Republika e Kosovës

Republika Kosova-Republic of Kosovo

Qeveria –Vlada-Government

Ministria e Arsimit e Shkencës dhe e Teknologjisë- Ministarstvo za Obrazovanje, Nauke i Tehnologija--Ministry of Education Science andTechnology

Kabineti i Ministrit /Kabinet Ministra / Cabinet of the Minister

Prishtina, 28 October 2014

Mr. Armen Ashotyan
Minister
Ministry of Education and Science
The Republic of Armenia

Ms. Stefania Giannini
Minister
Ministry of Education, Universities and Research
Italy

Mr. Friedrich Bechina
Secretary of the Congregation for Catholic Education
Congregation for Education Cattolica
The Holy See

Dear Ministers,
Dear colleagues,

Declaration of the Republic of Kosovo for Accession to the European Higher Education Area

In your respective roles as Ministers responsible and representative of Chair countries and host country of the next Ministerial conference of the Bologna Follow Up Group we submit the application for accession of the Republic of Kosovo to the "European Higher Education Area" (EHEA). This application would be for consideration at the forthcoming EHEA Ministers Conference in 2015.

The Republic of Kosovo attaches great importance and commitment to meeting the requirements for EHEA membership and has modernized and accordingly aligned its higher education system. Though not yet a member of the European Cultural Convention, the Republic of Kosovo is fully committed to meet the requirements coming out of the Convention.

The Republic of Kosovo has, for some time, been actively and consistently developing and orientating its higher education system towards achieving high European standards. Indeed, Kosovo is among the first countries in the region to make significant progress in the implementation of the Bologna process and the three cycle system.

Among its activities Kosovo has adopted a modernized higher education law, and has made fully operational the Kosovo Accreditation Agency (KAA), which was granted full membership in ENQA in September 2014. The Kosovo ENIC Office was also established in 2008, which is efficiently functioning.

Our efforts have been supported by European governments and institutions such as the European Commission, Austria, Germany and the UK, which have provided resolute support to the Republic of Kosovo in the development of all aspects of its modern higher education legal framework and system as has the European Commission through the IPA programme and the Tempus programme.

In striving to meet the obligations in full, Kosovo used the Bologna Process/EHEA documents: "Information to be provided by countries applying for accession to the European Higher Education Area (EHEA), 2013" as a basis for preparing this application.

We should be most grateful for acceptance of the Kosovo application for EHEA membership and its consideration in the Ministerial Conference next year.

Yours sincerely,

Prof. Dr. Ramë Buja
Minister
Ministry of Education,
Science and Technology
Republic of Kosovo

Annex I: Report
Annex II: MFA note

Copy BFUG Secretariat
c/o Mrs Harutyunyan

DETAILS REGARDING THE APPLICANT

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I. OVERVIEW OF THE NATIONAL HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEM

Background

The first higher education institution in Kosovo, a teacher training institution, was established in 1959. Today, Kosovo has seven public universities and 25 private colleges offering 418 different study programs. With slightly over 100,000 students currently enrolled, Kosovo reached a solid participation rate in higher education – 62.7%[1] of all persons aged 20-24, which is the exact EU average[2]. Provision is delivered in five languages: Albanian, Serbian, Bosnian, Turkish and English. Annex 1 provides data on students and staff, as well as study programs by HEIs.

The Kosovo Higher Education System is governed by the 2011 Higher Education Law and a set of bylaws derived from it. The body responsible for HE policy implementation and for licensing all HE institutions is the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MEST). The other main regulatory bodies are the Kosovo Accreditation Agency (KAA) and the National Qualifications Authority (NQA). The KAA is the independent, public agency responsible for accreditation of all public universities and private HE institutions (HEIs) offering academic degrees, whereas the NQA is a cross-ministry body, charged with developing the National Qualifications Framework, at all levels, to comply with needs of society and economy.

By Law, the Municipality of Mitrovica North has some authority to exercise responsibility for the University of Mitrovica North offering study programs in Serbian language. Following political agreement sponsored by the EU, recently elected municipal authorities in Mitrovica North are expected to cooperate with the Government to ensure full integration of this university in the Kosovo system, and its participation in regional and international cooperation.

National strategies

The main document guiding medium-term development of education in the country is the Kosovo Education Strategic Plan 2011-16 (KESP) which has a separate chapter for Higher Education and is in line with the Kosovo Higher Education Strategy 2005-2015 and the requirements of the Bologna Process. The two documents set targets and measures for integration of Kosovo in the EHEA, whereas key priorities are: increasing participation and ensuring equal access to higher education, improving the quality of higher education and establishing better links between higher education and labor market. Same priorities are confirmed in the Government of Kosovo Program 2011-2014.

