

**The Assembly of Republic of Kosovo**

## **White Paper**

# **KOSOVO SOCIAL INCLUSION CHALLENGES**



**October 2009**

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## **Introduction speech of the President Krasniqi in publication: “Challenges of Social Inclusion in Kosovo”**

### **Agenda of the social inclusion in Kosovo is developed in a new historical and political context**

One of the different challenges that actually Kosovo is facing with, the challenge of social inclusion is one of the delicate ones.

Social inclusion, whether as special policy or as all-embracing process, aims the extension of citizens possibilities spectrum regarding the employment, welfare, education, communication, participation or entertainment.

Social inclusion means a more active citizenship and participant in decision- taking, more informed society, it means refusal of dominant or discriminative inclination, of any form and in any level within society. Social inclusion means the support to all of those who are in difficulties, as well as the popularization of those people who suffer as a consequence of any natural or social limitation.

In different countries and societies, depending on the difficulties they face, social inclusion treats the old people, children, people with disabilities, homeless persons, citizens who are looking for any job or information, citizens without elementary education, citizens suspended from decision-taking and from social and political life. In this way, they can not or are not able to exercise more influence regarding their fate and merits in society, or can not refuse an injustice, despite that the law guarantees them this.

Social inclusion implicates the need for undertaking the policies, laws, right and balanced measures, in different spheres for the benefit of citizens without any distinction. Social inclusion also interacts closely with the Developing Objectives of Millennium approved by the Assembly of Kosovo with the Resolution of 17 October 2008. The objectives aim at abolition of the extreme poverty and hunger, achievement of primary education for all, promotion of gender equality and empowerment of women's role in society, reduction of infants and mothers' mortality during birth, fighting the catching diseases, security of sustainable environment and global partnership.

Considering the difficult situation of citizens of different social categories, social inclusion, also means financial output and deadline of actions, which should be undertaken with emergency sense and analytic care. These actions

should be undertaken under the illumination of transparency for the citizens that we represent.

Social inclusion exceeds the parting lines and provides democratic and progressive partnership, in order to create the social and political value which contributes toward a better life for everyone without exception. Social inclusion influences in advanced energies, their mobilization, as well as it influences in approach between us, in good and in difficulty.

In Kosovo, the list of social exclusion is long and compassionate, first as a consequence of an unjust history of long-term utilization and mistreatment, but without exception of internal aspects, common characteristic for all developing societies in Europe, as there is the care regarding the health, environment, or consecration for more intercity solidarity.

In our society there are whole categories of citizens who were heavily harmed in the past, as ex political prisoners, war captives and invalids, women who were mistreated and raped during the war, the dislodged of war, traumatized and orphan children. This difficult situation for these citizens and for our society in general, makes more difficult but not impossible the attempts of our institutions for contradiction and later casting of exclusion list.

Reflecting in regard to this situation, as well as intending to accompany trends of progress for a more social inclusion, according to good examples that are being developed within European Union and in region, Assembly of Kosovo has drafted this document named "Challenges of Social Inclusion in Kosovo", in the way that the identification of those touched by social exclusion, to serve institutions in their action plans.

"Challenges of Social Inclusion in Kosovo" is drafted with the support of United Nations Agencies and in the spirit of European aspiration of Kosovo. The document treats the general aspects of social exclusion, according to European concept and Kosovo concrete conditions.

Agenda of the social inclusion in Kosovo is developed in a new historical and political context, in which the constitutional spirit and European integration consecration serve us not just as inspiration for initiation and implementation of progressive policies and legislation, but also as stimulation to change positively the situation of those excluded in our society. This is the spirit with which we intend to continue the building of our new state and democratic institutions.

Kosovo Institutions are involved in the process that relates the economic development with the social justice and overall social political and cultural progress. This progress will include all without any distinction.



## **White Paper: Kosovo Social Inclusion Challenges**

### **Preface**

Kosovo Social Inclusion Challenges in Kosovo, White Paper

The issuance of the White Paper on Kosovo Social Inclusion Challenges (KSIC), produced by the Assembly of Kosovo (AoK), represents and articulates a pledge of the Kosovo institutions to democratic values, a more inclusive society, and a prosperous future for all. This initiative has served the AoK to exercise its role in representation, by serving as a voice for the most vulnerable. As an institution, the AoK has shown a great commitment in putting the people of Kosovo first, and also articulating its vision for its European integration ambitions.

The White Paper is a declaration of political commitment by the AoK, through which it aims to map out social exclusion issues and contribute to the stimulation of discussions and debate about them. The document has, as its focus the poor, the young, the elderly, women, persons with disabilities, Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities, internally displaced, refugees, and other socially excluded individuals or groups. The document issues a warning about the situation of these particular groups who are often found at the edge of the Kosovan society. It presents the concept of the social inclusion agenda, and underlines the commitments of AoK towards reaching the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) and aligning them with the European Inclusion agenda.

Individual Members of Parliament (MP), women and men, from different backgrounds, political spectra and expertise, have showed clear dedication, personal and political will during the process of drafting the White Paper. In dealing with issues related to the most vulnerable, the MPs reached out to their electorate and created partnerships with civil society in tackling such issues. Their work and enthusiasm is commendable.

