adult education courses as well as in the development and implementation of local/municipal action plans for inclusive education. An NGO that deals specifically with minority issues asserted that their involvement in education is crucial and that in general the role of civil organizations is very important in accessing the grass-root level of the communities (in-depth interview, NGO ECMI, Prishtina). Information from the vocational school “Kadri Kusari” in Gjakova revealed that NGOs have lobbied to the schools to ensure access of socially excluded group of youngsters. Upon the recommendation from the NGO, the school now ensures open access and enrolment. In addition, another NGO representative from Prizren asserted the important role of NGOs in lobbying for improved quality of schools. However, it was found from all the interviewed NGOs that they do not have specialized experts who could address issues of social exclusion in vocational education.

Employers’ associations

The key employers’ association is the Kosovo Chamber of Commerce, which has a department for VET whose representatives are directly involved in the VET policy making processes and implements different VET – related projects. . The association’s involvement in the VET policy-making process, development and implementation is certainly increasing. The association’s representatives were highly involved in our research, demonstrating its readiness to engage with vocational education and issues of social inclusion *per se* as well as the research process in general. An interview with a representative from the Association of Artisan and Business in Prizren has provided a picture of the extent to which such an association is able to engage with the vocational schools as well as the entire VET system. The association has taken responsibility for issues such as teacher training partnership with business associations in Germany, initiation of discussions on decreasing taxes for companies that employ students, and creating cooperation platforms between schools and businesses.

2. VET PRACTICES FOR SOCIAL INCLUSION AND SOCIAL COHESION AT THE LOCAL LEVEL

2.1 Methodology

This section elaborates the methodology applied in this study, discusses the participatory action research process, presents a situational analysis in three case study localities, outlines the main findings of the research tasks and compares the findings from the three case study schools.

2.1.1 Participatory action research

The rationale for applying the PAR approach is that it adapts the research methodology and methodological instruments to the needs of those for which research findings are applicable i.e. schools in this case. During the implementation of the PAR approach, a national advisory board (NAB) was set up consisting of national level stakeholders including government officials, NGOs, business association and representatives from academia. The first meeting was focused on the identification of the main issues concerning the relationship between VET and social inclusion and social cohesion and agreed on an appropriate collaborative research strategy to investigate them. Local advisory boards (LAB) were established in three case study areas consisting of school principal, teacher, a parent, a pupil and a representative of a business association. The main aim of the LABs was to validate research instruments (questionnaire) that were to be applied with teachers and students. A more detailed elaboration of PAR process is outlined in Section 2.2. The research has been conducted in three case study schools located in Prishtina, Prizren and Gjakova. The selected schools offer different study profiles and are located in cities with different economic conditions: Prishtina as capital city being most economically developed, followed by Prizren and Gjakova as the least economically developed city. Another feature of Prizren is that 18% of the population are minorities whereas there are fewer in the other two cities. A lengthier analysis of three case study locations is provided in Section 2.2.

2.1.2 Research instruments

To assess research tasks, several distinct but mutually reinforcing and complementary approaches were applied. A focus group was organised at national level with key policy-makers and policy advisors including representatives of relevant government ministries and agencies, social partners and representatives of CSOs. The focus group was focused but not limited to exploring issues on policies towards VET, social inclusion and social cohesion and the relationship between them; different patterns of school-based vocational education and apprenticeship systems and assessing their

influence on social inclusion; and the role of VET in promoting social cohesion. A total of 36 face-to-face in-depth interviews (IDIs) were undertaken at national and local level (Figure 9).

At national level, in-depth interviews were carried out with key decision-makers in the area of VET and social inclusion and social cohesion, including policy leaders at central government level within the respective ministries of education, employment, social policy, economy and other relevant ministries, VET agencies, education agencies, public employment services; CSOs; social partners; business association; international organisations active in the field of VET and social inclusion.

At local level, in-depth interviews were conducted with the director of the municipal education department; the public employment centres; local representatives of business community; CSOs representing interests of women, minorities and disabled people; with school principal/directors; teachers, a parent and local employer that cooperates with schools in professional practices and/or that employs graduates from the case study vocational schools. Interviews were designed to investigate the relationships between VET policy and practice and social inclusion and social cohesion from the perspective of the different actors in the system. It is important to highlight that most local NGOs interviewed did not have only a local focus but were engaged throughout Kosovo: for example, the European Centre for Minority Issues in Prishtina (ECMI) covers the entire country (with no specific focus on a certain city), hence information provided was not only for Prishtina where ECMI was located. Detailed information on institutions interviewed can be found in Appendix 1, Table 1.

Another method used to investigate the research questions were teachers and students' questionnaires applied in three case study schools. A total of 79 teachers responded to the questionnaires (on average 25 per school) and 288 students responded to the student questionnaire. The sampling of students was done in close cooperation with school principals. Students that participated in the survey were chosen from the 10th and 12th grade, from all profiles and from both genders. Additionally the sample of students consisted of students from two shifts i.e. morning and afternoon shifts, assuming that there might be differences between students that belong to each shift. Regarding teachers, most teach vocational-oriented modules so are able to provide valuable information with regard to practical work of students, equipment and the school-to-work transition. Issues covered by the student and teacher questionnaires included (i) the process of accessing vocational education (social background of the students, choice of schools, cost of school attendance, selection processes) (ii) the educational processes within the vocational schools (resources available including both finance and equipment, social composition of the pupil body, teacher-pupil ratios, teaching methods, tracking or streaming within schools, dropout rates and causes of dropout, degree of autonomy of the school in key areas

including budgeting, course design and course mix, selection of students, choice of course by students in relation to gender bias, involvement of local community in life of the school, degree of social differentiation between schools) and (iii) the transition from school to work (links of the school with local businesses, career guidance provided, employment rates and employability of graduates, destinations of graduates, matching of graduates between skills acquired and jobs attained). The questionnaires were adapted to the Kosovo context.

2.2 Situation analysis in the case study areas

2.2.1 Economic and social profile of case study areas

The three schools chosen for the study are located in Prishtina, Prizren and Gjakova. Data presented in Table 5 show that Prishtina has the largest population, followed by Prizren and Gjakova. The three cities have almost an equal share of women and men, which implies that any difference in terms of gender noted in findings among the three schools, cannot be explained by different gender composition in the community. Among three case study locations the largest minority population lives in Prizren, representing 18% of the population (Table 6).

Regarding the skill composition in the three cities, it can be noted that most people have completed secondary education which highlights the importance of secondary education hence of vocational education (table 7). Almost 57% of youth enrol in vocational and 43% in general schools.

According to latest data from 2010, almost a third of the population in Kosovo lives in poverty (29%). Gjakova has the highest rate, with more than half of the population (54%) living in poverty, in Prizren one third (34%) and in Prishtina one fifth (22%) (KAS, 2012). Another measure of economic situation is the number of social assistance beneficiaries; the highest number is found in Prishtina (due to the larger population) followed by Prizren and Gjakova (Table 8). The number of people with disabilities is highest in Prishtina followed by Prizren and Gjakova (Table 8). The highest number of newly registered unemployed in 2011 is found in Gjakova and Prizren, while the lowest number is in Prishtina. According to MLSW data more new jobs are created in Prishtina and Prizren and fewer in Gjakova (see Table 9).

2.2.2 Case study schools; cooperation with business community and local government

The current section presents the main findings of the case study schools in regards to their cooperation with business community and the local government. Table 10 presents data about schools included in this research project. The three schools are quite large with more than 1,000 students and the number of profiles taught starts from 4 to 11 profiles (for data analyses purposes the profiles were grouped

into five main occupations). The ratio of students per teacher ranges from 14 to 22, and is considered satisfactory by the interviewed school directors and teaching staff.

Since a practical component is crucial for skills development of vocational students, companies were mentioned by school directors and teaching staff as the most important cooperation stakeholders. The technical school in Prizren stated that there are close links between school and local businesses, for example Post Telecom of Kosovo, Kosovo Energy Corporation (KEK) and water supplier; this is also due to their ability to accommodate interns. Occasionally, students conduct their practical work in enterprises by fixing computers and other electronic hardware. To inform companies about the quality of the education and training provided, the school organises “Open days” where businesses visit students during their practice hours at school workshops. Through this event, the school has managed to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with a vocational school in Montenegro which brought along the exchange of eleven students and two teachers, for a period of three weeks.

A critical situation is in the Gjakova school, as there is no cooperation with local businesses. The only institution that the school cooperates is the municipal Court related to the law profiles. According to the teacher in Gjakova even when students are sent to practice, they are mainly employed in tasks such as cleaning and transportation, thus little contributing in students’ skill’s development. The lack of cooperation with local businesses represents a serious concern for the school, because there are no workshops or premises for practical work within the school. Profiles related to tourism stand at a better situation, as students are placed in hotels for professional practice and, according to the employer, students do possess the needed skills. However, the employer stated that he seeks employees with work experience, which implies that vocational graduates are not their first choice for employment.

A similar situation - in terms of availability of workshops and equipment and cooperation with local businesses – was found at the technical school in Prishtina. According to the school director, the school does not cooperate with businesses, with the only exception for students attending the profiles of Post and Telecommunication and Graphics. Students that study Graphics conduct their professional practice in printing houses and in Post Telecom of Kosovo. Students from other profiles encounter more difficulties finding places for professional practice due to the lack of interest from businesses in hosting students from vocational schools. A satisfactory situation regarding the practical work within the school was identified in the Gjakova technical school. The director of this school stated that the school is well equipped and meets the requirements a school needs.

The municipal officer in Prizren acknowledges the importance of cooperation between the municipality, vocational schools and businesses for professional practice placements but confirms that

this cooperation does not exist. Vocational schools are considered as the last choice and mainly a choice of poor performing students. The municipal officer stated that the municipality offers no support to students in professional practice placements. The budget for the vocational schools is allocated by the Ministry of Finance but distributed through the MEST. Budgeting is done based on the number of students (based on the financing formula which yields 24 Euro per student capita) without taking into account the specific needs of single study profiles. All interviewed stakeholders at national, local and school level and school directors claimed that there are insufficient financial resources allocated to vocational schools and that, when the budget is allocated, the different needs of the schools are not taken into account. Currently MEST is lobbying to the Ministry of Finance to increase the budget. One reason that halts the increase of the budget allocated to VET is reported the vocational schools' low quality.¹ The Director of MED added that schools lack funds and if municipality did not support them they would not be able to cover their running costs. Moreover, companies in Kosovo do not contribute to the VET system. It was also claimed that the low budget allocated to vocational schools is explained by the lack of schools' capacities in planning the budget based on their own needs.³

Regarding financial autonomy, the school director in Prizren noted that the school had never had autonomy over its funds. The decentralisation process is assumed to hinder the schools autonomy given that the municipality distributes the school budget (although supposed to do so based on school budget plans, but the schools lack capacities to plan their budget and therefore yet, the municipalities are proceeding with the planning) and spending the school generated incomes is arranged through a complex procedure. This implies that the VET system is centralised at the level of the municipality, which according to the director hinders the school progress. The school in Prishtina each year generates around 100,000 Euros out of a training course for driving instructors. However, this amount goes to the municipality and is not directly used by the school. As for the autonomy on curricula design, the director of Education Department in Prizren indicated that all decisions regarding VET profiles are done by MEST and - although the municipality would like to design profiles based on labour market needs- such a possibility is not an option. The school director of "28 Nentori", affirmed that the meetings with the municipality relate to technical and administrative issues and not to quality management. This highlights that the municipality does not contribute very much to quality improvement but is more focused on administrative issues.

³ Indicated by researchers from the Kosovo Pedagogical Institute

2.3 PAR research process and research findings

PAR research process

The PAR research process was received very well by key informants; both the National Advisory Board and the Local Advisory Board highly contributed to the methodology implementation and the instruments used. Two key recommendations came out during the consultative process with NAB and LAB. *First*, the NAB proposed that the communication of the findings to all VET stakeholders through a consultative workshop is key for the PAR research methodology to be fully applied and *second* the adjustment of the questionnaire which was perceived as the core element of the research received high contribution by the LAB, particularly by the economic school ‘28 Nentori’ in Prishtina. Last but not least, the NAB proposed that this research should cooperate with another research project on VET in addressing social inclusion, the VET and social inclusion project financed by KulturKontakt. The MEST suggested that these two research studies should be aligned and set the ground for further research and similar analyses. The conference in Vienna, where the school representatives from both projects took part, highly contributed to a more participatory approach and feedback by the school directors. It was made clear that such initiatives and studies should not come to an end, but on the contrary they should be widely spread throughout the entire country.

2.3.1. Research Task 2: Mapping the influence of selection and tracking on social inclusion

From the in-depth interviews (both at national and local level) it was found that there are no policies in place for tracking within schools. However, looking into the structure of the VET schooling it is very clear that there exists a certain tracking system as the 1st level provides more general information on a certain occupation and further continuation to levels that focus on specialization of certain profiles. Nevertheless, the interviewed were not so familiar with what selection and tracking would benefit to social inclusion. Lack of financial resources was indicated as a reason by MEST for lack of mechanisms that guide students based on their skills. The 9th grade test was noted as a test to orient students in their educational orientation but it did not play its intended role⁴. Lack of career guidance services at schools and municipalities was highlighted as another shortcoming in Kosovo that could support tracking of students based on their abilities.

Teachers in the three case studies were asked whether the school put students in separate tracks based on their ability. A number of teachers affirmed this but this is not supported through the qualitative

⁴ This was noted in the focus group by MEST.

interviews with school directors and teachers. This might imply that teachers are not so certain or familiar with this term. .

With regard to selection policies, the teacher's questionnaire included a question asking '*what type of student does this school seek to attract*'. The findings outlined in Figure 1 reveal that schools are most interested in attracting students that have a preference for applied studies (88% of teachers) and that have professional interest (95% of teachers). An interesting finding is that more than half of respondents also seek to attract students from minorities and from poor families, which implies that the school has an inclusive approach for these two categories. However, almost one third of teachers stated that schools opt for boys rather than girls, people with disabilities and those with learning difficulties. Data in Figure 1 highlight that there are differences amongst schools in terms of selection; this will be discussed further in Section 2.4.

The survey reveals that students' school choice is highly influenced and supported by friends (88% of the students circled this option); half of students indicated advice and help from family whereas only the 20% made a decision by themselves (Figure 2). The school in Prishtina "28 Nentori" has four deaf students enrolled in the Post & Telecommunication profile in which they have more chance to get a job.⁵

Students were asked about the importance of several factors in selecting the school, and the responses are shown in Figure 13. Further study opportunities appear to be the main reason for choosing the school, followed by likeliness of the courses and the school reputation in opening doors to their future employment opportunities. Less important reasons are the reputation of the school and the distance from home. As it can be noted from Figure 13, reasons for choosing the school do not differ between male and female students.

Referring to the study profiles, it was found that providing further study opportunities has been the most common reason to choose the school (construction and geodesy, economy and law); the main reason for choosing architecture and graphic design is that students liked these courses. Finally for the IT, Post & Telecom, and Road Transport, the main reasons were students' appeal to these courses, employment and further study opportunities. On average for all schools, the main reason for choosing vocational school instead of other types of school is that it increases the chances to get a job, while the least important reason is to meet family expectations.