Another important document affecting developments in higher education is the National Research Program approved by the Kosovo Parliament in 2010 which defines measures for research promotion and national research priorities for the period 2010-2015. Development of human capacity for research and strengthening links between the research and the society are two strategic objectives of the National Research Program

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[1] According to the Kosovo Accreditation Agency, there are 101,179 students in Kosovo HEIs in the academic year 2013/14, whereas data for the University of Mitrovica are not available. Also, according to 2011 Population Census, there are 161,467 persons aged 20-24. The population census was not carried out in the Northern part of Kosovo largely inhabited by Serbian community.
[2] http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/statistics_explained/index.php/Education_statistics_at_regional_level

that establish direct links to the Higher Education System.

Progress in achieving KESP targets is reviewed on annual basis by MEST, higher education institutions and development partners through a process called the Joint Annual Review and appropriate measures to address concerns are planned and formulated in an Aide Memoire which is shared with development partners.

In addition, MEST, in collaboration with Ministry of Trade and Industry, and Ministry of Economic Development have drafted the National Innovation Strategy 2013-2020, which greatly supports the triple helix approach bringing together academia, research and industry. Besides this, the Government of Kosovo is in the process of developing the Strategy for Human Resource Development, with skills and competences are at the core of the strategy, and education as the major means for achieving its goals.

Main Challenges

As a country in transition, Kosovo is characterized by a underdeveloped economy and a large number of young people who are unemployed. The major challenge higher education faces is to make sure that graduates' qualifications meet the expectations of the labor market at national and global level. The links between the Kosovo's economy and the higher education system still need to be improved. The private sector is in the process of defining its needs, and the higher education institutions are working to better respond to that situation.

This relates directly to the second challenge - the quality of higher education provision. Increased demand for higher education has created the need for opening new public higher education institutions and offer new programs, resulting in increased demand for qualified academic staff.

Third challenge is cooperation within the region and integration in the EHEA. Kosovo institutions participate in a number of international academic programs, and have benefited from a number of institutional partnerships with similar institutions in Europe. However, these partnerships have not lead to satisfactory level of cooperation reflected in continuous exchange of staff and students, or joint degrees. The main reasons are, visa-related issues , financial constraints and, in some cases, language problems.

Fourth challenge relates to the institutional perspective of achieving three missions: research, teaching and service. Although, recognized as important, research is still not fully embedded as one of the cardinal values and purposes of higher education. Teaching requires improvement, primarily to be adapted to the needs of learners, by promoting student-centered learning. Service is a new category in Kosovo Higher Education which targets the society and strives to improve it at local and national level.

In order to address the a/m challenges, Government plans to implement a number of measures to strengthen the links between higher education and the labor market by providing accurate labor market need analyses, and encouraging development of study programs meeting the demand. Kosovo higher education institutions have already developed plans to establish stronger links between research and teaching and improve the quality of teaching. , Following advances in digitalization of student services, Government intends to introduce an effective Higher Education Management Information System (HEMIS), which will strengthen the capacity of the Government and higher education institutions to develop sectorial evidence-based policies.

Kosovo and EHEA

In 2001 Kosovo was among the first countries in Europe to adopt the three-cycle system and introduce ECTS, and, although not formally being part of European Higher Education Area, continued to observe and implement all recommendations of the Bologna Process. "Bologna Process" and "European Higher Education Area" are key words in the current Higher education Law, just as they were in the 2003 Law and all national strategic documents related to higher education, demonstrating commitment of Kosovo legislators, Government and the higher education community to implement the Bologna requirements. Presenlty, the University of Prishtina and the University of Mitrovica North are full members of the European University Association (EUA).

Formal accession to the EHEA would strengthen the implementation of Bologna requirements; improve international cooperation and mobility of academic staff and students; facilitate further development and improvement of the National Qualifications Framework; strengthening of quality assurance system; and eventually lead to development of joint degrees and international programs.

II. STRUCTURAL REFORMS

Degree structure/NQF/Employability

Although not signatory of the Bologna Declaration, the Kosovo Government has been committed to developing national qualifications frameworks compatible with the overarching framework of the European Higher Education Area. For Kosovo, the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) is an important component within the reform of the Education and Training system. It is intended to improve access to work and further learning by ensuring that qualifications are relevant to employment and learning, and meet the needs of learners, economy, and education and training institutions.

The basic structure of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) consists of eight levels at which qualifications, and modules or other components of qualifications can be placed. They progress from the simplest levels of achievement to the most difficult and complex. Each of the levels of the NQF is defined by a statement of typical outcomes of learning based on the approach adopted by the EQF, providing a cross reference to the levels of the EQF. Kosovo NQF level descriptors are based on the EQF level descriptors, elaborated to show how they will apply in the Kosovo context. Annex 3 provides links between NQF levels and descriptors for higher education qualifications.

With few exceptions, HE programs are implemented on the 3/2/3 Bologna cycle scheme:

- Bachelor programs 3-4 years (180 - 240 ECTS credits)
- Master programs 1-2 years (60-120 ECTS credits)
- PhD programs last at least 3 years.

In accordance with the Bologna Process and the Dublin descriptors for higher education, short-cycle studies are also offered (NQF level 5). These qualifications may be either

vocational or academic in content and will normally last one or two years of full-time study or the equivalent in part-time study.

The scheme of the Kosovo Higher Education System is presented in the Annex 4.