This initiative is an important step taken by the AoK. It signifies a milestone for Kosovo's vision for enhanced human development. The issuance of KSIC is just the beginning of a process that will continue to expand. It will have far reaching policy and strategic implications, and will lead to positive

outcomes for the most vulnerable.

United Nations Kosovo Team supported the AoK to develop the KSIC and is committed to continue its partnership with the institutions addressing issues identified by the White Paper, and to support the achievement of the MDGs and wider social inclusion at the local, regional and global levels.. In sharing the same global commitments, the vision for eradication of poverty, wider inclusion and strengthening of the position of vulnerable groups, such as women, youth, elders, persons with disabilities and non-majority communities, can be improved.

Another step in this partnership process has been marked by undertaking a Survey on Social Inclusion with 6,000 respondents, to be finalized by the end of this year. The survey will help emphasize quantitatively the issues identified in KSIC, and support further research on the preparation of policy and strategy implications for social inclusion issues. These will further discussions and policies in favor of the most vulnerable in the Kosovo society.

## **Chapter I**

### **SOCIAL INCLUSION CHALLENGES**

#### **Introduction**

The White Paper<sup>1</sup> of the Assembly of Kosovo aims to present the concept of social inclusion and to highlight areas of exclusion of vulnerable groups and individuals within Kosovo society. Another aim of this document is to intensify the engagement of the Assembly of Kosovo in a broader discussion on issues contributing to the development of a more inclusive, cohesive society, and a higher wellbeing for all.

The White Paper is the first document of its kind, and is a result of the engagement of the Assembly of Kosovo in advancing social inclusion and human development. This engagement strengthens the commitment of the AoK expressed through the approval of the Resolution of Millennium Declaration. The White Paper aims to identify issues affecting vulnerable groups and individuals in the Kosovo society. The White Paper does not propose policies, strategies or recommendations to be undertaken by the Government of Kosovo. It rather focuses on warning about the situation of excluded groups and individuals, and demonstrates the necessity for addressing justly their issues.

Remarks drawn from the White Paper aim to stimulate a greater public and institutional discussion based on European agenda for social inclusion, and to contribute toward an informed policy-making on social inclusion issues. The document aims to bring to specific institutional processes through discussion which will advance this agenda in Kosovo.

Finally, the White Paper aims to contribute to the aspirations of Kosovo for an inclusive society with more opportunities for all. Optimistic that social inclusion as a process will enhance the Kosovo European integration capacities, the Assembly of Kosovo is specifically interested in adoption of best practices on social inclusion from the region and European Union members states.

#### **Assembly Reflection**

For the Assembly of Kosovo, addressing immediately the needs of excluded groups and citizens is of critical importance for strengthening social inclusion in Kosovo.

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<sup>1</sup> White Paper is a document or report, usually issued by state institution, which presents or addresses concepts, policies, challenges or problems, which help in better and higher information and education in decision-making. The White Paper does not have any obligatory character, and as such is consultative. Issuance of white papers has become a tradition in many parliaments and governments of EU member states.



Greater social inclusion is closely connected to acquisition of objectives that stem from EU's Lisbon Strategy<sup>2</sup>. This Strategy aims to create a positive interaction between increased competitiveness in the economic and employment field, with the need for social inclusion, and to improve the welfare of all vulnerable people throughout European societies. In this context, the Assembly of Kosovo through the Resolution on Millennium Declaration, endorsed on 17th of October 2008, and the Resolution on the Priorities and Strategies of Kosovo for Integration into European Union, endorsed on 26 February 2009 - is committed to address different challenges of integration processes. Greater engagement in increasing social inclusion and human development strengthens Kosovo's efforts in its path towards integration into European Union.

*We, the people of Kosovo,  
Determined to build a future of  
Kosovo as a free, democratic, and  
peace-loving country that will be a  
homeland to all of its citizens;  
Committed to the creation of a state  
of free citizens that will guarantee  
the rights of every citizen, civil  
freedoms and equality of all citizens  
before the law;  
Committed to the state of Kosovo as  
a state of economic wellbeing and  
social prosperity;*

...

***The Preamble of the Constitution of  
the Republic of Kosovo grants***

Addressing these challenges is also important to set Kosovo on the way toward the achievement of the Laeken Criteria<sup>3</sup> and Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)<sup>4</sup>. However, the Assembly recognizes the fact that the process of social inclusion requires long term efforts, efforts that imply better policy planning, implementation, monitoring mechanisms, and new financial commitments.

Social inclusion is particularly important for Kosovo because its population has experienced difficulties throughout past decades characterized by

<sup>2</sup> List – Laeken/Lisabon Criteria

<sup>3</sup> What are the Criteria

<sup>4</sup> \* Millennium Development Goals; attached as an Annex to this document

conflict and injustices. These difficulties have resulted in psychological, mental problems, even physical deprivations. As a result, most of the population of Kosovo is deeply touched by exclusion from many basic rights related to one or more dimensions of social exclusion. Therefore, before seeking policy solutions, our institutional efforts should concentrate on two core aspects: first, recognizing who are the excluded people or groups in Kosovo, and second, what are the causes fuelling this exclusion?