⁵ This profile has to do with receiving and organizing postal packages and envelopes.

To summarise, there are no formal policies in place in tracking students according to their skills and abilities. According to data derived from students and teachers' questionnaire, it is found that students select the school because they consider that the school supports their further education and increases their employment prospects. Overall, schools opt for students that are more promising to perform well during their studies i.e. students that have preference in applied science and those that have professional interests. However, based on teachers' responses there seems to be some discrimination by schools in terms of preference of female students to male students, those with disabilities and with learning difficulties.

2.3.2 Research Task 3: To map the extent of dropout from vocational education and assess the influence of dropout on social inclusion

The study has approached the dropout issue through the analysis of the legislation in place, interviews with directors, local community and central level, as well as through the analysis of data provided by school directors.

By the end of the school year 2009/2010, 3% of students had dropped out of upper-secondary education system. However, the dropout in VET is certainly higher than in other sub-sectors – 81% of students have dropped out of vocational schools (KAS, 2011) giving rise to a serious concern among the stakeholders. However, it should be noted that although MEST provides some data on vocational education, data on dropout remain patchy. The return rates of the dropouts and data on re-registration of those repeating the classes across different years are not properly traced therefore only a distorted picture of this phenomenon can be viewed. The existing data and literature provide no clear picture about further pathways of the dropouts in general. As shown in Table 4, the national mechanisms in place focus on the prevention of dropout rather than on tracking those that have already dropped out of the system. Some of the difficulties facing dropouts identified in international studies concern re-entering the formal education system (UNICEF, 2011, p.7).

An important statement was made in relation to dismissed students due to their bad behaviour. Once dismissed from the school, which can last for up to one year, there are no mechanisms in place to support their improvement and development. This in turn sharpens their social exclusion. Nevertheless, the schools principals and teachers reported in the interviews that dropout is not a major concern in their schools (in general only 4-5% of their students drop out every year, though this is unequally distributed across levels, the first level – grade 10 - marking the highest dropout rate). The data provided by the three schools show fairly constant rates throughout the last three years (2009-2012). There are significantly higher rates reported among males than females, and highest after the first level of VET education (10th grade) (see Annex 3 and 4) leaving the majority of dropouts

without any qualification, therefore following the same trend as that of the entire VET education in this respect (KAS, 2011) (*See Annex 2*).

Among the main reasons for dropping out reported by the local community as well as school directors of the three target schools are early marriages for girls, financial factors – students drop out to find any job that would secure them economic survival (most reported positions: waiters and shop assistants) and loss of interest in schooling (in-depth interviews with school directors, trade union, MED).

This information is confirmed by an international level study carried out by UNICEF where the lack of financial means and poverty has been reported as one of the main rationales for upper-secondary students' decision to drop out of school (UNICEF, 2011: 8.)

As provided earlier in this section a practice observed in one of the schools – “28 Nentori” (although not encountered amongst the rest) is the dismissal of the badly behaved students with no recurring opportunities. Such a penalty-based policy and practice in place with no room for support for improvement and development implies quite a concerning local policy (school director in Prishtina – in-depth interview).

A good piece of news that might regulate this is that the NQF caters for lifelong learning opportunities for all and therefore prevention of dropout due to the flexible system opportunities. “A student can leave and enter the system at anytime” (NQA director, in-depth interview). However, this remains to be seen, as the NQF with all its specificities has not been universally applied.

In addition, dropouts of the vocational schools are offered adult education courses that function under MEST but are also provided by MLSW through vocational training centers (MEST and school teacher, in-depth interview). However, there are no data on the number and other characteristics of dropouts taking these courses. It was confirmed in the Torino Process review (workshop 2012) that there is lack of cooperation between the school and the employment service.

The questionnaires revealed additional information about the perceptions of students and teachers about the three case study schools.

Students are relatively happy with their schools, with the lowest level of happiness (7.5) being reported by the students of the Technical school “28 Nentori” in Prishtina. Although there are few differences among age-groups, a higher rate of happiness was reported by students aged 16 or under than their older counterparts. Although data show higher dropout rates among the first level (10th grade) students, this does not correspond with students' subjective perceptions.

Students report that the schools provide a welcoming environment. Some differences are observed in the economic school “Kadri Kusari”. Aggregated by fields of study, fewer students from the Economy profile reported a welcoming environment (80%) as did those specializing in Law. There are also gender differences, with male students reporting lower levels (82.4%) than female students (90.8%) who seem to be more warmly welcomed by teachers.

There seems to be some correlation (not statistical though) between the low rate of happiness reported by students and the high rate (mean score 3) of bullying and absenteeism (3.4) reported by teachers at the technical school “28 Nentori”.

In line with the lowest welcoming environment from teachers (80.8%) reported by students of Economic school “Kadri Kusari”, this school’s teachers reported relatively large problems with motivation and discipline of their students (3.6 and 3.5 – mean score).

Students from the economic school “Kadri Kusari” reported the lowest extent of learning from courses they are taking (3.9) although there is little difference among schools. Students of Law, Economy and Construction, geodesy and heating reported the lowest level of learning from courses. As opposed to the opinion that economic vocational schools increased reputation reported in section 1.2.2 of this report, the findings from the local level do not confirm the same.

2.3.3 Research Task 4: Mapping the different patterns of school-based vocational education and apprenticeship systems and assess their influence on social inclusion

Vocational schools in Kosovo offer a combination of theory and practice-based learning. Practice-based learning at secondary level in vocational schools is organised in two forms: practice-based learning in schools’ workshops and practice-based learning in enterprises (Haulica and Morina, 2012). This second form in Kosovo is widely referred as “professional practice”.

There is some evidence that school-based vocational education combined with practice-based learning may provide better prospects for graduates, given that it does not equip students with company-specific skills and hence would provide them with better employment prospects. It cannot be claimed that the existing mode of vocational schools serves to students’ needs at its best. However, this is mainly related to the fact that there is a lack of workshops in the schools and also limited possibilities to be placed in companies for professional practice. A general finding from the interviews is that there is a lack of workshop and the existing equipments are out-dated. This in turn implies that not much practical work takes place during studies. The head of Education Department in Gjakova stressed that vocational schools are more theory-based and have out-dated textbooks. The teachers’ survey revealed that 24% of teachers consider that the school performs poorly when it comes to combination

of theory and practice during schooling. Furthermore, with reference to the adequacy of equipment, almost 40% of teachers consider them as inadequate. Additionally, teachers in three case study schools stated that the 62% of teaching time is comprised of theory and the 38% comprises practical work in school workshops (Figure 23). According to teachers' responses on average hours spent in practical training and theoretical learning, it turns out that students in "Kadri Kusari" school spend more time in practical training (42% of time) compared to 40% and 33% of time spent at "28 Nentori" and "11 Marsi" (Fig. 23).

Data provided in Figure 24 show that improvements are needed more in classroom equipment and less in school buildings. Surprisingly, among study profiles the greatest need for improvement of classroom equipment is found in the Law profile IT, Post & Telecom and Road Transport. Whereas from in-depth interviews, "11 Marsi" was found as the best-equipped school, but the opposite is found from the students' questionnaire. Much improvement is needed in "11 Marsi" and "Kadri Kusari" whereas some improvement is needed in "28 Nentori". From students' responses it is evident that the building of "28 Nentori" needs more improvements than stated by students of other case study schools. This can be justified due to the fact that although the school building is new, according to the director it does not match profile needs as it was built for a gymnasium school and not technical school. Confirming the school director's response, the school "Kadri Kusari" requires more improvements in school building (Figure 24).

Although the intention of schools is to provide real work experience through professional practice placements, very few students experience professional practice. The lack of professional practice places is among the main weaknesses of the VET system, which hampers students' preparedness for the world of work. Working in companies through practical work placements will not only enhance student's practical skills but it would also contribute to social inclusion of minorities.⁶⁷ This was indicated by a CSO in Prizren that is a city with the most diverse composition of population by ethnicity. One employer in Gjakova with whom the school cooperates stated that there is a high demand for professional practice places but only few places available. As a result the company occasionally accommodated more interns that they could engage in company's activities. Therefore in some cases, students that were accommodated in the company for professional practice were not assigned actual tasks but served just as observers in the company. Lack of professional practice placements is a great concern for parents as well.²

Data provided in Figure 25 (average of all schools) suggest that in terms of placements in companies for practical experience, women and other minority students are better placed, whereas in the worst

⁶ Indicated by Kultukontakt

⁷ Interview with director of Academy for Technical Assistance in Prizren

position were found students with special needs and disabilities. This is confirmed when teachers were asked to rate the level of difficulty in placing different groups in companies. People with disabilities and special needs were considered as the most difficult groups to be placed for practical experience in companies.

Poor cooperation between schools and businesses has been claimed as one the determinants for the lack of professional practice placements. Donor projects have been appraised as a good supporter for professional practice placements. Notwithstanding benefits from professional practice programs mainly supported by donors, a business association addressed criticisms towards un-coordinated projects, which lead to confusion and without sustainability of those initiatives.

It has been claimed that introducing apprenticeship system in Kosovo will equip students with needed skills and will improve their chances to work permanently with the company/enterprise. The apprenticeship system is considered to be an appropriate mode for vocational education, but it was pointed out that little commitment and progress has been evidenced so far in terms of introducing an apprenticeship system.

From the teachers' questionnaires, it appears that schools perform rather well in placing students of almost all included groups. However, to obtain a more accurate response an additional question would have been to ask about the share of students that undergo practical work in companies. Additionally, due to poor labour market conditions, students opt for any job they can find which in turn implies that they end up in low paid jobs where they cannot use knowledge and skills acquired during the school time. As indicated from in-depth interviews with school directors and also from the NAB most of enrolled students come from poor economic and educational background and their education in vocational school does not support their inclusion.

2.3.4 Research Task 5: Mapping the transition from vocational education to work and assess the different ways in which this transition reflects differences in social inclusion

The general finding from interviews at national and local level confirms that there are no data available on school-to-work transition for VET students. An exception to this is the case study school in Prizren where 34% of graduates get employed, although not necessarily in areas relevant to their study profiles. Lack of data makes it difficult to analyse the school-to-work transition, and also prevents evidence-based policymaking. All interviewees highlighted that one of the main challenges of the VET system remains its weak links with business community. A number of initiatives have been undertaken by MEST to link schools with the business community. An example provided was the organisation of regional conferences with the aim of raising awareness of importance of VET and

businesses. From the teachers' questionnaires it was found that around 74% of teachers consider that their school communicates with local businesses to understand labour market needs.

The administrative data collected by the MLSW do not provide a clear picture about VET as there are no specific categorizations compatible for VET system. Even if such data existed, there is no information for the bulk of graduates that are not registered at the public employment centres as job-seekers (given that MLSW has data only for registered unemployed). This is an area where cooperation between MLSW and MEST is deemed crucial for tracking the labour market experience of VET graduates.

Employment of VET graduates is perceived as a major concern; VET curricula do not reflect labour market needs and no-one has conducted a sound labour market needs study to understand for which professions there is a need and what exactly employers need⁸. Curricula need to be dynamic to keep pace with rapid changes in the labour market. It was stated that also Vocational Training Centres run by the MLSW need to close a number of professions for which there is no market need. Lack of professional practice places was considered as one of the reasons hindering VET students to boost their skills required in the world of work. The Head of the Employment Division at the MLSW stated that there are projects such as the one by UNDP that support placement of VET students in companies for professional practice, but these projects are not sustainable.

The interviews yielded contradictory information was provided in relation to employment chances of VET graduates: for example the director of Municipal Education Directorate in Prishtina stated that employment rates of VET graduates are satisfactory, a teacher from Prishtina answered that the 20% of graduates continue further education and the remainder find jobs or start their own business. Contrary to these promising statements, the school director complained that although there is no data available, employment rate of VET graduates is very low. Lack of official data on employment contributes to this contradictory information. One common observation made by all interviewed stakeholders was that poor economic conditions in Kosovo are the main barrier to employment.

From some in-depth interviews it was stated that VET graduates have better employment prospects compared to general schools, in the sense that they have an advantage when it comes to starting up a business. Interviewed employers that offer professional practices stated that they rarely employ students that undergo professional practice in their company. The explanation provided was that employers seek experienced staff⁹. One public employer with which students are placed for professional practice stated that, in order to get a job, students should have personal links with

⁸ Stated by Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare

⁹ Employer in Gjakova

decision makers in the company. Three interviewed employers were in general satisfied with the quality of vocational schools. According to the Employment Centre in Gjakova, the prospects of secondary school graduates in general are very limited. There is an excessive supply of graduates of all profiles and even of those with university degrees. The school principal of school “Kadri Kusari” in Gjakova stated that *‘the school does not track employment of students - but we know that it is a rate close to zero’*. He stated that even when graduates get employed, in most cases they are employed in jobs that do not match with their study profiles. As a result, VET graduates most likely end up in low paid jobs bearing in mind that they do not use skills and knowledge gained during education, but work in jobs where they do not apply their skills and knowledge.

As for employment of Roma VET graduates, the vice-president of the general assembly and a representative of the RAE community in Gjakova stated that employment of Roma graduates is no different than of other ethnicities. There is no discrimination in employment by ethnicity, but the lack of jobs prevents all VET graduates from finding work. Employment centres are strongly committed to find jobs for registered unemployed minorities since there is an employment quota that the centres have to fulfil¹⁰. The employment rate of women was emphasized as difficult in Prizren, and when they find a job it is usually in the trade sector, i.e. as salespersons¹¹. According to the director, the explanation for the low employment rate of women is influenced by attitudes towards women in the Prizren region. An employer in Prizren indicated that VET graduates are at an advantage for employment compared to graduates coming from general schools, but complained that the weakness of vocational schools is that the quality of enrolled students is very poor, which then leads to the poor quality of VET graduates.

None of the school studied has a career guidance service, but the school in Gjakova has a module ‘career advising’, which is a voluntary course where students are invited to participate. On other occasions, teachers support students related to career guidance on voluntary basis. Lack of career guidance services has been identified as one of factors that deter employment of VET graduates: students do not have valuable information on jobs available and also how to look and apply for jobs.

Whereas theoretically VET education has an advantage in providing better employment prospects compared to general schools (i.e. gymnasiums), it turns out that the vast majority of graduates plan to

¹⁰ Employment center in Gjakova

¹¹ Employment centre in Prizren

continue their education (Figure 26)¹²: 96% plan to continue education whereas fewer (88%) plan to look for a job. About one third plan to emigrate.

Data provided in Figure 27 show that there are some differences in terms of future plans of graduates from school to school. More differences will be presented in the next section.

From those that responded to each option it seems that gender, ethnicity, religion and disability are not valued as barriers in finding a job (Figure 28 left panel). The main factors that bring about difficulties in finding jobs are the school attended and the kind of qualifications obtained. However, female students consider gender as a greater barrier compared to men (Figure 28 left panel).

Students responded that upon completion of studies in their first employment they expect to use more their learned skills (mean score 4.3; 264 students responded to this question). With regard to employment chances, students answered that they expect to find a job within six months and a year after graduation (mean score 2.3; 272 respondents), 22% expect that it will take longer than a year to find a job.