Government of Kosovo has started to improve and consolidate the legal infrastructure that promotes a more consistent development of skills and competences through education, and has started to enhance the dialogue with social partners, especially businesses/industry, in order to get to know their needs for qualifications and skilled workforce. In addition, MEST has compiled and endorsed a series of strategic documents that promote and support the preparation of a skilled workforce to directly respond to labor market needs. The Kosovo Education Strategic Plan 2011-2016 (KESP) clearly supports such measures in different education sectors, particularly higher education and vocational education and training. Whereas unemployment rate in Kosovo is 30.9% it is comparably lower for persons with tertiary qualifications – 15.6%[3] , with 18.3% of unemployment for holders of Bachelor degree, 7.4% for holders of Master degree and 2.5% for PhD holders[4]. In order to improve employability of higher education graduates, many higher education institutions have introduced industrial boards to facilitate input from industry to the development of curricula and teaching methods, and also internships for students in local companies. Also, there are coordinated efforts of the Government and the donor community to improve links between Education and Job Market.

Quality Assurance

Licensing and accreditation are compulsory for all HEIs operating in Kosovo. Whereas license is issued by the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MEST) and represents the work permit, accreditation represents a formal acknowledgement that an Institution of higher education and its programs fulfills internationally recognized standards, and is issued or recognized by the Kosovo Accreditation Agency (KAA). Before applying for license to MEST, each HEI has to undergo institutional and program accreditation with the KAA.

The Kosovo Accreditation Agency (KAA) is operational since 2008 and is responsible for institutional and program accreditation in higher education. KAA supports the implementation of quality assurance measures at two levels: internal and external. For internal quality assurance KAA works closely with HEIs and supports them develop and maintain relevant structures and processes. All higher education institutions in Kosovo are required to have quality assurance offices and instruments of internal evaluation. QA guidelines have been developed for all HEIs. HEIs are required to produce self-evaluation reports and submit them along with applications for program or institutional accreditation, which is in full compliance with the ENQA Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area[5].

Since 2009, the KAA has made a priority of the specification of all degrees, at all levels, being given in terms of learning outcomes. With support from a number of Tempus-funded projects focused on learning outcomes, this has now been achieved and has enabled a

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[3]Statistical Agency of Kosovo: Labor Force Survey 2012, September 2013.
 https://esk.rks-gov.net/ENG/publikimet/doc_download/1108-results-of-the-kosovo-2012-labour-force-survey
[4] Statistical Agency of Kosovo: Population Census 2011
[5] ENQA: Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area, 3rd edition,. Helsinki 2009.

competence-led approach to teaching and learning to be developed, and standards achieved to be more readily identified. KAA adopted a separate regulation for accreditation of PhD programs[6] which sets additional requirements on HEIs wishing to offer such programs.

To ensure the integrity of the process, external evaluation is carried out by impartial international experts hired by KAA, whereas the nine-member National Quality Council, which is effectively the KAA Board and has three international members, reaches final decision on accreditation. To strengthen international recognition of the standards and quality in the system, KAA has become member of the International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (INQAAHE) and Central and Eastern European Network of Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (CEENQA).

On 15 September 2014, KAA was granted full membership in ENQA.

For the sake of accreditation of programs leading to regulated professions (architecture, medicine, pharmacy, nursing, etc.), Kosovo HEIs have to demonstrate that proper standards set forth by EU regulations have been applied

Recognition of qualifications

Kosovo NARIC office, established in 2008, assists in promoting the mobility of students, teachers and researchers by providing advice and information in relation to academic recognition of diplomas and study period, undertaken abroad. The Kosovo NARIC office has received support from the Austrian Federal Ministry of Science and Research/ENIC-NARIC Austria. Decisions on recognition are taken by the National Council for Recognition following procedures applied in most EU countries and in full compliance with the Lisbon Recognition Convention[7]. In general, all qualifications are recognized if they are awarded by institutions accredited by accreditation bodies in current membership of European Network for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA) or (in the United States) is an accreditation body which has been recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) or by the United States Department of Education (USDE) or from both or (in any other jurisdiction) has been accepted by the Ministry on a reciprocal basis as a properly constituted national or regional accrediting body, which is recognized and authorized by the relevant Ministry within that jurisdiction.

For the time being there are no arrangements for recognition of degrees earned through alternative learning paths.

Implementation of ECTS in Kosovo started at the beginning of the Bologna reforms as early as 2001, and is now being used by all HEIs in Kosovo with exception of the American University which follows the US Credit system. Initially, all HEIs in Kosovo had dedicated ECTS coordinators to help the staff and students understand the system, whereas now it is academic development coordinators who oversee the implementation of ECTS in HEIs.

Higher Education Law prescribes that every accredited provider of higher education in Kosovo has to provide each person awarded a degree or diploma with a diploma supplement in format set out by the MEST. All higher education institutions have implemented diploma supplement approved by the MEST, but, in practice, diploma supplement is mostly provided

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[6] KAA: Criteria and procedures for the accreditation of programs leading to the award of Doctoral degrees , http://www.akreditimi-ks.org/new/index.php/en/documents-publications/official/doc_download/5-kaa-regulation-on-doctoral-study-programs
[7] Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European Region, Lisbon 1997, http://conventions.coe.int/Treaty/en/Treaties/Html/165.htm

upon request.