### **Concept**

Social inclusion is a concept that aims to create, maintain, and strengthen processes where groups and individuals, notwithstanding their differences can lead a better life. It is acknowledged that this can be achieved only when people can fully realize their potential and benefit from social opportunities available to them. Therefore, social inclusion means that all groups and individuals are given the opportunity to play a role in all social life aspects. To be included, they have to be offered opportunities to:

- Education based on their needs and interest;
- Employment followed by social security;
- Easier access to public and community services;
- Connecting with family, friends, personal interests and local community; and
- Have their voice heard.

In this regard, the Assembly of Kosovo borrows the EU definition of social inclusion, as a “process which ensures that those at risk of poverty and social exclusion gain the opportunities and resources necessary to participate fully in economic, social and cultural life and enjoy a standard of living and wellbeing that is considered normal in the society in which they live. It ensures that they have a greater participation in decision making which affects their lives and access to their fundamental rights.” Many challenges arise from this aspiration, which require to be dealt at the central, local or lower level.

The social inclusion agenda aims to counter social exclusion and addresses social diffraction that excludes groups and individuals from social relationship and institutions, and prevents their full participation in activities in the society they live.

Both social exclusion and diffraction comes as a result of:

- Interrupted access to formal and informal networks, by the fact that barriers for a more meaningful participation in social and institutional life exist.

- Lack of integration between groups and individuals as a result of language differences, lesser opportunities for education, geographic barriers or prejudices against these groups.

- Material deprivation, which is mainly a result of poverty and economic vulnerability of groups and individuals who cannot cope with access to information, social networks, and decision-making processes or because they lack sufficient financial incomes.

These factors collectively, or individually, generate an inadequate access in social and institutional processes, and impede greater realisation of human rights and opportunities. Furthermore, this transforms into creation of obstacles related to provision of adequate healthcare, qualitative education, employment, social services, and social security, shelter, legal aid, but also commercial services such as banks or insurance.

### **Excluded groups**

**Social exclusion** is a process whereby members of the groups and individuals, suffering from poverty, inappropriate educational capacities, lack of professional, intellectual and other skills, are placed to live in the margins of the society.

This excludes them from employment opportunities, from income and education, it likewise excludes them from the benefits of communication and social networking. More negatively, unfavorable social circumstances these people live in; limits them to exert their influence or to have a greater voice in regard to the development of policies and decision-making

processes which affect them, and thus have reduced chances to impact the improvement of their lives.

In this context, a great number of people in Kosovo belong to a category of excluded. Individuals or excluded groups such as poor people, children, youth, older people, persons with disabilities, Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian (RAE) communities, Internally displaced People (IDPs), refugees and returnees, Diaspora, families with lost or missing members, veterans and war invalids, political prisoners, persons with post-traumatic stress disorder, women victims of domestic violence, abused women during the war, homeless people, Gays and Lesbians, people dependent on narcotics and the ones infected with HIV/AIDS. In this sense, the future initiatives on social inclusion shall aim inclusion of individuals falling into one of these categories of excluded.

### **Exclusion Causes**

It is hard to make a difference between reasons and consequences deriving from social exclusion. But, poverty has to do with both – deprivation from material opportunities to exist, can be a reason for people's marginalization; and also, the exclusion from a meaningful education and participation opportunities in a society, can all lead to **poverty**. Discussion with relevant experts in Kosovo has resulted in identification of causes of social inclusion as described below.

Poverty is one of the most dominant causes affecting social exclusion. Poverty in Kosovo has remained unchanged, with 44% of people being poor and 14% being extremely poor<sup>5</sup>. Under these circumstances, children and youth, women and elders face additional difficulties and are at greater risk from poverty than other groups. Citizens belonging to one of these categories are either at higher risk from unemployment or have low financial incomes and do not have any other economic means to generate financial incomes.

Single mothers and single older women are significantly more likely to have persistently low incomes and be more vulnerable to poverty. The poverty risk of children is also related to this. In addition, social exclusion in most countries has a close correlation to **age**.

<sup>5</sup> Statistical Office of Kosovo, Labour Market Statistics.

[http://www.ks-gov.net/ESK/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=104&Itemid=92](http://www.ks-gov.net/ESK/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=104&Itemid=92)

Households with more than three children are found to be more likely to be poor than households with less children. Therefore, children living in these households are more likely to be poorer than the general population.

**Unemployment** is a major cause for social exclusion, especially the long-term unemployment. The poverty risk increases with higher rate trends of unemployment. This often occurs in combination with other factors, such as low educational qualifications, age and cultural background. It is acknowledged that, **women and youth unemployment** (15–24 years) is higher than average population and considering the recent global crisis, this group is increasingly getting vulnerable to poverty<sup>6</sup>.