In conclusion, vocational schooling does not support social inclusion and cohesion, producing graduates with skills not appreciated by the business sector and students that seek to upgrade their skills in universities where most likely their knowledge from the VET system is not highly used¹³.

2.3.5. Research task 6: Mapping the role of VET in promoting social cohesion

Although this research task has been discussed earlier in section 1, from the national level perspective, this section seeks to provide findings from the local school level. The school willingness and availability to provide teaching and learning support to some of the socially excluded groups has been reported in the findings, albeit some differences. The contribution that the vocational school provides to the community through its values, ethos, voluntary work and the community's perception is clearly observed in this study.

The findings on schools' promotion of social cohesion differ across the three schools. The lowest rates reported by teachers are related to schools' representativeness in the community, more specifically access-openness to the community and the extra curricular activities. However, there are clear differences observed across the schools (see section 2.4). The teacher respondents rated the school environment highly in all areas. Exceptional results were observed in the respect for students.

¹² Although only those that did not plan to look for a job were supposed to answer on other alternatives almost all students responded in all alternatives. One explanation that could be provided is that given poor employment prospects in Kosovo there are poor chances for graduates to get a job and therefore they at the same time consider other plans.

¹³ Stated in the National Advisory Board

However, teachers of technical school “28 Nentori” reported the lowest rates. The findings reveal that in general, teachers from all the three schools reported lowest rates in dealing with students with learning difficulties. Clear differences are indicated across schools, with more particular emphasis on teachers of the economic school “Kadri Kusari”. However, the lack of preparation of this school might be explained by the lowest percentage of disabled people living in the city where the school operates (as compared to other school). In general, data from this section show that none of the schools has sufficient physical access for disabled students. Nonetheless, the teacher respondents of the economic school “Kadri Kusari” seem to be doing not so well in this regard, which confirms the previous question about teachers’ preparation to deal with students with disabilities.

2.4 Comparative analysis of vocational education, social inclusion practices and social cohesion

This section reflects upon the similarities and differences between the three case study schools/localities and their relationship with social inclusion/exclusion and social cohesion. The main areas where differences are found are outlined in Table 10, and reference is made to tables and figures in Section 2.3. One important finding was that whereas school directors in “28 Nentori” and “11 Marsi” were very concise about the state of workshops and equipment in the school, the director of the school “Kadri Kusari” initially noted just needs for computers. After some communications he provided information that the school has almost no places and equipment for practical work but he does not mention those, as there is no chance to get them.

Table 2 Comparative analysis of vocational education, social inclusion practices and social cohesion

Selection and tracking (RT2)	No policies and/or practices in place
Dropout (RT3)	Differences appeared in relation to: Although similar dropout rates are found across the three schools, yet the potential reasons and risks are differently spread (although the reasons reported in qualitative evidence are the same)
Patterns of education, apprenticeship systems and social inclusion (RT4)	Differences appeared in relation to:
	Space and adequacy of buildings
	Availability of workshops
	Availability of equipment and tools

	Professional practice opportunities
Transition from education to work (RT5)	Differences appeared in relation to:
	Cooperation with local businesses
	Employment prospects of students
	Linking vocational curriculum with local labour market
VET in promoting social cohesion (RT6)	Differences appeared in relation to:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reputation of school as a reason to choose the school; • Level of voluntary work; • Welcoming environment by teachers; • School motivation and environment; • Friendliness of other students; • Extent of happiness in school • Incentives for the enrolment /access to vocational schools for RAE communities; • Schools and community engagement in increasing social cohesion. • Extra-curricular activities

Research Task 2: Selection and tracking: A common finding is that there are formal selection and tracking policies in place. The teachers' survey shows that there are no stark differences among schools with regards to the type of students that schools opt for. 11 Marsi school seems to be more opened for disabled students whereas "28 Nentori" and "11 Marsi" for less privileged groups. Asking students why they have chosen the school their enrolled at, students in "11 Marsi" state the closeness to the school as a highly rated reason compared to the two other schools. Reputation of "28 Nentori" school is not found to be as important factor in choosing the school as it is for the two other schools. There are no significant differences among students from the three schools with reference to the motivation of the school choice (Figure 16). Increasing chances to get a job is found to be the main driving reason to choose the school whereas the least important turned out to be the family satisfaction.

Research task 3: Dropout and its impact in social exclusion. Although data on dropout rates provided by schools show similar trends (1st level or the 10th grade students drop out of the system at higher rates than others across all three schools), quantitative evidence shows differences in the questions related to the groups at risk for dropout. To this end, the teachers from the technical school "28 Nentori" reported more problems with bullying and absenteeism. In addition, the students from the same school reported lowest level of happiness with the school and the lowest level of perception of friendliness of other students. Students from the economic school "Kadri Kusari" rated teaching

methods and welcoming environment relatively poorly. Whether students of these two schools are more predisposed to dropping out is not known. However, this shows some signs of risk and a need for stronger preventive mechanisms (see section 3 with Action Proposals recommended by the research team) and more flexible practices for returning the dismissed students. Yet, as reported by all the school directors and some other key informants (employment centre and MED) the dropout in these schools is not a major concern as they claim to have low dropout rates as compared to other schools (4-5%).

Research Task 4: Patterns of education, apprenticeship systems and social inclusion: From interviews it was found that (except for the school “11 Marsi”) schools in Prizren lack workshops and equipments. The school director in Prishtina indicated that the school has not been designed to match profile needs whereas the school in Gjakova highlighted that the school does not even have enough space. Lack of professional practice places was very strongly highlighted in “28 Nentori”. However this is not confirmed by data presented in Figure 25. “Kadri Kusari” was found to be poorly performing in placing female students, students from poor families and Roma students in companies for practical work; “28 Nentori” does poorly in placing ethnic minorities whereas “11 Marsi” is not doing well in dealing with disabled students and those with special needs.

Research Task 5: Transition from education to work: A greater share of students from the school in Prizren plan to look for a job, while a smaller share plan to continue their education, followed by Gjakova and then Prishtina school (Figure 25). However a greater share of students from the Prizren school plan to emigrate. With regard to difficulties in finding jobs it emerged from student survey in the Prishtina school, that gender and disabilities seem to present a higher barrier to employment. This indicates that women and graduates with disabilities experience higher social exclusion than others when they leave school and join the world of work. Qualifications obtained and school chosen have been noted as barriers to employment of a greater extent in Gjakova and Prishtina school. Therefore the conclusion is that VET students consider that their chosen school and qualification are not effective in supporting their inclusion in the labour market. From the in-depth interviews it was found that about 34% of students find jobs whereas the two other schools stressed that employment is very low ‘almost zero’. However the main reason was noted to be the poor economic indicators of Kosovo.

Research task 6: The research has sought to respond to this research task against a number of issues raised both in the quantitative and qualitative methods. The following key differences were encountered in the findings across three schools.

- a) Students of technical “28 Nentori” reported the lowest rates for school selection because of its reputation. In addition, the same school reported higher rates of bullying and absenteeism,

which provides information for a less socially inclusive environment. The students from the same school also reported the least rate of happiness with the school and the friendliness with other students. The findings reveal some extent of less cohesive environment in this school as based on these indicators.

- b)** 44.6% of students of “11 Marsi” reported engagement in voluntary work, marking the highest rate across all other schools. The students from the same school also reported highest rates of happiness (91.5) with the school and welcoming environment by teachers. The school does seek to promote the talents of the school as well by organizing different award winning contests through the support of donors (such as the GIZ supported paintings exhibition). The school has a close cooperation with the community as well.
- c)** The students of the economic school “Kadri Kusari” find a less welcoming environment by teachers (as compared to other schools – 80,80%) and in line with this finding the teachers of this school find the motivation and discipline among students as the highest rated challenges.

In general, the most common challenge that all schools face is the physical access and additional preparation for students with disabilities, with the economic school “Kadri Kusari” marking the lowest rate of readiness to deal with these students.

3. ACTION PROPOSALS FOR SCHOOLS

Action proposals for three case study schools:

- Quantitative evidence indicated that, overall, schools do not seek to attract students with disabilities and learning difficulties. The proposal is that schools should attempt to attract these two groups especially in profiles where students can find jobs. For example the Post & Telecommunication profile provides opportunities for employment in the postal services. Schools should make use of the support that the municipality offers for people with disabilities. For example “28 Nentori” school has interpreters for deaf people with the support of the municipality.
- The quantitative and qualitative research results suggest that the most difficult groups to be placed in professional practice are students with special needs and those with disabilities. Our proposal is that schools should develop an implementation plan to accommodate students with disabilities and those with special needs in companies. In general, the commitment of society to support these groups is increasing and schools should benefit from this development. Cooperation with NGOs working with these groups should be enhanced.
- The qualitative evidence showed that none of the schools has a career guidance unit. We propose that the schools should establish a guidance office, and the school psychologists can provide career counselling but with the help of other teacher’s career guidance provision can be complemented. The staff of the career guidance office if not possessing the needed competencies should be trained to run the office and connect with existing job search links available in Kosovo. As indicated in the JAR 2013 and the draft Strategy for Career Guidance, there is a number of trained teachers on career guidance trained through different donor supported projects. The schools can take the advantage and make use of their knowledge. However, this also needs to become a clear policy designed by the central level, respectively policy makers.
- Based on the dropout data provided by schools, it was made clear that male students aged ‘16 and under’ make the most vulnerable group for dropping out of vocational schools. This is also backed up by the lowest rate of ‘welcoming environment by teachers’ reported by male students. Consequently, it is important that schools focus their preventive mechanisms towards the first level of vocational schooling or the 10th grade. The career counselling and guidance need be focused more in this level but other mechanisms such as: regular

monitoring by main teachers, consultations with parents/caregivers, regular talks with students skipping classes, etc.

- The school “Kadri Kusari” has shown the lowest rate of welcoming environment by teachers (80.8%), therefore it should consider offering teacher training in student-teacher relationships and similar trainings on dealing with socially excluded students.
- More specifically, students from the technical school in Prishtina “28 Nentori” have reported lower rates of happiness with the school on the one hand and on the other hand higher extent of bullying and absenteeism. The penalty-based practice applied with ‘badly behaved’ students should be re-considered and further discussed on the municipal level, and rather substituted by other mechanisms that would instead keep and the student in the education system.
- Schools do not equally report the use of computers. The economic school “Kadri Kusari” has reported a high need for computers (both the director as well as teachers that reported a low level of computers utilization – 36.4%). In general, the use of e-learning was reported as a highly inclusive instrument for schools (NAB). The e-learning strategy assessment reported limited opportunities for the students to access workshops outside their regular IT classes. Working in 2-3 shifts (as reported by technical school ‘11 Marsi’) does not provide for availability of facilities and classrooms or other venues at the disposal of students. It is clear that not all the classes will be undertaking the same course at the same time, therefore access to computer labs should be given during the entire working hours (covering all 2-3 shifts). However, more supervision should be provided in this case (not only for maintenance control but also for students’ e-learning possibilities). A very good practice is found in countries where peer learning through tutorship provided by students doing well in certain subject/course, this specifically is a well-developed practice for e.g. in Austria.

4. POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 Policy recommendations for policy makers at national level

- Qualitative evidence demonstrates the need to develop monitoring and incentives for good practices undertaken at school level or municipal level (MEST, in-depth interview and national level focus group and NAB).
- The technical school “11 Marsi” in Prizren shows clear efforts to provide a socially inclusive environment for all, in particular for minorities. Given that the city where the school operates has the highest share of minorities (18%), approaches and initiatives undertaken by the community itself and in particular the school, should be further motivated and incentivised. If no state-budget is available for such incentives, other means of support should be considered. For instance: further capacity building for teachers and school directors on social inclusion issues or other issues that the school shows more interest in. This could be also supported with the help of donors whose support is increasing in social inclusion and cohesion (for e.g. European Commission – through IPA funding, Kulturkontakt, Finland’s support through Edu-Cluster, GIZ through its VET and Basic Education projects, etc.)

4.2 Policy recommendations for policy makers at local level

- Qualitative evidence revealed that municipalities do not have information on labour market needs and employment of VET graduates. Our proposal is that the municipality should sponsor studies to analyse labour market needs in their locality. Additionally, municipalities should require from schools to establish an alumni system and require information on a regular basis on the employment rates of VET graduates.
- Students from vocational schools can get dismissed for up to a year and there is no system in place to support their development. Municipalities should work on identifying mechanisms through which this group does not get further marginalised. There is no tracing system in place. The proposal coming from the results of this study focuses on practice firms’ higher use as a setting to address individual learners’ needs by providing segmented work settings for different purposes/needs (as stated below).

- Qualitative evidence on professional practice demonstrated a need to raise awareness and market the strengths of vocational schools to the local community, prospective students, and prospective employers (two donor organization, in-depth interviews, and NAB). The schools should be supported to organize promotional campaigns with very clear messages on what they offer (profiles and degrees) during schooling and their graduates' labour market opportunities. Internship opportunities (for e.g. contracts with certain companies) and employment opportunities are often used as a marketing tool in many countries. Success stories should be highlighted and used for promotional purposes. A similar campaign has been organized by the Division for Training Centres within the MLSW and proved successful in attracting new trainees (increase of around 30%, as stated by the MLSW VT Division).
- Qualitative analysis provided by key informants (at both central and local level) indicated a low level of mentoring and coaching during the practical part of vocational schooling. Developing social inclusion-oriented mentoring and coaching mechanisms for the practical part of vocational schooling is an urgent need. Such a practice could be piloted in the existing practice firms (before it is further expanded in the professional practice undertaken outside the schools – in enterprises). One of the recommendations provided by the NAB is that there should be flexibility within the practice firms, distribution of tasks within the same classrooms based on abilities, and utilization of inclusive and integrative practices. In addition, the new curricula provide a foundation for inclusive practice either through integrated or mainstreamed classes by applying individual education plans (IEP), followed by assessment and evaluation.

4.3 Policy recommendations for international donor organisations

- There is a low involvement and almost no cooperation of NGOs with vocational schools. Given their role to “channel the voice of civil society” and the power to link the schools with the community, it is important that the existing NGOs dealing with issues of social inclusion should be further empowered. Donors can easily come into play by designing financial programmes to support NGOs to develop programmes and activities addressed to vocational schools (supporting schools with research and analysis could be an option).
- Evidence also shows that NGOs lack specialized skills in dealing with issues of VET. Through their technical assistance, donors could organize capacity building programmes addressed specifically to NGOs engaged in social inclusion issues (or dealing with certain socially excluded groups). Such support has proved quite successful in the Basic Education Programme of GIZ in Kosovo through its component on CSOs empowerment that is built on offering trainings to CSOs and local subventions to

NGOs for the empowerment of their professional structures. A good example is the “Foundation Together” which consists of professional psychologists working in the field of education. Segmentation of NGOs that deal specifically with social inclusion in vocational schools could be achieved.

4.4 Policy recommendations for NGOs/CSOs

- From qualitative evidence it was found that schools do not cooperate with CSO organisations. We propose that CSO dealing with areas with disadvantaged groups (people with disabilities, those with special needs, women NGOs, NGOs of different ethnicities and those that work in issues related to minorities) should cooperate with vocational schools. In this way, NGOs/CSOs can advocate for better prospects of disadvantaged groups both in terms of orienting them in vocational schools and also supporting their placement in companies and supporting their employment.