Recognizing difficulties to meet the requirements of regulation issued by MEST, the Higher Education Reform Expert Team (HERE) and KAA provided some support to HEIs on diploma supplement and further support for improving the format and implementing the regulation is envisaged under IPA 2012 assistance.

III. OTHER KEY AREAS

Academic mobility

One of the eight principles on which the Higher Education in Kosovo is based[8] calls for European and international focus of Higher Education and promotion student and staff mobility. Also, target HE9 of the KESP 2011-16 makes a specific reference to internationalization of Higher Education by offering international study programs and promoting mobility of staff and students.

Kosovo participates in European mobility schemes like CEEPUS and Erasmus Mundus, and also benefits from various forms of bilateral and multi-lateral support, but opportunities for mobility of staff and students remain limited. Major obstacles for outgoing mobility are restricted number of scholarships available, visa requirements and insufficient knowledge of English among academic staff and students, whereas for incoming mobility – the local language issue. For example, Kosovo students benefited from 331 out of 4,163 mobilities funded by the Erasmus Mundus Program in seven Western Balkans Countries; on the other hand Kosovo hosted only 5 of 398 mobilities of EU nationals to Western Balkans Countries[9]. A better ratio of outgoing and incoming mobilities is achieved in the Central European Exchange Program for University Students (CEEPUS), where in five years, 58 Kosovo staff and students have benefited from mobility to participating countries, whereas Kosovo had 46 incoming mobilities[10]. In last few years special attention has been paid to supporting mobility of PhD students. MEST has provided each year 30 scholarships for PhD students from Kosovo enrolled in top-ranked world universities, whereas Austrian-funded project Higher-Kos supported 13 PhD students to complete their studies abroad.

To improve mobility perspectives, MEST has encouraged introduction of joint degree programs and programs taught in English, whereas HERE has facilitated discussion on the topic of joint degrees. Pristina Summer University, where courses are taught in English, is a good example of incoming mobility of academic staff and students from all over the world. It is anticipated that participation in the new EU program, Erasmus+, will provide more mobility opportunities for staff and students.

The social dimension of Higher Education

Kosovo public universities apply rather low student fees, which have recently been further reduced to make higher education accessible to as many young people as possible. Starting with the academic year 2014/15 fee per semester in public universities is 25 EUR for

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[8] Higher Education Law 2011, article 2
[9] European Commission: Erasmus Mundus in the Western Balkans, December 2013.
[10] MEST Center for International Cooperation, 2014.

Bachelor level, 150 EUR for Master level and 500 EUR for PhD level[11]. Fee waivers are provided for freshmen and students from low income families. Private Higher Education Institutions also have programs for fee waiving. Other types of support for students from disadvantaged groups are: reduced accommodation fees and need-based scholarships provided by the municipalities. Particular attention is paid to students from ethnic minority groups. University of Prizren and University of Peja offer full programs in Bosnian and Turkish.

On the other hand, public universities reserve places for ethnic minority students in specific study programs where competition for admission is high, whereas MEST and civil society organizations provide scholarships for the most disadvantaged group of students – Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians. Inclusiveness is a key word in Kosovo Education Strategic Plan, whereas target HE3 anticipates measures to ensure equal opportunities for students from disadvantaged groups.

IV. VALUES AND FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES

Academic freedom and institutional autonomy

Academic freedom and institutional autonomy are guaranteed by the Higher Education Law (Article 13). There is a legal provision that the Government cannot impose any funding conditions restricting academic freedom (Article 22), whereas HEIs are required to have provisions in their Statutes that guarantee academic freedom of staff and students (Article 27). All providers of higher education enjoy full institutional autonomy in line with the Magna Charta principles, including election of governing and management bodies, and arranging their structures and activities through their own rules in conformity with the Law. All public universities in Kosovo enjoy financial autonomy.

Public responsibility for higher education

Although there is no public monopoly in higher education provision in Kosovo, it is still perceived as a public good and public responsibility. The Government policy is to provide access to public higher education to as many citizens as possible. To meet the demand, five new public universities where founded in addition to the University of Prishtina and the University of Mitrovica North, whereas participation figures have quadrupled in 10 years. The main challenge related to this approach is related to funding, therefore public universities are encouraged to leverage additional funding from their academic activity and cooperation with businesses.

Cooperation among stakeholders and student participation

In addition to higher education institutions, the major stakeholders in higher education are employers, student organizations, civil society organizations, as well as international development partners supporting Kosovo integration to the EHEA, which include Austria, EU and the US Government. Most of them actively participate in discussion on major issues

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[11] MEST Administrative Instruction 17/2014
http://www.masht-gov.net/advCms/documents/17_2014_UA.pdf

in higher education, and also contribute to development of higher education policies.