**Ethnic and cultural factors** also play an important role in relation to poverty and social exclusion. Some non-majority groups such as the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian (RAE) communities, members of the Serb community, as well as IDPs, have a higher poverty vulnerability. Facing high unemployment rates, low level of education, or lack of formal preconditions for full realization of their rights, members of these communities represent groups or vulnerable individuals. In this context, language differences appear as

## Reasons for social exclusion

Poverty

Long-term unemployment

Lack of access to public services

Ethnic and cultural factors

Low level of education

Lack of civil registration

Lack of infrastructure

Internal displacement

Regional dimension

Gender

Age

inter-communication barriers among citizens, preventing higher social inclusion. Also, inadequate use of justice system and limited access to information has negative impact in inclusion.

Another characteristic of social exclusion is the geographical barriers. In some cases the poverty vulnerability is higher in specific regions or municipalities; which are not well connected to road infrastructure, while in other cases, it is mainly concentrated in specific urban areas representing

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<sup>6</sup> Statistical Office of Kosovo, Labour Market Statistics. [http://www.ks.gov.net/ESK/index.php?option=com\\_docman&task=doc\\_view&gid=531&tmpl=component&format=raw&Itemid](http://www.ks.gov.net/ESK/index.php?option=com_docman&task=doc_view&gid=531&tmpl=component&format=raw&Itemid)

poorest parts of in larger cities, which have no infrastructure and access to public services.

Another particular and specific aspect for the reality of Kosovo which affects exclusion is the fact that since 1981 there was no registration of population or census. As a result of lacking exact data, this document uses only approximate estimations showing that Kosovo has 2.1 million habitants. These estimations come from various sources of information such as Statistical Office of Kosovo, World Bank and other United Nations agencies.

## **Chapter II**

### **Access to Public Goods and Community Life**

Social inclusion represents a broad concept, therefore different countries embrace various approaches related to practical achievements, with regard to this concept. The EU member states have collectively adopted strategies that aim to realize objectives of greater social inclusion. Similarly, this concept has become as important and necessary for countries aspiring integration into EU.

Kosovo has limited capacities to implement goals for a greater social inclusion at a level of EU member states, nevertheless it will still make its efforts to meet this end.

#### **Political life**

There are various obstacles which affect groups and individuals within the Kosovo society, limiting them in enjoying opportunities for greater access to political life. Among them are women, youth and the elderly.

A quota system for female representation in the Assembly is just one of the mechanisms to help greater access of women and other groups to political life. Women and young people have difficulties in accessing and having greater impact in political and institutional<sup>7</sup> decision-making. In a similar position, are also the other groups, especially individuals affected by poverty, without access or possibility to participate in the political life, or lacking access to information. Based on this situation, and the fact that there is no systematic approach in empowering these social groups, there is real risk of exclusion and non-representation for them.

#### **Information**

Access to information is granted by Law on Access to Public Documents. There is solid evidence that the implementation of this Law is on the right track. However, a specific challenge arises when institutions fall short of realizing the objective for wider public outreach and information on institutional development.

Apart from this, there is a serious lack of public awareness for enjoying the

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<sup>7</sup>Women and young people are not properly represented in the decision-making positions in the Kosovo's institutions. This conclusion is a result of meetings with municipal officials and civil society in the municipalities – Gjilan/Gnjilane and Mitrovicw/Mitrovica, November 2008

right provided by this Law. This comes from the fact that there are very few requests for access to official documents<sup>8</sup>. Nevertheless, access to public information for basic rights, social and health services and education opportunities is still questionable due to the following reasons:

- Limited access to information as a result of limited access to internet;
- Non-availability of information in all three official languages;
- Lack of institutional proactive outreach methods for target groups;
- Illiteracy of some groups, especially among RAE communities and women;
- The lack of accessible environment for persons with disabilities.

Access to information is a prerequisite for inclusion into the mainstream life of the society.

## Media

Kosovo's legislation guarantees the right for all citizens, without any discrimination, to receive and provide information in their language through media. In addition, the legislation guarantees the minorities to create media in their own languages, and the right to special representation in public media. Legislation meets high standards in protection of freedom of expression and freedom of the media.

Currently, eight daily newspapers are published in Kosovo, all in the Albanian language. Kosovo has one of the lowest newspaper circulation rates in Europe<sup>9</sup>.

Eight daily newspapers have an estimated daily edition not more than 25,000-30,000 copies.

Helsinki Monitor, 2007

Out of 114 licensed broadcasters in Kosovo, 44 broadcast in non-majority languages (34 in Serbian, four in Bosnian, three in Turkish, two in Gorani, and one station in Roma language). Two stations broadcast equally in Albanian and Serbian. Three television platforms are functioning in Kosovo – land, satellite, and cable television.