-There is a poor linkage with business associations. We propose that business associations should be proactive in addressing the needs of the labour market and communicate those needs to vocational schools. Moreover, business association can play a crucial role in convincing companies to take on VET students for professional practice.

CONCLUSIONS

A diverse set of policies is in place to govern the VET system in Kosovo. The comparison between legislation and strategies on the one hand and the mechanisms on the other reveals that emphasis has been placed on access for socially excluded groups in the system and on flexible approaches to keep them in the system. Flexibility of the system and recognition of previous learning are some of the key initiatives undertaken at the system level (through NQF and Guideline for the recognition of previous learning) towards smoother pathways for all students. However, this mechanism is yet to be applied and measured against its goals and objectives. The developed mechanisms for addressing the issue of dropout are focused on preventive rather than ‘treating’ mechanisms. However, even the mechanism in place does not function, although piloted in some schools. The drafted professional practice strategy foresees a number of inclusion-oriented priorities. Through a SWOT analysis has been undertaken for this purpose, it is clear that VET system in the context of the labour market situation and weak economy faces many challenges in linking VET policies with those for the labour market. In the light of the very weak employment opportunities for VET graduates (considering labour market trends and the fact that “the higher the education level the higher the opportunity to get employed”) the VET system’s role in securing high quality and added value as opposed to other education sub-sectors that would convince employers to hire a VET graduate over a higher education graduate is

very challenging. The strengths of vocational schools need be promoted, particularly through the job generating profiles. The conventional wisdom that VET system's reputation is low just because of its low quality needs to be shifted to other modalities: as reported by some of the key informants, it should rather focus on promoting and marketing the existing good practices in its dual contribution to both generating employable and skilled labour force and in promoting social inclusion.

None of the case study schools have a formal system for tracking. At national level, the Matura exam is found to deepen social exclusion of already excluded VET students. The explanation for this is that Matura exam does not reflect the curricula taught during vocational schools and moreover the knowledge of VET students is not taken into account when students apply in higher education institutions. From teachers' questionnaires it was found that the three schools have an inclusive selection practice in place. However it seems that, to some extent, schools have a selection bias against girls and those with disabilities and learning difficulties. From students' responses, the main reasons for choosing the case study schools are represented by the support that the schools provide for their further study opportunities and future employment opportunities. Reputation did not appear as an important reason to choose the school. Vocational school is chosen as it is considered to enhance employment prospects.

An important concern related to the VET system in Kosovo is the limited possibilities of students to develop their practical skills within the school or in companies. In two of the case studies, schools lack of workshops and equipment were strongly stressed as a great concern, which limits students' skill development. In all the three case study schools, cooperation with employers was indicated as the weakest point. Companies in general are reluctant to accept students for professional practice. People with disabilities and special needs were considered as the most difficult groups to be placed for practical experience in companies. One good practice was found in the school in Prishtina, which has four deaf students enrolled in a profile with employment prospects for this type of a disability.

VET students complete their studies, but they are not prepared for the labour market. Two school directors complained also about the infrastructure and space availability of schools. Lack of finances and lack of autonomy in financial matters make it difficult for schools to improve the study conditions. VET students with an already poor educational background do not have a second chance to improve their skills to become more prepared for the labour market. This implies that vocational schools do not contribute to social inclusion, but rather trap excluded groups in a disadvantaged situation.

The employment rate in Kosovo is low by any standard, and this holds also for VET students. An academic from the National Advisory Board noted that the employment of VET graduates is low also

due to the bad image of vocational schools. One positive observation was that, in comparison to the gymnasia, the VET graduates have an advantage when it comes to business start-ups. School directors in two schools stated that the employment rate is so low that it approaches zero. Disappointing information provided was that VET students do not always get employed in their study profile. Optimistically, it was noted that minorities do not have problems finding jobs due to their ethnicity but as a result of poor economic conditions in Kosovo. Almost all students plan to continue further education and few of them plan to look for a job. It is found that vocational schools may be less effective in providing employment opportunity for females, as a greater number of females plan to continue their education and less to look for a job. This is understandable given their poor likelihood in finding a job, and therefore their decision to advance their educational level. Qualification and the chosen school were highlighted as the main deterrent to future employment. A conclusion that can be reached is that poor employment prospects do not promote social inclusion of VET graduates. Given that students plan to continue their studies, and noting the fact that Universities do not account for their previously obtained knowledge, one can conclude that studying in vocational schools contributes to further marginalisation of students.

Both qualitative and quantitative evidence indicate some tendencies in promoting social inclusion and social cohesion across the three schools. Considering the main issues that the municipalities where these three schools are located face, they seem to be addressing them accordingly within their limitations (both financial and economic). For example, it was very clear that the technical school '11 Marsi' in Prizren makes the highest efforts in addressing the minorities (as the municipality itself is quite heterogeneous, as minorities represent around 18% of the population). However, although the three schools indicated that the majority of their students come from poor socio-economic backgrounds, suitable practices or mechanisms in addressing this were not found, although many teachers reported that schools seek to provide opportunities for students coming from poor families (95.8%). The policies in place seem to lean towards attracting boys more than girls. Nevertheless, data from the school show that male students have the highest dropout rates. The students with learning difficulties are differently approached, and the quantitative evidence revealed that teachers reported only an average preparedness to deal with this group of students.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Methodological Note

Sequencing of the Participatory Action Research Approach

Step 1: Establishment of national advisory board (NAB) and first NAB meeting to discuss aims and methods of project and collect advice on key issues and procedures. Interviews with national policy makers, policy advisors and stakeholders to investigate key issues relating VET to social inclusion and social cohesion in each country. Documentary sources will be consulted and statistical analysis will be carried out as appropriate and needed.

Step 2: Formation of local advisory board (LAB) of local stakeholders. Presentation and discussion of aims and purpose of project, the participatory action research methodology, and the draft pupil and teacher questionnaire.

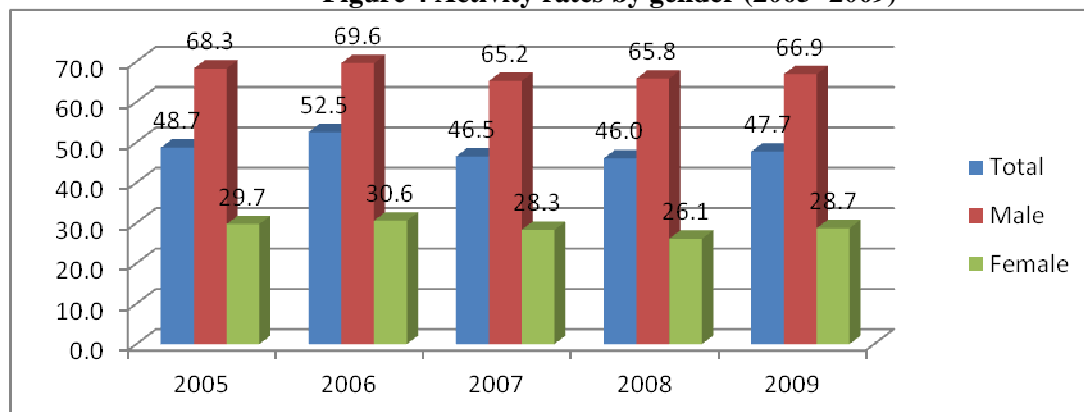
Step 3: Following initial LAB consultation meeting, research will involve in-depth interviews at three case study vocational schools in each country (school directors, teachers and representatives of parent associations) and with key informants in the local community (local government, employers, trade unions, civil society). Focus groups will be carried out at local level at the three case study locations with community-based informants and stakeholders as appropriate. Documentary sources will be consulted and local statistical analysis will be carried out as appropriate. Implement short pupil and teacher questionnaire to entry level and final year pupils and teachers followed by data processing and analysis (descriptive statistics and cross tabs only using Excel and/or SPSS if available – LSE team will provide core question set).

Step 4: Presentation of research findings (executive summary in local language) from qualitative and quantitative research to national and local advisory boards for discussion of the research findings and their significance for improving VET policy and practice in relation to social inclusion and social cohesion.

Step 5: Writing up full country reports in English, incorporating comments and reflections of advisory boards

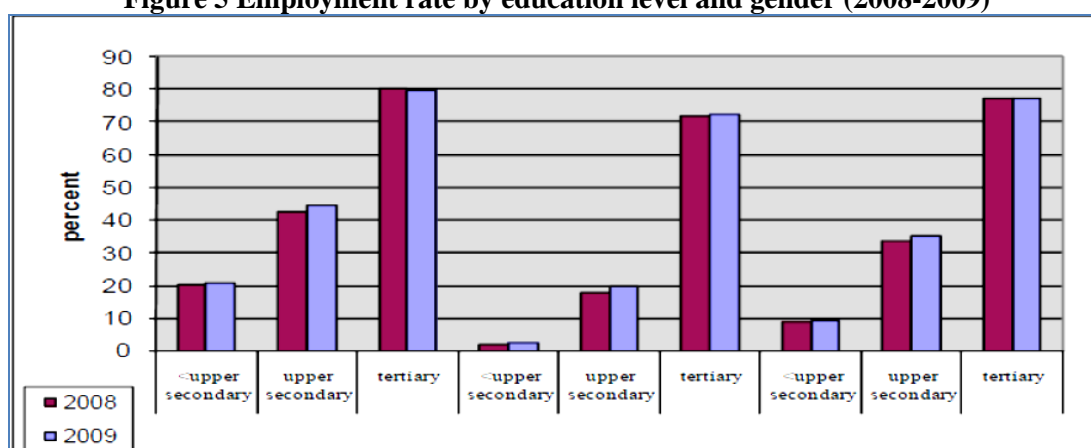
Appendix 2: Figures and Tables

Figure 4 Activity rates by gender (2005- 2009)



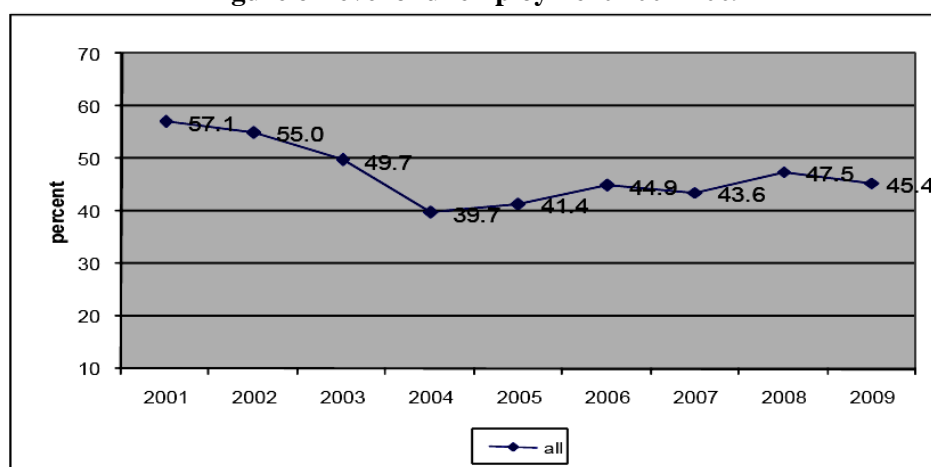
Source: Labour Market Statistics, SOK, 2006, 2007, 2008 and Labour Force Survey 2009

Figure 5 Employment rate by education level and gender (2008-2009)



Source: KAS – LFS, 2009

Figure 6 Level of unemployment 2001-2009



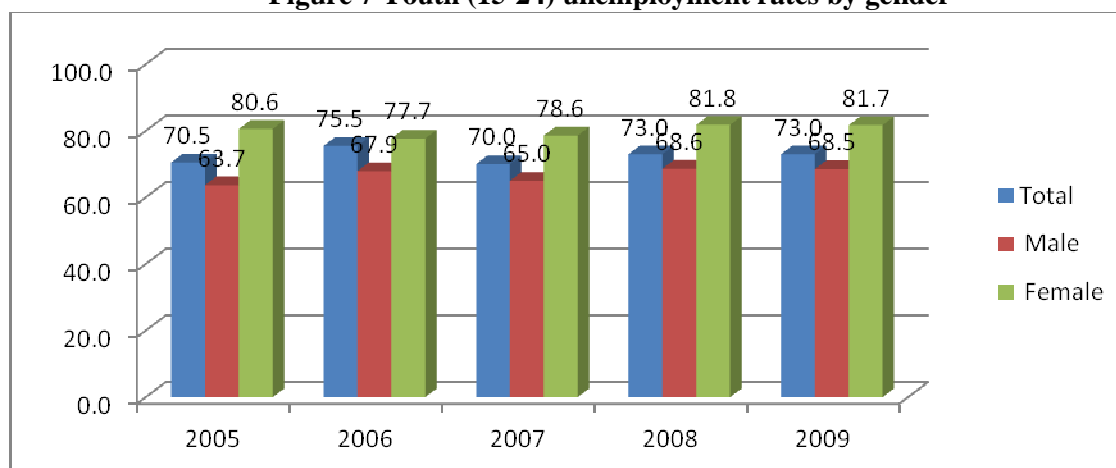
Source: Labour Force Survey, SOK, 2009

Table 3 Long-term unemployment (2005-2009)

Year	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Total	83.7	91.5	85	81.8	81.7
Male	83.5	91.7	84.8	83.2	82.8
Female	84	91	85.4	79.3	79.8

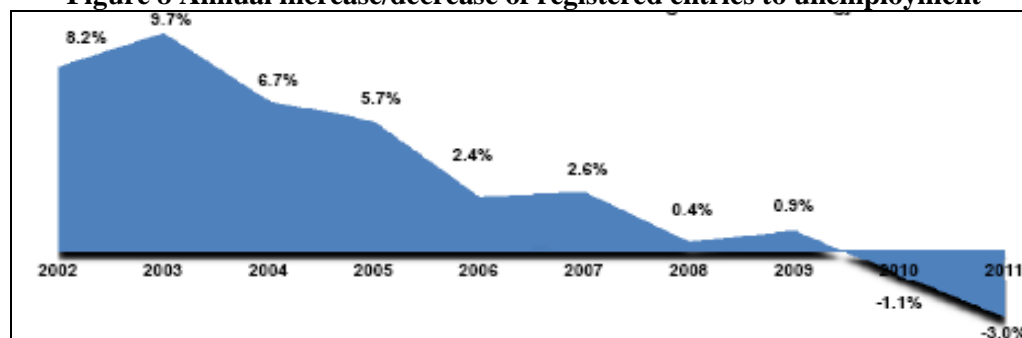
Source: Labour market statistics for 2006, 2007 and Labour Force Survey, 2008-2009, Statistical Office of Kosovo.

Figure 7 Youth (15-24) unemployment rates by gender



Source: Labour Market Statistics, SOK, 2006, 2007, 2008

Figure 8 Annual increase/decrease of registered entries to unemployment



Source: Labour and employment report for 2011, MLSW 2012.