By Law, statutes of HEIs have to foresee creation of one or more organizations that represent students and contribute to fulfillment of social, cultural, and academic requirements of students. Student organizations are fully autonomous, and the right to association is guaranteed. In public universities, students select their representatives in the Student Parliament through an election process open to all registered student organizations, and the Student Parliament appoints certain number of students in the University Senate. Similar practices are applied in private Higher Education Institutions. MEST is facilitating establishment of the National Student Union with support from the Tempus Program.

ANNEXES

ANNEX 1

Number of students, academic staff and academic programs
for the academic year 2013/14
(Source: Kosovo Accreditation Agency, 31/12/2013)

No.	Institution	Students	Academic programs	Academic Staff		
				Full Time	Part Time	Total
	PUBLIC HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS					
1	University of Prishtina	54,066	196	998	900	1,898
2	University of Prizren	5,875	12	30	150	180
3	University of Peja	4,682	14	64	95	159
4	Faculty of Islamic Studies	2,66	1	10	13	23
5	University of Ljubljana/Faculty of Economy – Prishtina Branch	59	2	-	-	-
	TOTAL	64,948	225			

No.	Institution	Students	Academic programs	Academic Staff		
				Full Time	Part Time	Total
	PRIVATE HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS					
1	Private Higher Education Institutions	36,231	193	771	664	1,435
	TOTAL	36,,231	193			

TOTAL		101,179	418			

Note: University of Prishtina data also includes three universities, which started operation of 1 October 2013: University of Gjilan, University of Mitrovica and University of Gjakova.

ANNEX 2

Key Documentation

Some of the main documents pertaining to the HE system are given below:

Laws - http://www.masht-gov.net/advCms/#id=61
- The Higher Education Law no.04/L-037 (2011)
- Law No 03/L-060 on the National Qualifications (2008)
- Law No. 03/L-068 on Education in the Municipalities (2008)
- Law No. 04/L-135 On Scientific- Research Activities (2013)

Administrative Instructions - http://www.masht-gov.net/advCms/#id=561
- Administrative Instruction on Criteria and Procedures for the Accreditation of Higher Professional Schools and Higher Technical Schools in the Republic of Kosovo (AI 12/ 2009)
- Administrative Instruction establishing the Kosovo Accreditation Agency (AI 11/2004)
- Administrative Instruction for Licensing Private Providers of Higher Education in Kosovo (AI 14/2003)
- Administrative Instructions on Principles and procedures of recognition of vocational high school diplomas and university degrees earned outside the Republic of Kosovo (AI 8/2010)

Strategies
- Higher Education Strategy 2005-2015 (http://www.masht-gov.net/advCms/documents/Strategy_EN.pdf) – published July 2014
- Kosovo Education Strategic Plan 2011-2016 (http://www.masht-gov.net/advCms/documents/KESP_2011_2016.pdf)
- National Research Program of the Republic of Kosovo 2010-2015
- National Innovations Strategy 2013-2020 (draft)
- Strategy for Integration of Roma, Ashkali, and Egyptian Communities in Kosovo 2007 – 2017 (http://www.masht-gov.net/advCms/documents/Strategy_English_07017.pdf)
- The Program of the Government of the Republic of Kosovo 2011-2014 (http://www.kryeministri-ks.net/repository/docs/Programi_i_Qeverise_eng_.pdf) s
- Strategies of individual HEIs.

National Qualifications Framework

Diagram 1. Links between NQF levels and Kosovo's education and training structure on the one hand, and with occupational requirements on the other.

National Qualifications Framework				
NQF Level	Contains qualifications associated with			EQF ref. level
	Education programmes	Currently available qualifications (Type)	Potential work roles/occupational requirements	
8	Higher education - Bologna 3rd cycle (Doctorate)	Doctorate (A)	Entry to, or continuing professional development within, senior levels of management or higher level professional occupations	8
7	Higher education - Bologna 2nd cycle (Master)	Master degree (A)		7
6	Higher education - Bologna 1st cycle (Bachelor)	Bachelor degree (A)		6
5	Bologna short cycle and /or post-secondary VET	Title of qualifications still unknown (A), (C) Certificates of non-formal providers (D or E)	Specialist/Trainer/Manager	5
4	Preparation for progression into higher education and/or labour market entry	Matura diploma in general or vocational subjects (B), (C), Vocational education diploma (C)	Qualified Worker/Supervisor	4
3	Preparation for labour market entry (young people and adults)	Vocational education certificate (C) Certificates of non-formal VET providers (D or E)	Semi-skilled Worker	3
2	Progression from lower to upper secondary education (young people), preparation for labour market (adults)	No existing qualifications of formal education system identified Certificates of non-formal providers (D or E)	Low-skilled Worker	2
1	Basic education	No existing qualifications of formal education system identified Certificates of non-formal providers (E)	Minimum level of basic skills, inc. literacy/numeracy, required for entry to lowest level of employment	1