However, members of social groups and individuals face lack of appropriate

<sup>8</sup> Report on Implementation of the Law on Access to Official Documents at the Municipal Level, OSCE, November 2007. [http://www.osce.org/documents/mik/2007/11/27791\\_sq.pdf](http://www.osce.org/documents/mik/2007/11/27791_sq.pdf)

<sup>9</sup> Helsinki monitor: Security and Human Rights, 2007, no. 2;

<http://www.uio.no/studier/emner/hf/imk/JOUR4330/h07/Zweeden%20The%20state%20of%20media%20in%20Kosovo.pdf>



access and representation in public media, and to more qualitative programs for all without any discrimination<sup>10</sup>. Programs that aim non-majority audience within the Radio Television of Kosovo (RTK) still amount to less than the 15% of broadcasting, which is required by the law. On the other hand, the broadcasting of RTK still does not cover 11% of the Kosovo territory, namely the area of Dragash/Dragaš and Han i Elezit/Đeneral Jankovic. In order to improve the overall situation, a fund established within the Office of the Prime Minister aims to distribute grants to non-majority community media<sup>11</sup>. So far, the relevant financial resources have not been disbursed for this purpose.

There are other obstacles that prevent realization of better access for all. Groups and individuals residing in remote areas have difficulties in accessing broadcast electronic media, due to the lack of financial sustainability. Also, there is lack of access to information due to material deprivation and limited opportunities to access technology for the citizens. Local communities and vulnerable groups do not have appropriate access to media to voice their opinions and problems, people living with power cuts, those who lack information and technology devices, including a great number of households which due to financial, educational and infrastructural difficulties cannot benefit from access to media and internet information.

## **Civil registration**

Creation of a comprehensive and efficient civil registration throughout Kosovo is one of the challenges toward greater social inclusion in Kosovo. Civil registration, as a basic right, provides them with citizenship status and deriving rights from being a citizen. Otherwise, the lack of civil registration prevents them from enjoyment of their basic rights, including the right to vote.

However, all across Kosovo there are people who still lack registration at birth. Individuals from vulnerable groups, among others are; Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), those living in Diaspora, children, people from non-majority communities such as RAE, as well as persons with disabilities<sup>12</sup>.

Under such circumstances, all citizens without any differentiation, who find

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<sup>10</sup> From a meeting with municipal officials and civil society in Mitrovicë/Mitrovica municipality, November 2008.

<sup>11</sup> The state of freedom of media, observations and recommendations, OSCE, 2006.

[http://www.osce.org/documents/rfm/2006/07/19767\\_en.pdf](http://www.osce.org/documents/rfm/2006/07/19767_en.pdf)

<sup>12</sup> Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR), OSCE [http://www.osce.org/odihr/item\\_2\\_19838.html](http://www.osce.org/odihr/item_2_19838.html)

difficulties to gain access to civil registration face automatic exclusion from the social life and institutional development. The fact that they are 'non-existent' for the legal system makes their inclusion even more complicated.

### **Public Administration**

Higher representation of vulnerable and non-majority groups has not yet been fully achieved. At both central and local level of public administration, women, persons with disabilities, and members of non-majority communities, remain under represented. At decision-making positions these groups are in an even less favorable situation.

Public administration service efficiency is increased and strengthened with the increase of social inclusion. A Government Strategy and Action Plan on Public Administration Reform 2006 – 2011, address the need for creation of institutional infrastructure necessary to bring greater public administration service efficiency.

- 19,89% of leading posts in central level are held by women
  - At the municipal level there are 7.83% women in total
  - In all leading posts within public administration, 14.36% are held by women
  - Minorities are represented at public administration with 12%.
- Report on Public Administration situation in Kosovo, MPS 2007

The government has committed Euro 6 million for the implementation of this Action Plan for 2007-2009. The inclusion of non majority communities' representatives into the Government is an ongoing process. Currently, these citizens constitute around 11.5% of civil servants at central level and 12% at local level.

In this context, the main focus is on the inclusion of vulnerable social groups and members of

non-majority communities. This goal has been achieved only to a certain extent. More attention needs to be paid on inclusion of groups such as; women, youth and persons with disabilities. A fast stream career development of young people in public administration would motivate

especially those well educated or graduated abroad to return, stay and work for the country.

## Justice

Kosovo's legal framework on anti-discrimination incorporates important parts of the EU Community directives. However, the implementation of anti-discrimination measures remains weak and insufficient.

Domestic war crime trials were handled exclusively by international judges and prosecutors. Some trials are ongoing and many cases are under investigation. There is a backlog of several hundred cases. Approximately, 240 additional cases of missing persons were resolved, while 1,940 persons remain missing<sup>13</sup>. This constitutes a situation of exclusion. In a post conflict society, seeking justice as an outcome of domestic war crime trials can be a powerful motivation to live, to become active again in social life and to rebuild the country, for all the citizens who were affected by these crimes.

Disillusion and disappointment from the lack of justice from those trials and the impact of not finding missing persons, may lead to marginalization and self exclusion from social life and the society. Furthermore, this may lead to the establishment of a new vulnerable group that may need specific approaches for inclusion.

There is a backlog of thousands unresolved and pending cases in the courts, which makes Kosovo judiciary inefficient, and prevents greater social inclusion.

On the other hand, the Kosovo legal system needs to establish special procedures for juveniles in conflict with the law and introduce new

“At the beginning of October [2008], total backlog of civil disputes in municipal courts in Kosovo was 160,477. There is no action plan for the execution of all these cases by the courts. Further, more than 36,000 criminal cases are still unresolved in courts.”