Table 4 Registered Unemployment rates aggregated by level of qualifications -

Qualifications	ISCED	Registered unemployment	%	Monthly entry average rate	Monthly exit average rate
Unqualified	0-2	195394	60	0.37%	0.60%
Semi-qualified	3	11831	4	0.33%	0.84%
Qualified	3a	27214	8	0.23%	0.57%
Secondary school	3c	84597	26	0.67%	0.98%

Higher school (post-secondary education)	4	2002	1	0.63%	1.24%
University	5a+	4223	1	5.67%	4.30%

Source: Labour and employment report 2011, MLSW

Figure 9: Number of in-depth interviews at national and local level

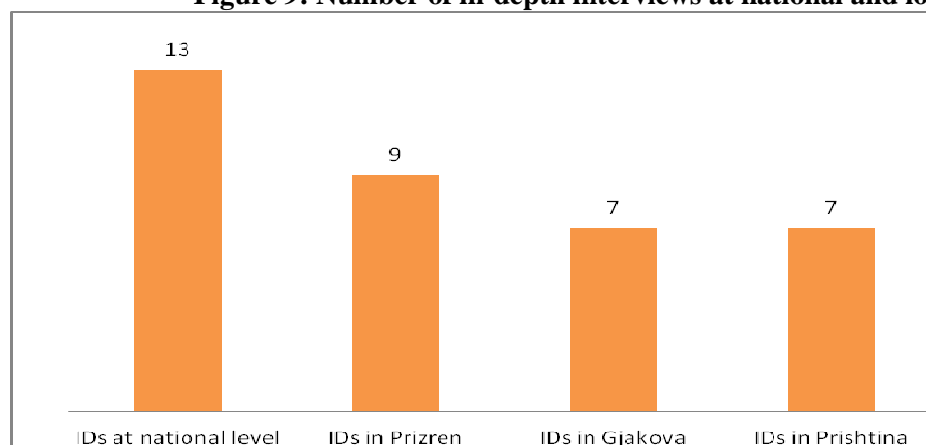


Table 5: Population and gender composition in three case study localities

City	Population	Share of females
Prishtina	198,897	50.04
Prizren	177,781	49.84
Gjakova	94,556	50.05

Source: KAS, 2012: 2011 Census data

Table 6: Number of minorities in three municipalities

Municipality	Serbs	Turks	Bosnians	Roma	Ashkali	Egyptians	Gorans	Others	Total	% minorities
Gjakova	17	16	73	738	613	5,117	13	92	6,679	7%
Prishtina	430	2,156	400	56	557	8	205	334	4,146	2%
Prizren	237	9,091	16,896	2,899	1,350	168	655	386	31,682	18%

Source: KAS, 2012: 2011 Census data

Table 7: Population according to educational level (age 10 plus)

City	No education	Primary school	Secondary	High school	University	Master	PhD	Total
Prishtina	8%	13%	61%	3%	13%	2%	0.5%	100%
Prizren	8%	18%	67%	2%	4%	0%	0.05%	100%
Gjakova	10%	17%	65%	3%	5%	1%	0.05%	100%

Source: KAS, 2012: 2011 census data

Table 8: Social indicators in three case study localities

Municipality	People with disabilities*	Social assistance beneficiaries: number of households (June 2012)	Poverty rates (regions)***
Prishtina	4,570	8,867	22
Prizren	2,881	3,796	34
Gjakova	2,121	3,029	54

* Based on number of pension beneficiaries

*, ** KAS, September 2012, Social Welfare Statistics

*** 2009 data. Source: WB, 2011

**** MLSW 2012

Table 9: Unemployment and employment opportunities

Municipality	Unemployment rate 2011	Registered unemployed 2011: new entrants****	Registered unemployed 2011***	New jobs created****
Prishtina	27	8,018	61,433	2,024
Prizren	42	18,173	60,114	1,625
Gjakova	48	28,122	39,398	1,153

Source: KAS 2012; MLSW 2012

Table 10: General data in three case study schools

General information			
Name	28 Nentori	Kadri Kusari	11 Marsi
Profile	Technical	Economic	Technical
Place	Prishtina	Gjakova	Prizren
Profiles			
1	Construction	Accounting	Geodesy
2	Architecture	Banking and insurance	Informatics
3	Geodesy	Spedition and logistics	Telecommunication
4	Graphic	Legal assistant	Electrician
5		Administrative assistant	Audio video
6		Tourism assistant	Road transportation
7		Veterinary technician	Heating and air-conditioning
8		Technology technician	Auto mechanic
9		Horticulture	Water installation and sewage

	10	Farming	Cloth design
	11		Graphic design
School statistics			
	28 Nentori	Kadri Kusari	11 Marsi
Number of students	1,428	1,330	1,511
Share of female students	47%	40%	11%
Number of staff	80	60	108
Student/staff ratio	18 students per teacher	22 students per teacher	14 students per teacher

Source: School directors

Figure 10: Whether the school put students in separate tracks based on ability (% of teachers that answered yes)

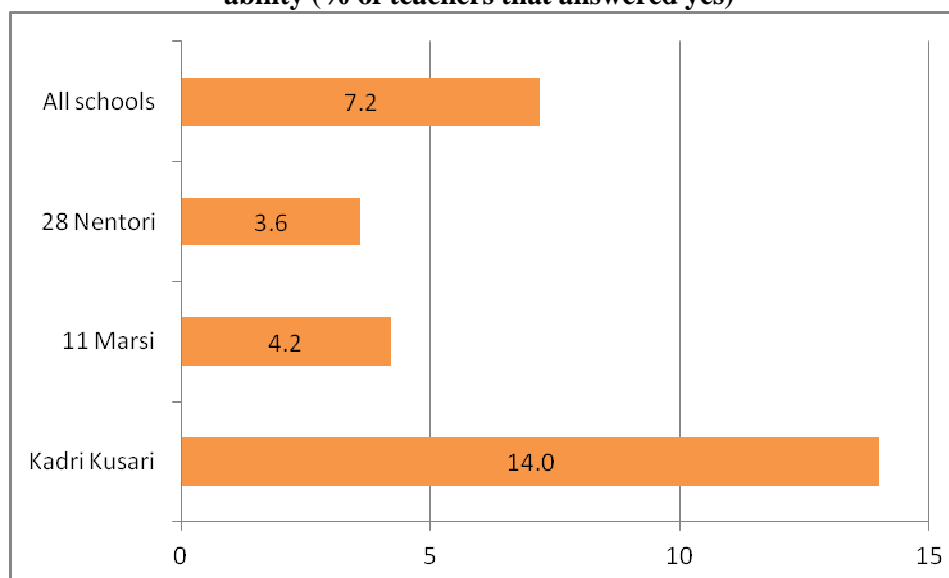
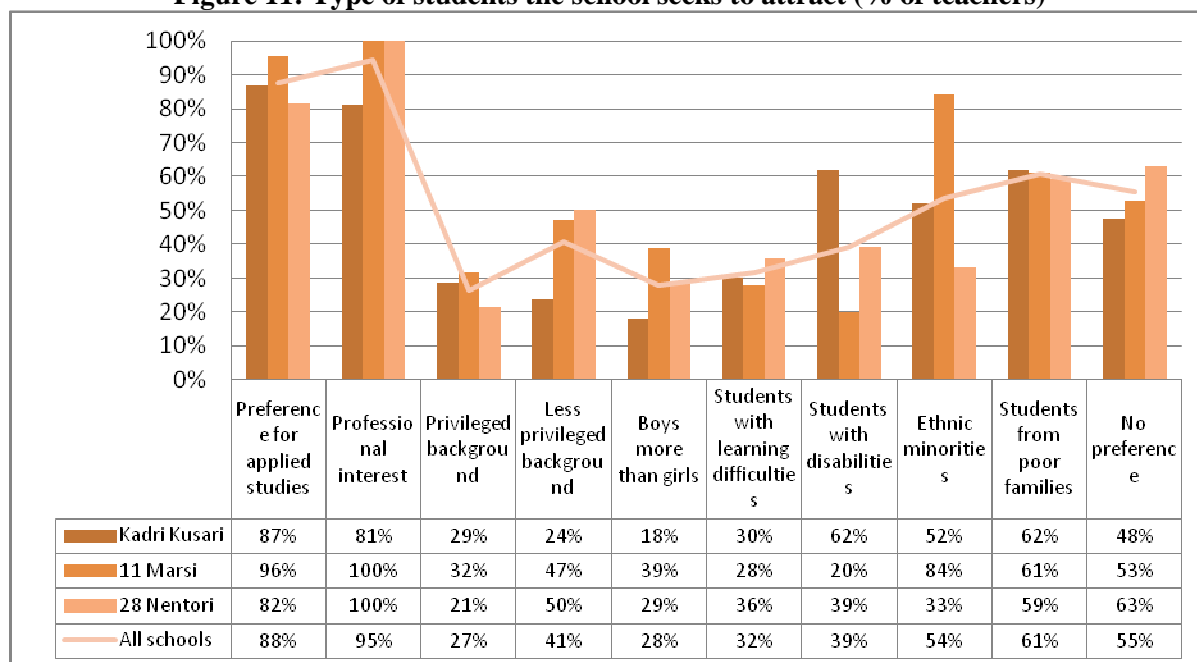
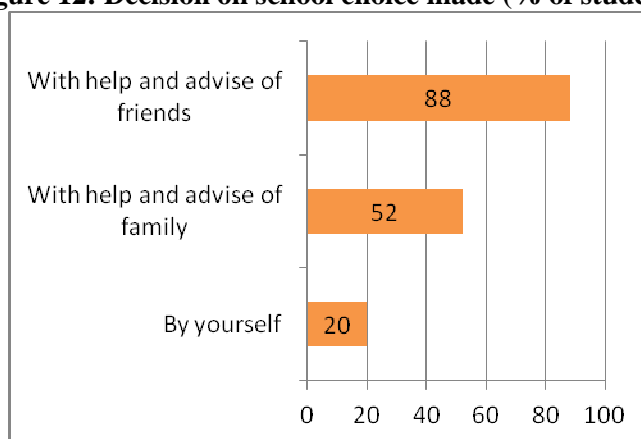


Figure 11: Type of students the school seeks to attract (% of teachers)



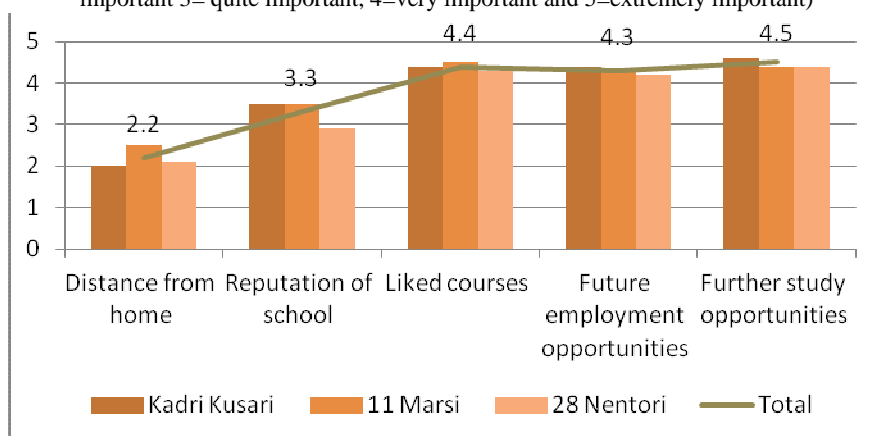
Source: Teachers' questionnaire

Figure 12: Decision on school choice made (% of students)



Source: Students' questionnaire

Figure 13: Reason for choice of this vocational school (mean score: 1=not at all important 2= a little important 3= quite important, 4=very important and 5=extremely important)



Source: Students' questionnaire

Figure 14: Reason for choice of this vocational school

(mean score: 1=not at all important 2= a little important 3= quite important, 4=very important and 5=extremely important)

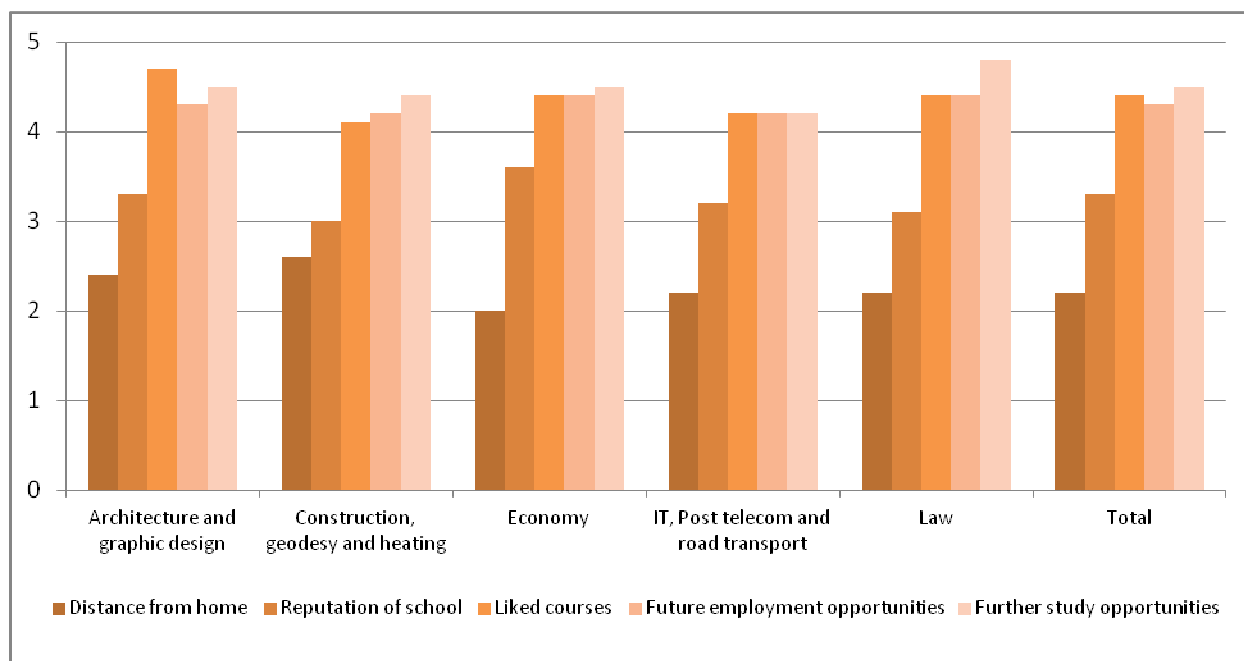
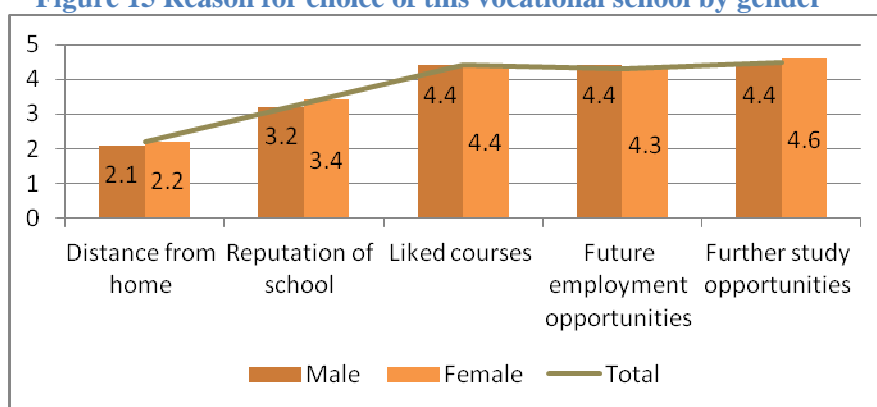
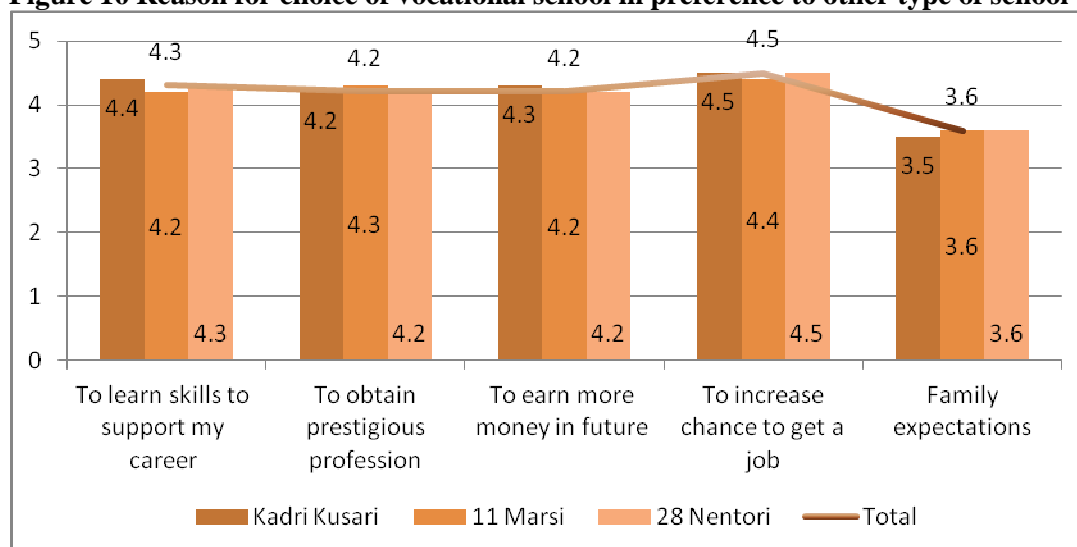