Diagram 2. Level 5 learning outcomes

Descriptor:	Individuals achieving qualifications at this level will have demonstrated at least some of the following capabilities or competences:
Knowledge – comprehensive and/or specialised	They will have broad or specialised factual and theoretical knowledge in and about an educational subject, occupation, or occupational area. They will be able to use the knowledge to achieve outcomes which result from structured learning or work. This may involve: • using comprehensive specialised, factual and theoretical knowledge within a field of work or study and showing awareness of the boundaries of that knowledge; • employing a broad knowledge of the scope, defining features, and main areas of a subject, discipline area of work and detailed knowledge in some areas; • understanding and use of a limited range of core theories, principles and concepts; • using knowledge and understanding of some major current issues and specializms, and drawing on an outline knowledge and understanding of research or equivalent processes within the context of work or study.
Skills - specialised	They will be able to apply a number of practical and thinking skills to complete tasks and solve problems. The skills, tasks and problems will be specific to an educational subject, occupation, or occupational area. They will carry out work at the level of a qualified worker or structured learning at the level required for entry to studies in higher education.
Skills – practical, cognitive and creative	They will be able to apply a full range of the specialised skills needed for planning, implementation, review and evaluation of results in an educational subject, occupation, or occupational area. They will be able to apply a comprehensive range of cognitive and practical skills, practices and techniques to develop creative solutions to practical problems and accomplishing tasks. This may involve: • applying investigative and analytical skills to the solving of both concrete and abstract problems and issues requiring the exercise of discretion and judgment; • following a line of investigation, analysis and interpretation that requires application of theories, principles, and methods relevant to a field of work or study; • using a range of communication, mathematical, and digital skills associated with a field of work or study, some of which are specialised.

Diagram 3. Level 6 learning outcomes

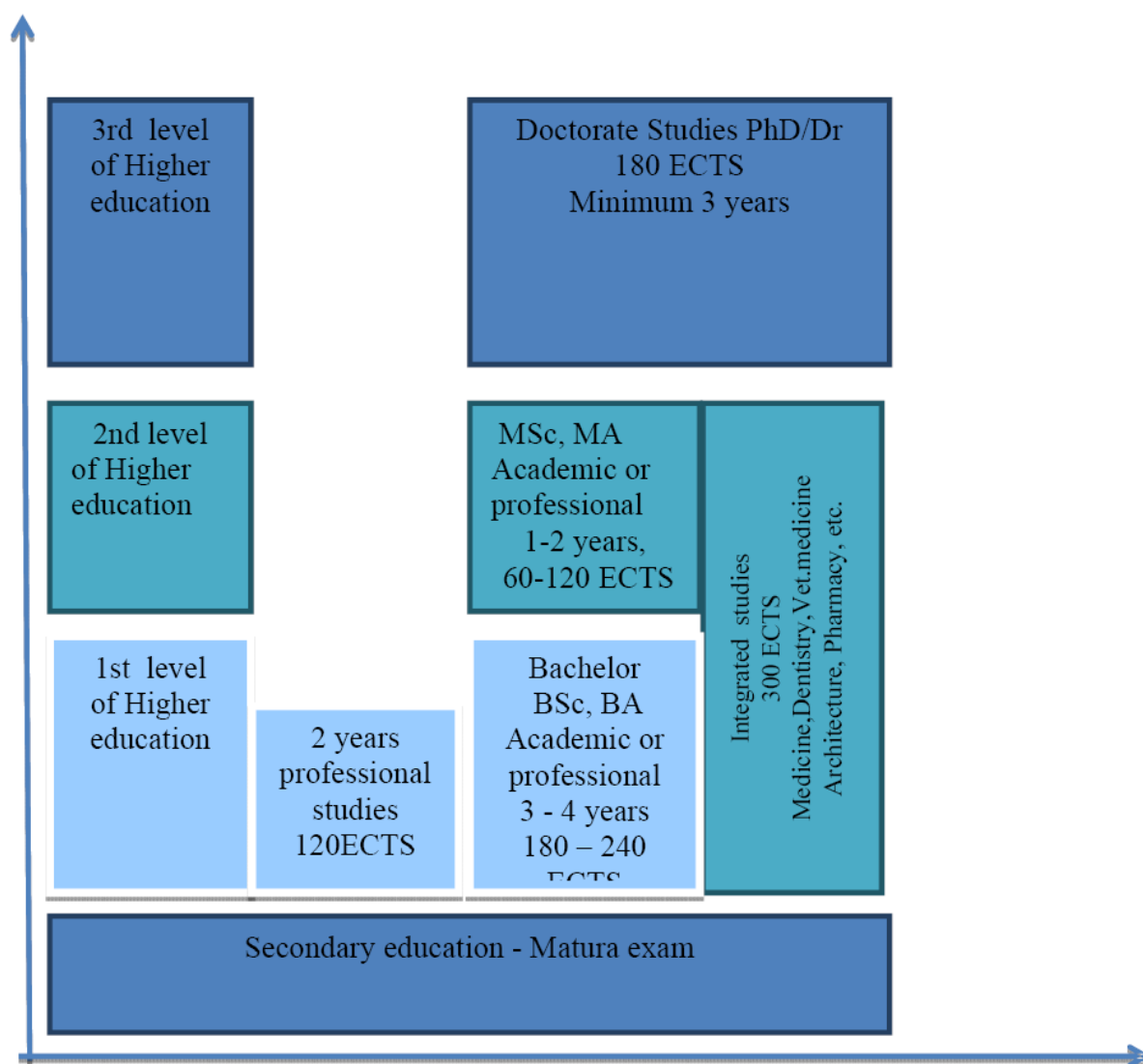| Descriptor:	Individuals achieving qualifications at this level will have demonstrated at least some of the following capabilities or competences:
Knowledge – advanced	They will have an advanced knowledge of a field of work or study, involving a critical understanding of theories and principles. This may include: • using an integrated view of the principal areas, features, boundaries, terminology and conventions of the field of work or study to reach informed judgements about the theories and principles which underpin or govern it; • drawing on detailed knowledge and understanding in one or more specialisms, including some that is informed by or at the forefront of a subject, discipline or area of work; • demonstrating knowledge and understanding of the ways in which the subject, discipline or area of work is developed, including a range of established techniques of enquiry or research methodologies.
Skills – advanced practical, cognitive and creative	They will be able to demonstrate mastery and innovation in using advanced skills to solve complex and unpredictable problems in a specialised field of work or study. This may include: • using a few skills, practices and/or materials which are specialised, advanced, or at the forefront of a subject, discipline or area of work; • executing a defined project of research, development or investigation to identify and implement relevant outcomes; • practising in a range of professional level contexts which include a degree of unpredictability and/or specialism and demonstrating some originality and creativity and making judgements where data/information is limited or comes from a range of different sources.
Personal responsibility/ responsibility for others	They will undertake work or study which involves managing complex technical or professional activities or projects, which may include responsibility for decision-making in unpredictable work or study contexts and/or for managing the professional development of individuals and groups. It may include: • working effectively under guidance in a peer relationship with experienced qualified practitioners; • the exercise of autonomy and initiative and significant responsibility for the work of others and a range of resources; • working with others to bring about change, development and/or new ideas ; • dealing with ethical and professional issues in accordance with current professional and/or ethical codes or practices.