European Commission Progress

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<sup>13</sup> European Commission Progress Report, November 2008.  
[http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/press\\_corner/key-documents/reports\\_nov\\_2008/kosovo\\_progress\\_report\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/press_corner/key-documents/reports_nov_2008/kosovo_progress_report_en.pdf)

concepts and institutions aimed at reforming the criminal justice system to ensure its compliance with international and European human rights standards. Children need to be treated with humanity, and justice system must have child-centred, specialized and multidisciplinary approach.

Inefficient functioning of justice system in Kosovo generates social dissatisfaction and sometimes it creates an environment for violation of law.

## **Cultural Life and Civil Society**

There is weak inter-cultural (music, theatre, arts, religion, public debates) dialogue. Inter-cultural activities among communities have taken place primarily at NGOs level, which aim to bridge the gap between communities, but this has taken place only to a limited extent. However, there is almost a complete lack of inter-cultural dialogue and almost everyone is affected by this development.

It is estimated there are around 500 active NGOs operating in different social, economic and political areas. The civil society organizations are mainly made of small organizations which are very often dependent from short-term funding by a single donor, especially those at the municipal level. Civil society organizations are primarily mono-ethnic. The level of cooperation among these civil society organizations is insufficient. There is a need to enhance the networking of NGOs.

The co-operation between civil society with business and public sector is not satisfactory. Moreover, there is no government strategy to develop civil society sector, especially in the area of public funding of NGOs, or creating tax incentives for businesses' funding activities and projects implemented by NGOs.

Every sixth Kosovar is engaged in one or another level of civil society organization – 10% as members, 5% as volunteers, and around 2% are employed.

Report on Human Development for  
Civil Society, 2009

The co-operation between institutions and civil society is essential in advancing the social inclusion agenda.

The administrative, financial, and managerial capacities of civil society organizations are very uneven, and are particularly poor at municipal level. It is important to build and strengthen the capacity of local level NGOs, namely their advocacy, networking and lobbying skills to support the regional economic development of Kosovo.

A low number of NGOs, which differ in their capacities, needs to be increased to rank this part of the society as an agent of making difference and developing the Kosovo society.

## **Health**

The state of healthcare in Kosovo was negatively affected by many factors: Historical factors which are characterized with failures of the socialist type of system and which underwent other failures and political dictates resulting with obstacles and with inadequate inclusion of majority population; destructions and damages during 1997-1999.

Post 1999 onward, a period of time characterized with an extensive rehabilitation and deep reforms in health system followed with the lack of regeneration and necessary reform to build efficient capacities.

Access to healthcare remains difficult and this sector deserves higher attention. Healthcare is under-developed and lacks funding throughout Kosovo.

Expenditure on health presents only 3% of GDP, which is far below the regional average.

Health and nutrition indicators are far from neighbouring countries and the EU. Life expectancy at birth, which is 69 years, is below the average for the region. Twenty out of 1,000 newborns are at risk of not surviving birth and in the first week of life, while 35 out of 1,000 infants do not reach their first birthday.

One third of children under the age of five suffer from vitamin A deficiency,

and one in every ten from chronic malnutrition. The maternal mortality rate is above the corresponding indicators across the Western Balkans<sup>14</sup>.

The situation of mental health of children, women/mothers and people suffering from post-traumatic stress is not addressed adequately.

There is no healthcare insurance fund in Kosovo

In principle, all Kosovo citizens have access to healthcare, although in practice this is not the case. However, cost of service and drugs present increasing barriers to access to health care. There are still vulnerable groups not having access to essential health services

such as immunization. Poor public funding for health shifts expenditure to patients and users and directly affects poverty. The most expensive items of expenditure for patients are drugs, including essential drugs and those required during hospital treatment, expenditures for diagnosis, as well as more general expenses and informal payments made to staff in order to ensure access to healthcare.

The high incidence of informal payments is often attributed, at least in part, to the low salaries received by healthcare staff. Non-majority communities often have particular difficulty in accessing health services, as well as those people living in poverty, women, children, the elderly, and persons with disabilities, veterans and IDPs. Further focus is needed to ensure further integration in the public health sector and to discourage parallel health systems in order of increasing access and inclusion for all Kosovo citizens. The health status of children, women/mothers and people suffering post-traumatic stress disorders is not adequately addressed.

## **Social Assistance**

People are often not adequately informed of their rights and of the possibilities on how to access social assistance and social services. This is largely due to the institutional set-up, which is viewed as complex and not user-friendly for its users. More efforts need to be undertaken to finalize the introduction of a functional integrated information network to cover all

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<sup>14</sup> Report Prenatal situation in Kosovo for 2000-2008, the Ministry of Health, May 2009.

interlinked institutions. There are major challenges in the development of social services provision linked to the gradual decentralization of competencies to municipalities. The municipalities lack capacity and funds to deliver the necessary quality services<sup>15</sup>. In addition, there is a shortage of qualified staff at both central and local level<sup>16</sup>.