Figure 15 Reason for choice of this vocational school by gender



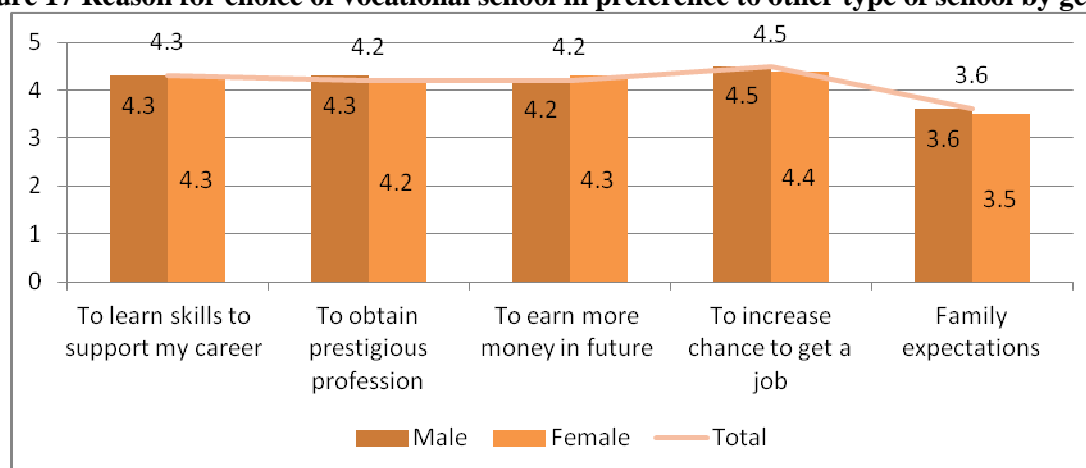
Source: Students' questionnaire - (mean score: 1=not at all important 2= a little important 3= quite important, 4=very important and 5=extremely important)

Figure 16 Reason for choice of vocational school in preference to other type of school



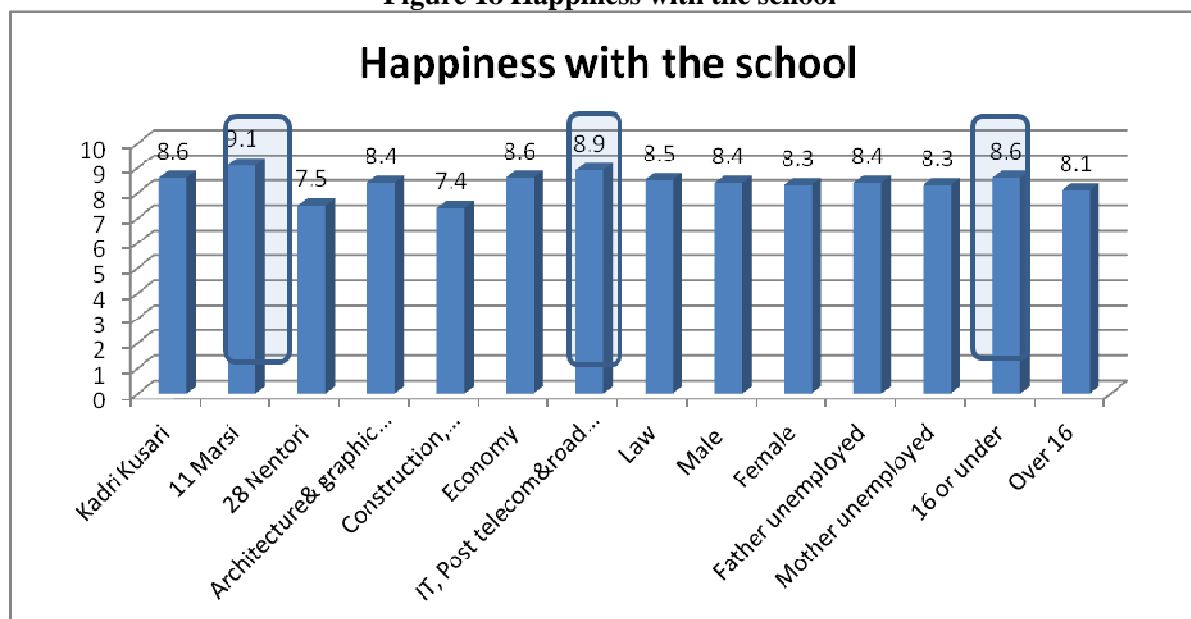
Source: Students' questionnaire - (mean score: 1=not at all important 2= a little important 3= quite important, 4=very important and 5=extremely important)

Figure 17 Reason for choice of vocational school in preference to other type of school by gender



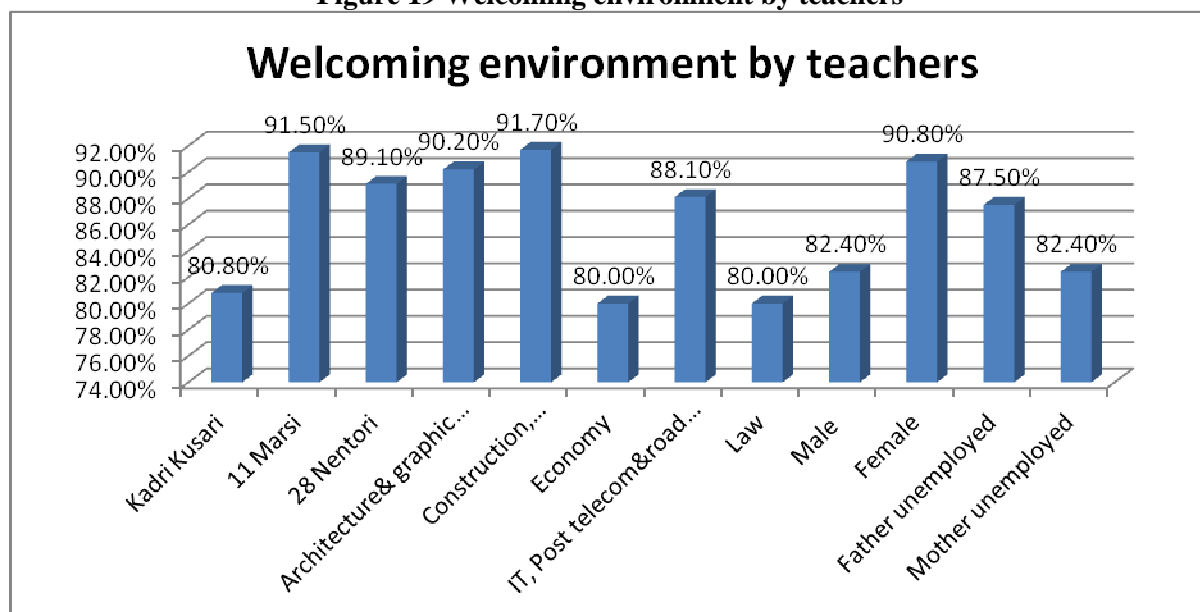
Source: Students' questionnaire - (mean score: 1=not at all important 2= a little important 3= quite important, 4=very important and 5=extremely important)

Figure 18 Happiness with the school



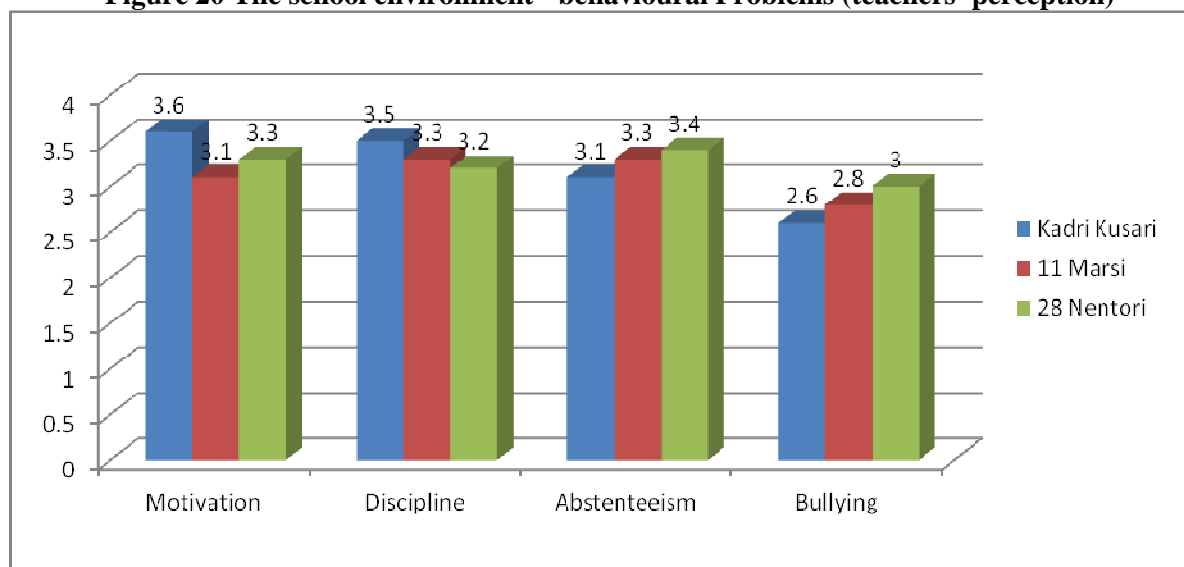
Source: Student Questionnaire – S21 “How happy do you feel in school?”

Figure 19 Welcoming environment by teachers



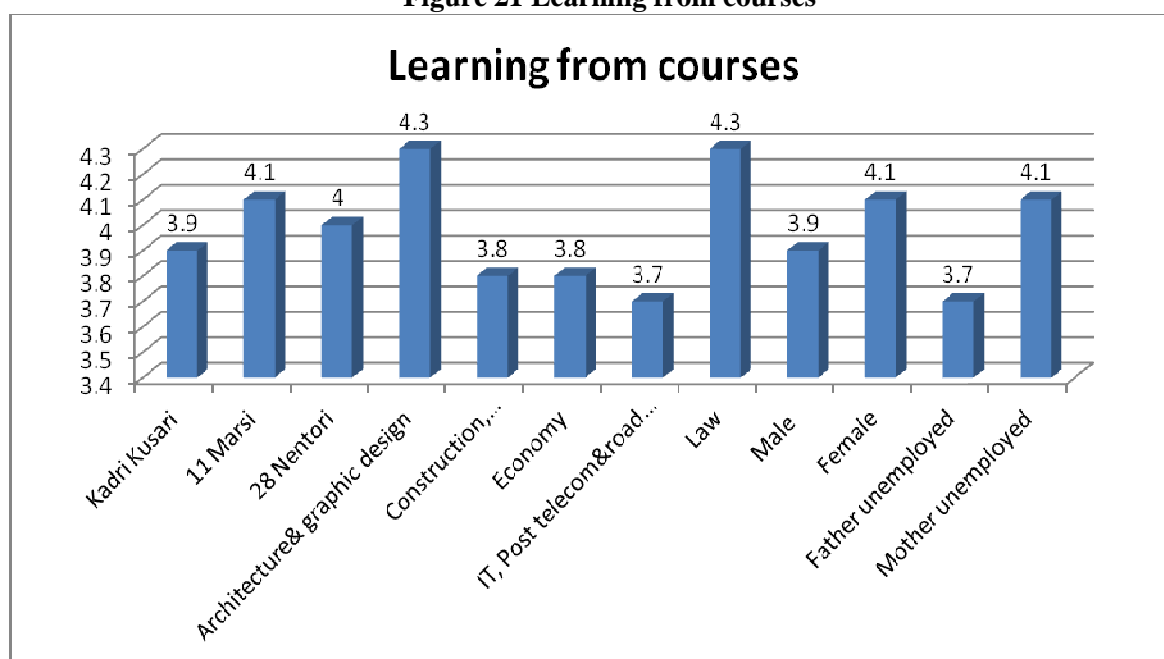
Source: Student questionnaire S25- “In your first few weeks at school did the teachers help you feel welcome in the school”? (Proportion of „Yes” responses).