Diagram 4. Level 7 learning outcomes

Descriptor:	Individuals achieving qualifications at this level will have demonstrated at least some of the following capabilities or competences:
Knowledge – highly specialised	They will have highly specialised, extensive and detailed knowledge and understanding, some of which is at the forefront of knowledge in a field of work or study and at the interface between different fields, as the basis for original thinking and/or research. This will include: • a critical understanding of the principal theories, principles and concepts relating to practical and conceptual knowledge in the subject, discipline or area of work including relevant specialisms; • working with knowledge that covers and integrates most of the main areas of a subject, discipline or area of work – including their features, boundaries, terminology and conventions; • drawing on a critical awareness of current issues in a subject, discipline or area of work including relevant specialisms.
Skills – highly specialised practical, cognitive and creative	They will be able to use highly specialised skills and techniques associated with a subject/discipline or occupational area, including some which may be at the forefront of developments, to carry out activities requiring significant innovative thinking and/or original research. They will have the ability and attitude to appreciate and evaluate new information, concepts and evidence from a wide range of resources and should be able to use specialised problem-solving skills to develop new knowledge and procedures and integrate knowledge from different fields. This may, for example, involve: • planning and carrying out a significant project of research, investigation or development; • developing original and creative responses to problems and issues practising in a wide and often unpredictable variety of professional contexts; • Drafting a master thesis
Personal responsibility/ responsibility for others	They will exercise substantial autonomy and initiative in professional and equivalent activities, taking responsibility for own work and/or significant responsibility for the work of others, and undertaking work or study which involves managing and transforming work or study contexts that are complex, unpredictable and require new strategic approaches. This may involve: • Managing teams of professionals, contributing to the development of their professional knowledge and practice and/or reviewing their performance; • dealing with complex ethical and professional issues and make informed judgements on issues not addressed by current professional and/or ethical codes or practices