There are several financial assistance schemes in Kosovo: Social Assistance Scheme (2000), Special Needs Scheme (2003), War Disabled and their Relatives (2001/2008), Basic Pensions and Contributions (2002/2008), Pensions for the Disabled (2004), Trepca Pension Scheme (2003). With this social assistance scheme there are more than 300,000 people covered, or 15% of the Kosovo population<sup>17</sup>.

There are solid social security criteria based on the law, but they are not applied equally and are not based on indicators deriving from the real life<sup>18</sup>. For social assistance program remains a challenge of improving the targeting of individuals and groups in need.

Social assistance programs are modest in size, which is understandable given the fiscal capacities of the country. There are three weaknesses linked to social assistance. First, the programs have low coverage, in part because of the tight fiscal environment. Second, the value of benefits per recipient household was not indexed and has remained low and almost flat regardless of the inflation. Third, we have to deal with low coverage, poor targeting and low benefits level, which altogether have meant that the programs have had little impact on improving the welfare of the population.

The pension system is financially unsustainable, as the unemployment rate is high, the informal employment is very common and there is no legal framework linking with the previous Yugoslav pension system to which the Kosovo population contributed for decades.

## Employment

The unemployment rate in Kosovo, considered to be around 43.6%, is the highest in the Western Balkans. According to the Labour Force Survey, almost half of the active labour force is unemployed. The rates for

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<sup>15</sup> Guideline on Sustainable Governance.

<sup>16</sup> European Commission Progress Report, November 2008.

<sup>17</sup> The Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare, "Strategic Document on Drafting of Social Policies 2009-2015"

<sup>18</sup> From a meeting with municipal officials and civil society in the municipalities of Mitrovicë/Mitrovica and Gjiilan/Gnjilane, November 2008.

vulnerable groups are significantly higher than the average. The unemployment rates for women and young people are rising as a trend. Only 33% of women are economically active. The youth unemployment (15–24 years) is particularly high<sup>19</sup>, 64% of the unemployed belong to the age-group 20-24 years. Each year, 30,000 young people are swelling ranks of job seekers while a maximum of 15,000 of new jobs are expected to be available. In relation to the worsening economic circumstances, this entire group is increasingly at risk of poverty. However, a large number of registered unemployed may be active in the informal economy.

## Level of unemployment

	<b>Total</b>	<b>Men</b>	<b>Women</b>	<b>Under 25 years</b>	<b>Long-term</b>
<b>Unemployment</b>	43.6 %	38.5%	55.2%	70%	37.1%

European Commission Progress Report, 2008

Kosovo has no comprehensive employment strategy where the specific plans and strategies for achievement of goals aiming higher employment would be based. Labour demand remains low and labour supply does not correspond to the characteristics and needs of the market. The current status of Kosovo complicates legal provisions to finalize trans-national agreements on seasonal work.

The poverty risk is also higher for the unemployed. However, not all the unemployed live in poor households, and not all the employed are free from poverty.

The evidence from surveys suggests that about 70 percent of all the poor are either employed or inactive. In other words, while the working poor constitute the largest group among all poor, the likelihood of being poor is higher for those unemployed.

The prevailing poor labour market conditions, no doubt, also partially explain what is suspected to be an increase in the trends of informal employment. On the other hand, periods of unemployment for those who are unemployed are of long duration. At the same time, employees' real wages remained almost unchanged in the last years.

<sup>19</sup>Human Development Report, UNDP 2006.



In the case of Kosovo, crucial sectors where employment generation would be expected to be high include transport and communications infrastructure, construction, services and agriculture. Special focus needs to be put on improving the investment climate for small and medium enterprises especially by making available affordable and reliable electricity.

The public administration cannot always ensure the adequate enforcement of existing labour legislation.

Given the relatively large size of the informal economy, many workers are often neither aware of, nor in a position to enforce their rights at work. Trade Unions remain weak and labour rights are not generally respected<sup>20</sup>. The private sector, which is at the heart of any long-term sustainable strategy to reduce unemployment, is steadily growing. A better environment for its further development is required.

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<sup>20</sup> European Commission Progress Report, 2008



## Education

Around one fifth of the population was enrolled in education (insert picture).

The 2006 Millennium Development Report for Kosovo calls attention to an alarmingly low rate of pre-school enrolment. Only one in ten young children attend preschool activities, which can have serious impact on children development and later achievements in education. The situation of pre-school education is particularly poor for children in rural areas, leaving them behind from the beginning of their overall formation. There is a widespread belief that the quality of education is generally poor. As a consequence, learning outcomes for many children are often so low that they drop out. Schools, particularly those in urban areas, continue to operate on four shifts due to lack of adequate space. The physical condition of school infrastructure remains poor, as schools lack adequate buildings, appropriate space for learning and recreation, didactic material and equipments.

The access of children with disabilities and special needs is further complicated due to lack of accessible infrastructure, the existence of attached classes for children with special needs, the lack of specialized teachers and teaching materials<sup>21</sup>. Nine out of ten children with special needs do not attend school. The non-majority community members also lack teachers, books and teaching materials necessary for them to study in their mother tongue<sup>22</sup>. Often they also face problems with access to higher education.