Figure 20 The school environment - behavioural Problems (teachers' perception)

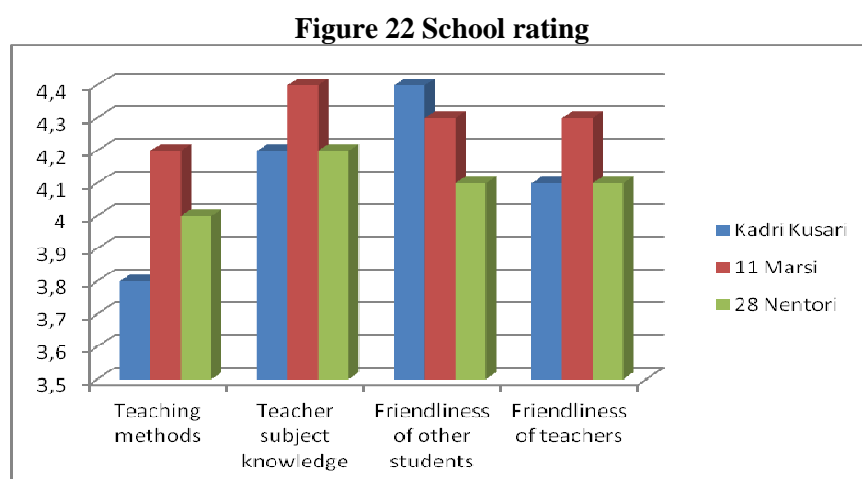


Source: Teacher questionnaire – T18 – “How much of a problem are the following behaviours in school”? (1=none, 2= a little, 3=average, 4 = much, 5=very much) (mean score)

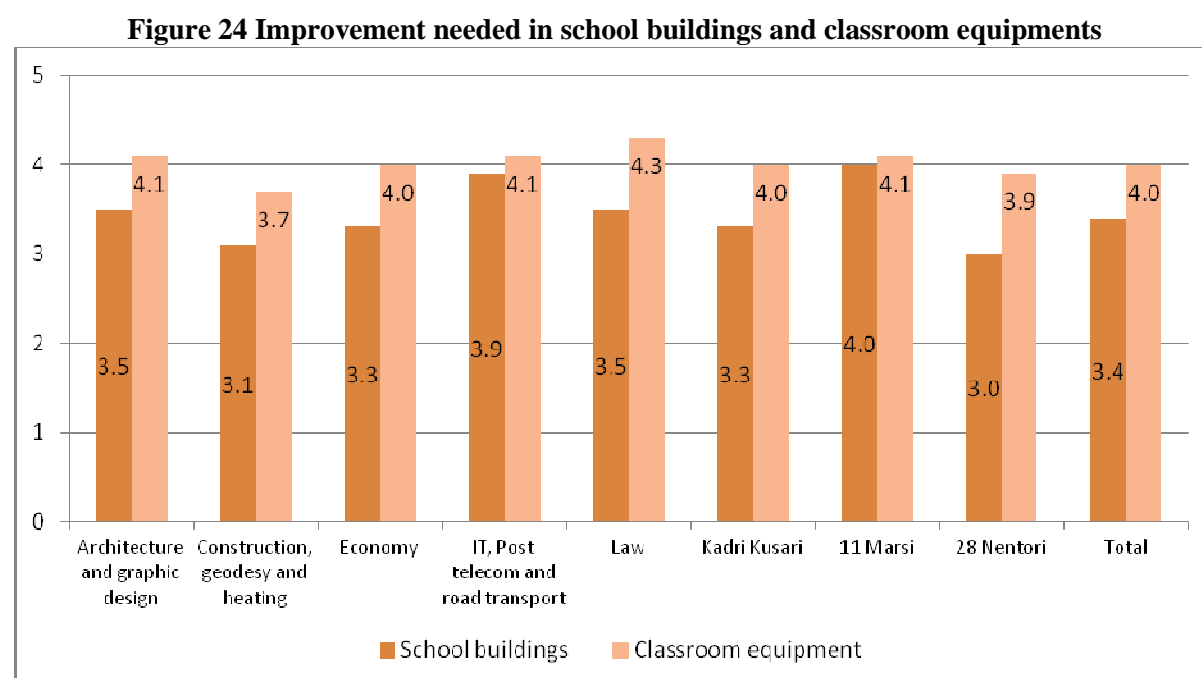
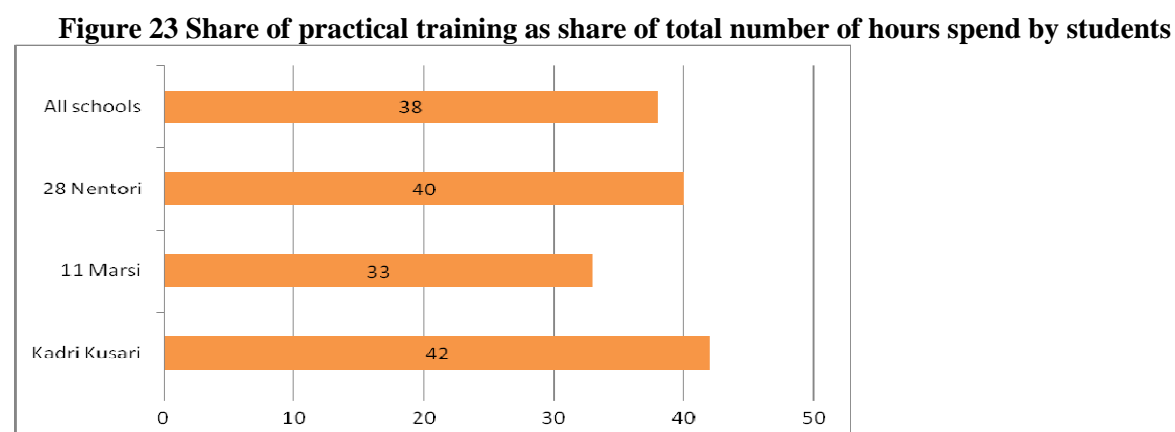
Figure 21 Learning from courses



Source: Student questionnaire S22 –” How much do you learn from the courses you are taking? (1=nothing, 2=a little, 3=a moderate amount, 4=much, 5=very much)(mean score)

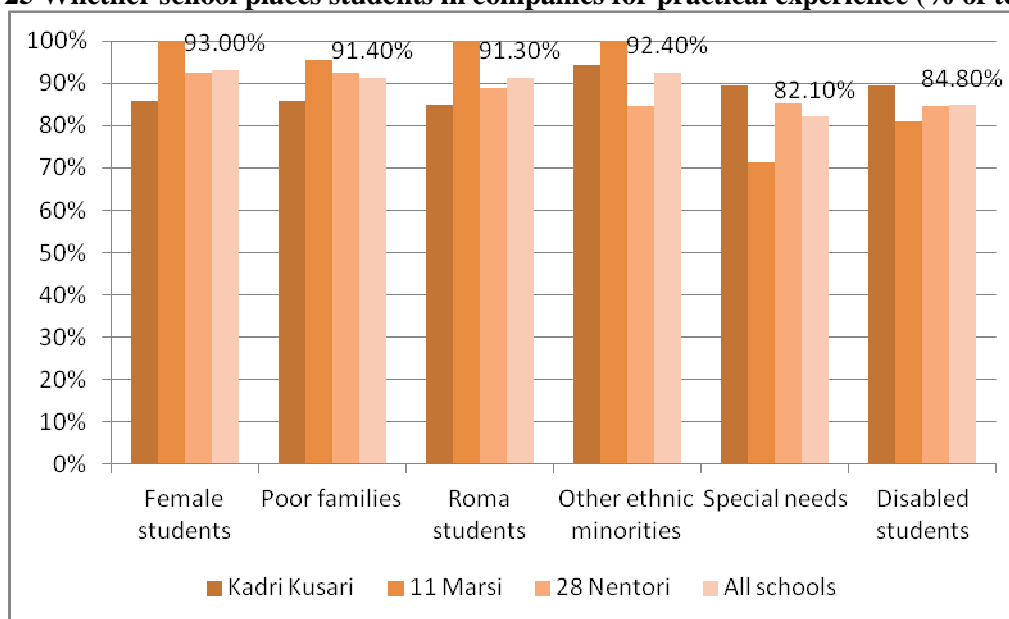


Source: Student questionnaire S29 “How do you rate your school” (mean score)



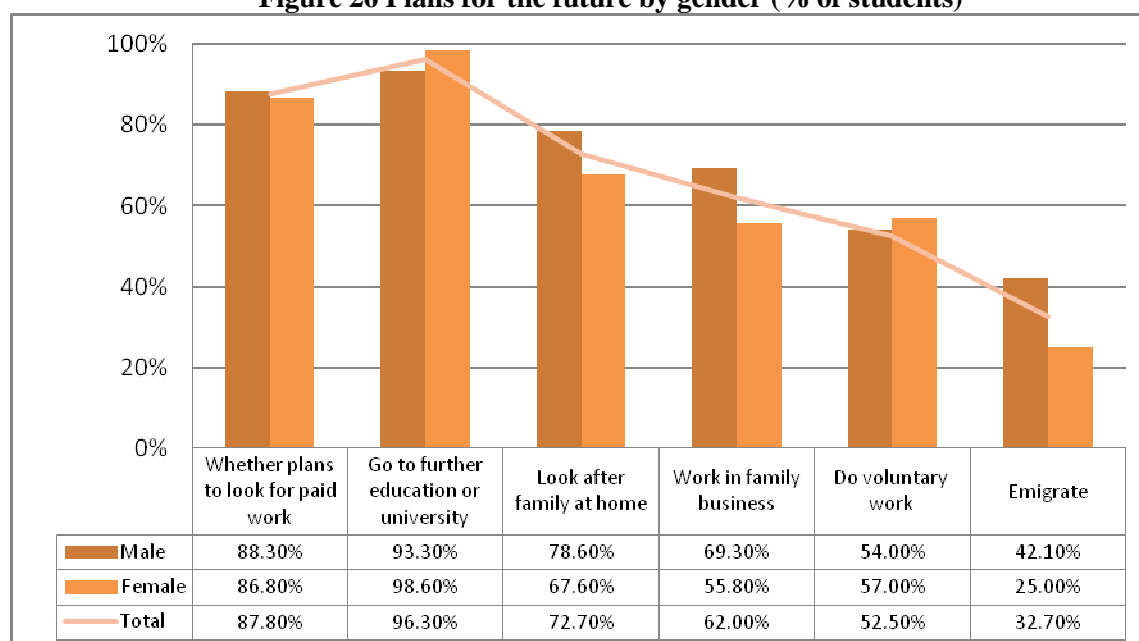
Source: Students' questionnaire - (1=none, 2= a little, 3= some; 4=much, 5= very much)

Figure 25 Whether school places students in companies for practical experience (% of teachers)



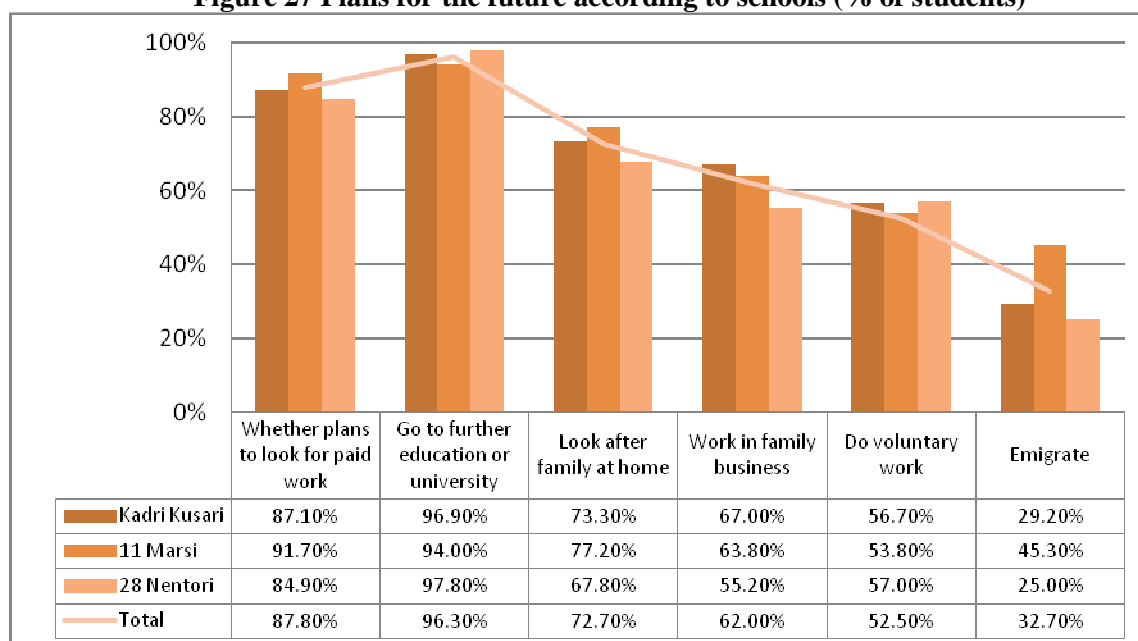
Source: Teachers' questionnaire

Figure 26 Plans for the future by gender (% of students)



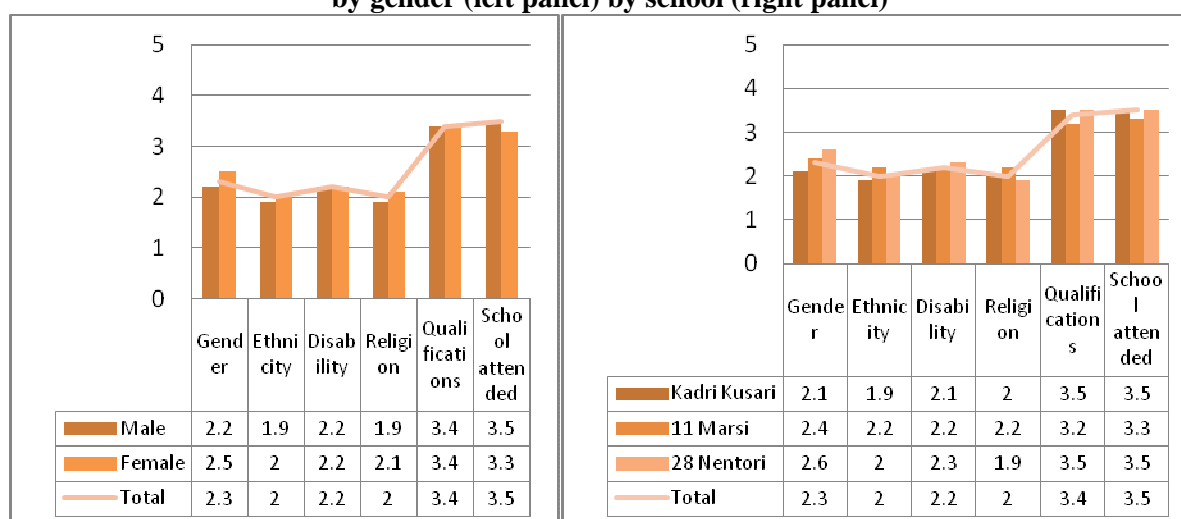
Source: Students' questionnaire

Figure 27 Plans for the future according to schools (% of students)



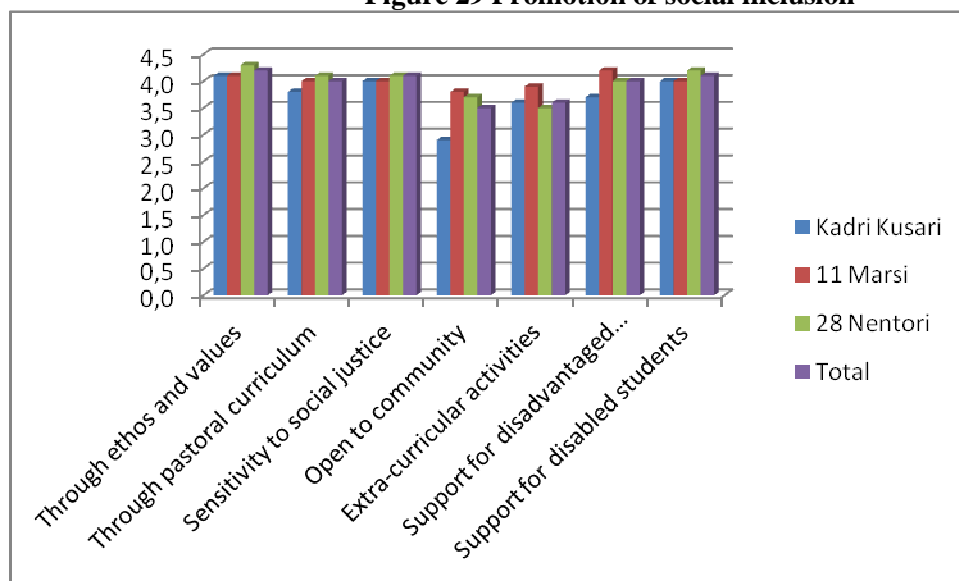
Source: Students' questionnaire

Figure 28 Likelihood of experiencing difficulty in finding a job for any of the following reasons by gender (left panel) by school (right panel)