Diagram 5. Level 8 learning outcomes

Descriptor:	Individuals achieving qualifications at this level will have demonstrated at least some of the following capabilities or competences:
Knowledge – highly advanced	They will have and use knowledge at the most advanced frontier of a field of work, study or area of research and at the interface between different fields, drawing on a critical overview of a subject/discipline, including critical understanding of the principal theories, principles and concepts. The knowledge and understanding is generated through personal research or equivalent work which makes a significant contribution to the development of the subject/discipline and offers original and creative insights into new, complex and/or abstract ideas, information and issues and developing creative and original responses to problems. This will include: • dealing with very complex and/or new issues and make informed judgements in the absence of complete or consistent data/information; • extending or redefining of professional knowledge and practices within a given field or the interface between fields.
Skills – highly advanced practical, cognitive and creative	They will be able to use a range of advanced and specialised skills, techniques, practices and materials at the forefront of a subject, discipline or area of work in order to achieve insights into new, complex and/or abstract ideas, information and issues and develop creative and original responses to problems. This will involve applying a range of standard and specialised research and enquiry methods (e.g. synthesis and evaluation) to design and carry out research, investigative or development projects in order to solve critical problems and/or extend or redefine existing knowledge or professional practice, resulting in significant contributions to knowledge and understanding and/or the application of knowledge within a discipline or educational area. This is likely to involve: • Review of literature, experimentation and other systematic approaches on a range of knowledge; • Writing of critical reviews in one or more specialism or research areas; • Preparation of a doctoral thesis.
Personal responsibility/ responsibility for others	They will exercise a high level of autonomy and initiative in professional and equivalent activities, demonstrating substantial authority, innovation and autonomy, scholarly and professional integrity and sustained commitment to the development of new ideas or processes at the forefront of work, study or research in the relevant area or discipline. They will also take full responsibility for own work and/or significant responsibility for the work of others, demonstrating leadership and/or originality in tackling and solving problems. They sould be able to deal with complex ethical and professional issues, making informed judgements on new and emerging issues not addressed by current professional and/or ethical codes or practices.

ANNEX 4

The Scheme of the Higher Education System in Kosovo

3rd level of Higher education		Doctorate Studies PhD/Dr 180 ECTS Minimum 3 years	
2nd level of Higher education		MSc, MA Academic or professional 1-2 years, 60-120 ECTS	Integrated studies 300 ECTS Medicine,Dentistry,Vet.medicine Architecture, Pharmacy, etc.
1st level of Higher education	2 years professional studies 120ECTS	Bachelor BSc, BA Academic or professional 3 - 4 years 180 – 240 ECTS	
Secondary education - Matura exam			

ANNEX 5

List of Acronyms

CEENQA	Central and Eastern European Network of Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education
CEEPUS	Central European Exchange Program for University Students
CHEA	Council for Higher Education Accreditation
ECTS	European Credit Transfer System
EHEA	European Higher Education Area
ENIC	European Network of Information Centers
ENQA	European Network for Quality Assurance in Higher Education
EQF	European Qualifications Framework
EU	European Union
HE	Higher Education
HEI	Higher Education Institution
HEMIS	Higher Education Management Information System
INQAAHE	International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education
IPA	Instrument for Pre-Accession
KAA	Kosovo Accreditation Agency
KESP	Kosovo Education Strategic Plan
MEST	Ministry of Education, Science and Technology
NARIC	National Academic Recognition Information Center
NQA	National Qualification Authority
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
USDE	United States Department of Education

Prishtinë, 28\1\2014

Ref: 565 /14

Your Excellency,

The Republic of Kosovo, through its democratic system has proven its political ability to build and preserve sustainable and efficient governance as fundamental objective of the Council of Europe (CoE) since the declaration of independence on 17th February 2008. As a result, we have progressed establish a new dynamics affirmative and contractual relations with CoE. After the membership in the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) in 2012, Kosovo became in June 2013 a full-fledged member of the Council of Europe Development Bank (CEB).

In addition, the Parliamentary Assembly of the CoE has permitted invitations to Kosovo MPs to attend most of the PACE committees. To establish formal interaction with the CoE, Kosovo and CoE Secretariat have begun a process of dialogue on issues of common interests through Joint Working Groups. The first meeting of the joint Working Group of the Republic of Kosovo and Council of Europe took place in Pristina on 18 November 2013. The main goal of the WG meeting was jointly to implement projects that tackle the fulfillment of necessary standards and reforms in Kosovo related the Stabilization-Association Agreement benchmarks towards Kosovo's EU future.

Kosovo's commitment to the fundamental principles of human rights, rule of law and democracy has been crowned in June 2014 with its admittance to the Venice Commission which will further ensure Kosovo successfully to undertake and implement the ongoing Constitutional and Electoral Reforms.

The second meeting of the Working Group between the CoE Secretariat and Kosovo Government was held on 23 September 2014 in CoE's Secretariat in Strasbourg. Discussions were focused on three points: CoE's ongoing projects in Kosovo, diplomatic status of the CoE staff in Kosovo, and the commencement of monitoring missions covering fulfillment of various

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obligations that derive from CoE Conventions. During the meeting, a framework of the future cooperation was agreed upon. Soon, GRETA is to send its questionnaire to Kosovo authorities, officially commencing the monitoring of implementation of the Convention's criteria.

The Republic of Kosovo would like to ensure its full commitment to the principles and responsibilities deriving from the 1954 European Cultural Convention. In its path to CoE membership, Kosovo will develop a national contribution to the common cultural heritage of Europe and its languages, history and civilization, as well as embrace and safeguard the cultural objects as integral parts of our common cultural heritage.

In regards to the above, the Republic of Kosovo hereby through this letter expresses its strong interest to join the European Cultural Convention at the earliest possible convenience and assume its active role in tendering its contribution.

Enver Hoxhaj
Minister of Foreign Affairs

H.E.Mr. Edward Nalbandian
Minister of Foreign Affairs
Republic of Armenia

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