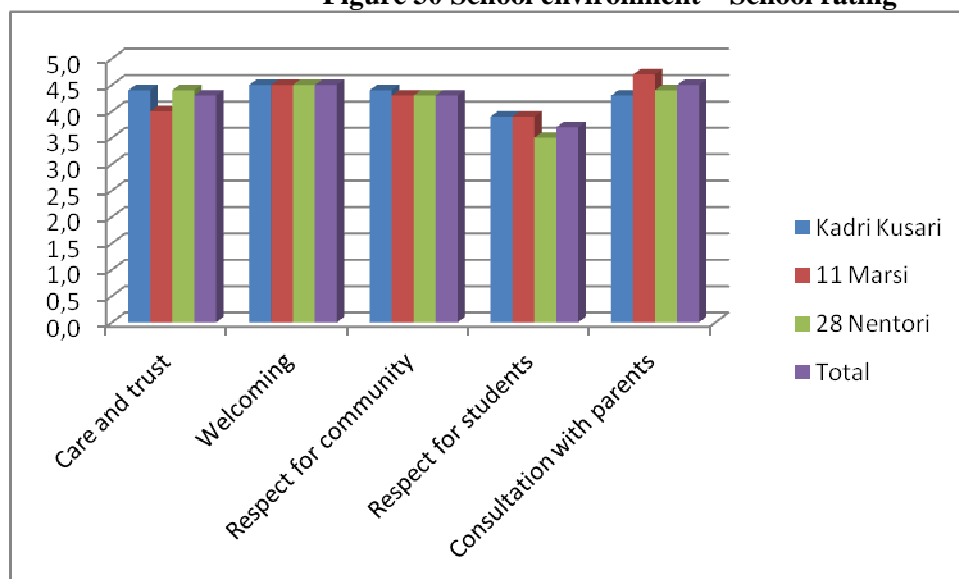
Source: Students' questionnaire -(mean score: 1=none, 2= a little, 3= some; 4=much, 5= very much)

Figure 29 Promotion of social inclusion



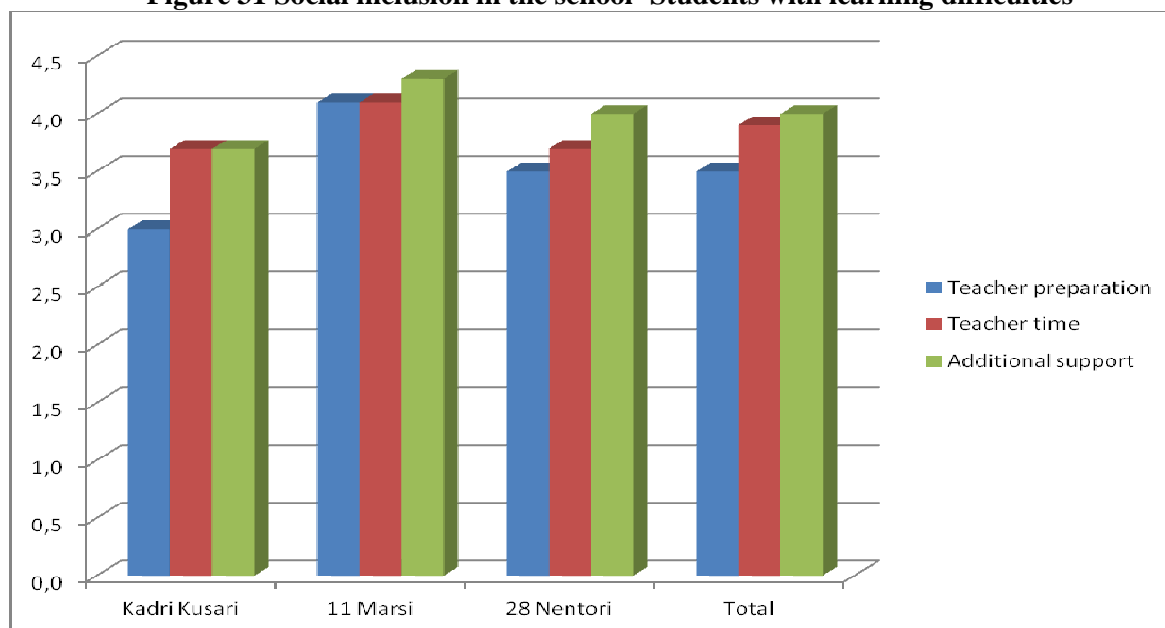
Source: Teacher questionnaire – T21 - ‘How well do you think your school promotes social inclusion in the following areas?’ (1=not at all, 2=a little, 3= somewhat, 4=much, 5=very much).

Figure 30 School environment – School rating



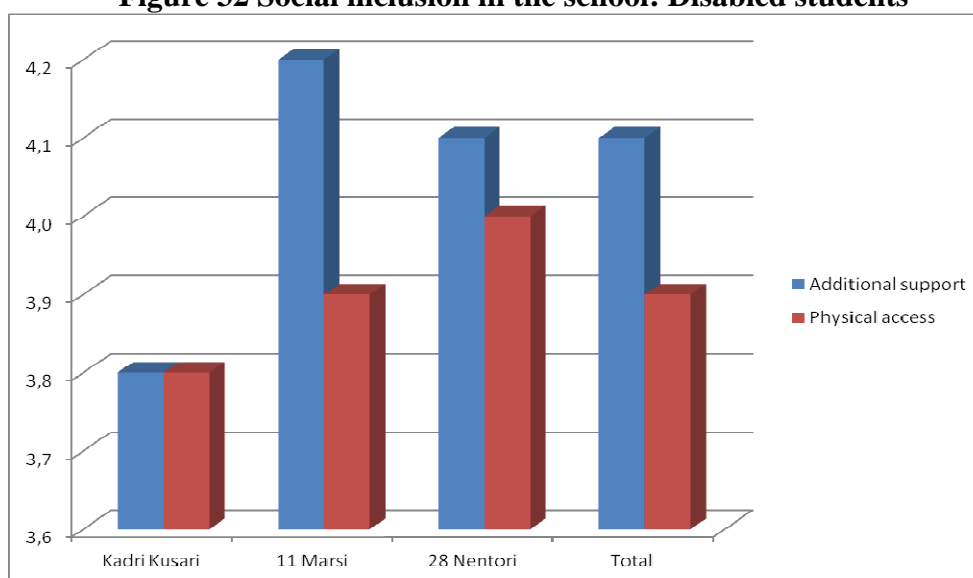
Source: Teacher questionnaire – T17 - ‘How would you rate your school in the following dimensions?’ (1= very poor, 2=poor, 3=average, 4=good, 5=very good)

Figure 31 Social inclusion in the school -Students with learning difficulties



Source: Teacher questionnaire –T22 - How well does your school deal with students with learning difficulties in the following areas? (1=very poorly, 2=poorly, 3=average, 4=well, 5=very well)

Figure 32 Social inclusion in the school: Disabled students



Source: Teacher questionnaire – T 23 – How well does your school deal with challenges facing disabled students in the following areas? (1=very poorly, 2=poorly, 3=average, 4=well, 5=very well)

Appendix 3: Inventory of interviews conducted

No.	Interview with	Institution	Position	National/Local	City
1	Adrian Zeqiri	European Centre for Minority Issues	Director	National	Prishtina
2	Hafiz Leka	Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare	Director of Employment Division	National	Prishtina
3	Besim Mustafa	Kosovo Chamber of Commerce		National	Prishtina
4	Vlera Kastrati		Social inclusion expert	National	Prishtina
5	Arben Shala	Academy for Technical Assistance	Manager	National	Prizren
6	Sophie Beaumont	EU Office	Tasks Manager for Education	National	Prishtina
7	Michael Koenig	Kulturkontakt	Team Leader	National	Prishtina
8	Gazmend Tahiraj	Edu Cluster Finland (Donor org)	Programme Coordinator	National	Prishtina
9	Haxhere Zylfiu and Binak Gerguri	Kosovo Pedagogical Institute	Researchers at the Kosovo Pedagogical Institute	National	Prishtina
10	Lutli Mani	SBASHK: Joint Association of Education, Science and Culture	Vice President	National	Prishtina
11	Ryve Prekorogja	Ministry of Education, Science and Technology	Officer for technical fields in VET Division of MEST	National	Prishtina
12	Teuta Danuza	National Qualification Agency	Director of NQA	National	Prishtina
13	Arta Uka	Ministry of European Integration	Education Officer at MEI	National	Prishtina
14	Igballe Potetra	Resource Center	Director	Local	Prishtina
15	Parent	School 28 Nentori	Parent	Local	Prishtina
16	Ismet Ismajli	PTK	Head of Department	Local	Prishtina
17	Islam Nita	School 28 Nentori	Teacher	Local	Prishtina
18	Halim Halimi	Municipality of Prishtina	Director of Education	Local	Prishtina
19	Zylkifli Obertinca	Employment Office	Director of Education	Local	Prishtina
20	Shemsi Lushaku	School 28 Nentori	Director	Local	Prishtina
21	Bislim Hoti	Roma Ashkali Egyptian	Vice president	Local	Gjakova
22	Fakete Elezi	Employment Office	Coordinator	Local	Gjakova
23	Bibe Bibaj	Economic School	Parent	Local	Gjakova
24	Fellanza Zeka	Hotel Pashtriku	Employer	Local	Gjakova
25	Silvana Haxhikadrija	Municipality of Gjakova	Director of Education	Local	Gjakova
26	Armend Terani, Setki Brahamaj	Economic School	Teacher	Local	Gjakova
27	Sinan Hajdari	Economic School	Director	Local	Gjakova
28	Shaban Xhuxhaku	School 11 Marsi	Parent	Local	Prizren
29	Besim Baraliu	Hidroregjioni	Employer	Local	Prizren
30	Shaip Kryeziu	Handikos	Manager	Local	Prizren
31	Sinan Gashi	Employment Office	Director	Local	Prizren
32	Nexhmedin Asllani	Kosovo Chamber of Commerce	Director	Local	Prizren
33	Ajtene Krasniqi	The Craftsmen and Businessman association	Communications officer	Local	Prizren
34	Mejreme Gjokolli	School 11 Marsi	Teacher	Local	Prizren
35	Xhelal Susuri	School 11 Marsi	Director	Local	Prizren
36	Nexhat Cocaj	Municipality of Prishtina	Director of Education	Local	Prizren

Appendix 4: Data on students in upper-secondary education (General education vs. Vocational education) aggregated by age, and ethnicity, school year 2010/2011

Level	Number of students in the entire upper-secondary education aggregated by level						Number of students in VET aggregated by level						VET vs. GUSE
	F	%	M	%	Total	%	F	%	M	%	Total	%	
X	14823	44,77	18288	55,23	33111	30,52	6575	37,96	10746	62,04	17321	29,11	52,31
XI	16117	46,85	18281	53,15	34398	31,70	6795	39,76	10293	60,24	17088	28,71	49,68
XII	13220	47,45	14638	52,55	27858	25,67	5678	41,02	8165	58,98	13843	23,26	49,69
XIII	5628	42,84	7508	57,16	13136	12,11	4740	42,10	6520	57,90	11260	18,92	85,72
Total	49788	45,89	58715	54,11	108503	100	23788	39,97	35724	60,03	59512	100,00	54,85
Age	Number of students in the entire upper secondary education aggregated by age						Number of students in VET aggregated by age						VET vs. GUSE
	F	%	M	%	Total	%	F	%	M	%	Total	%	
15	7508	47,35	8348	52,65	15856	14,61	3569	43,98	4546	56,02	8115	13,64	51,18
16	13514	46,27	15691	53,73	29205	26,92	5653	39,03	8831	60,97	14484	24,34	49,59
17	13738	47,93	14927	52,07	28665	26,42	5867	41,15	8390	58,85	14257	23,96	49,74
18	10046	45,76	11908	54,24	21954	20,23	5215	40,26	7739	59,74	12954	21,77	59,01
19	4436	40,99	6387	59,01	10823	9,97	3102	38,35	4987	61,65	8089	13,59	74,74
20	546	27,30	1454	72,70	2000	1,84	382	23,68	1231	76,32	1613	2,71	80,65
Total	49788	45,89	58715	54,11	108503	100	23788	39,97	35724	60,03	59512	100	54,85

Source: KAS, Education Statistics 2010-2011

Annex 3: Number of students that dropped out of school in VET in school year 2009/2010

Level	Number of students that dropped out of school in VET in school year 2009/2010					
	F	%	M	%	Total	%
X	282	19,34	1176	80,66	1458	55,63
XI	153	29,71	362	70,29	515	19,65
XII	98	26,92	266	73,08	364	13,89
XIII	81	28,52	203	71,48	284	10,84
Total	614	23,43	2007	76,57	2621	100,00

Source: Agjencia e Statistikave të Kosovës, Education Statistics, 2010 – 2011

Annex 4: Number of students that dropped out of school, individual schools data

Economic school “Kadri Kusari”

	Shqiptar			Egjiptian			Shqiptar			Egjiptian			Shqiptar			Egjiptian								
	M	F	Gj	M	F	Gj	M	F	Gj	M	F	Gj	M	F	Gj	M	F	Gj						
X	25	6	31	4	2	6	12	2	14	3	1	4	13	2	15	2	0	2	50	10	60	9	3	12
XI	17	6	23	1	1	2	22	8	30	3	1	4	9	1	10	0	1	1	48	15	63	4	3	7
XII	13	5	18	1	1	2	19	2	21	2	1	3	26	4	30	3		3	58	11	69	6	2	8
XIII	11	6	17	1	1	2	20	2	22	2	0	2	19	3	22	2	1	3	50	11	61	5	2	7

Source: Data provided by the school

Technical school “11 Marsi”

Viti skollor 2010/2011												
Klasa	Gjinia			Ethnic background								
	Gjinia	M	F	Gjith:	Shqiptar		Turk		Boshnjak		Rom	
					M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
X		37	6	43	23	5	3	0	11	1	0	0
XI		18	1	19	16	1	1	0	1	0	0	0
XII		11	1	12	11	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
XIII		15	0	15	15	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
		81	8	89	65	7	4	0	12	1	0	0

Source: Data provided by the school

¹ Stated by the officer in the VET Department at MEST

² Stated by a parent in Gjakova.