With the assistance from the donors, the government has continued to invest in training and re-qualification with a focus on youth, minorities, women and persons with disabilities.

The correlation between education and poverty is high. Poverty incidence is higher for families with head of household less or not educated than those with more education. This happens because the more educated have better employment prospects and better pay. In contrast to the EU's life long-learning objectives, the situation in the Kosovo education sector remains with many problems and with insufficient results. The budget for education is not enough to cope with the large numbers of young people, the parallel education systems, and the poor quality of teaching across Kosovo.

**Education** also plays an important role in finding employment. Around 66.50% of those with university education are employed, while from those with secondary education, only 50% are employed. The number of those employed who do not have any formal education is only 14%.

Social Inclusion Survey, 2009

In comparison with other countries from the region, Kosovo falls behind in regards to those who successfully complete university studies. However, the enrolment of students in universities has increased in the last years due to the establishment of a number of private universities<sup>23</sup>.

The evidence also confirms that the performance of Kosovo related to attendance in primary and secondary education is high. Enrolment rate in

<sup>21</sup> From a meeting with municipal officials and civil society in the municipalities of Mitrovicw/Mitrovica and Gjilan/Gnjilane, November 2008.

<sup>22</sup> MDG Report for Kosovo, UNDP 2006.

<sup>23</sup> Survey on Social Inclusion, UNDP 2009

primary education is 95%, and around three to four children enrol in secondary education. However, these results mask potential obstacles to establishing a well-educated population. The number of students that drop out of school continues to be high. There are different reasons for that, but they mainly relate to the financial situation of the students. Estimates suggest that 33% of students drop out of school for economic reasons, which directly link to poverty. Whereas 15% of them drop out of school because they join the workforce in order to generate income for a living. This is more emphasized in rural areas.



## Finances

**Banking exclusion – transactions** – access to banking (transaction banking services in particular) is seen as a universal need. The lack of access or use of this financial provision has negative effects in which social inclusion can continuously be damaged. This is so because it is a key to access other financial services (credit/savings). Lack of access to these disturbs market access and gives an opportunity for unfair practices to grow and so may

consequently increase the risk of poverty. Since it is not enough to have access to a banking account to be qualified as “financially included”, the following degrees of inclusion can be considered: 1) 'unbanked' who are generally people with no bank at all, 2) 'marginally' banked who are people with a deposit account that has no electronic payment facilities and no payment card or cheque book. It can also be people who do have these facilities but make little or no use of them, and 3) 'fully banked' are people that have access to a wide range of transaction banking services that are appropriate to their needs and socio-economic status.

**Loan exclusion** – A loan is a main financial tool to enable access to goods or expenditures that exceeds the monthly budget, such as equipment goods (e.g. vehicles, housing, furniture, renting guarantee) as well as generating self-employment through creation of own business. Micro loan schemes experiences proposed by not-for profit providers underline the positive social impact an appropriate small loan can bring for usually loan excluded household. By offering this opportunity in a more favourable manner, inclusion in micro-loan would create preconditions for: improvement of mobility and communication, improving the quality of housing, improvement of household employment situation, and increase of education opportunities.

The lack of access or use of this financial provision may impact social inclusion in various ways: 1) lack of access to some goods impact access to the minimum living standard, and lack of appropriate loan may stigmatize and reduce welfare level and self-esteem; 2) lack of access to appropriate loan may lead to lack of self-employment and business opportunities, it may increase household budget disequilibrium for a long period of time, and 3) it may lead to over-indebtedness, while the over-indebtedness may lead to financial and social exclusion.

Bank loans to the private sector in Kosovo have increased, but the interest rate spread remained very high at 10.4% that was perceived as an obstacle for access to loans<sup>24</sup>.

**Insurance exclusion** - Nowadays some kinds of insurance are essential in the organization of modern societies and, some of them, are therefore

<sup>24</sup> European Commission Progress Report, 2008

mandatory (for example those for the use of motor vehicles, or to carry on some kind of jobs). However, there is no clear definition of which types of insurance are considered essential so that anyone who lacks them might be considered financially excluded. In cases where insurance is compulsory for access to certain services, easy access and usage should be considered part of a financial inclusion goal. Furthermore, the insurance tool for retirement purpose is of growing importance, due to the well-known difficulties of the state welfare systems.



## **Economic Environment**

The number of registered businesses in Kosovo is rising. Uncertainty about regulatory policies and the cost of and access to financing also create problems. More than 80% of new investments were financed from own resources. The main reported reason for not having recourse to formal borrowing was that interest rates were too high. Although a new tax rates has been put into effect as of 1 January 2009, 70% of businesses perceived tax rates as too high and every second business perceived labour regulations

as too restrictive. Use of the courts to resolve property disputes remains insufficient. Corruption and uncertainty over property rights remain major impediments to economic activity, partly due legal disputes and partly due to uncertainty of land registries or missing of business cadastral registries. In general, the lack of rule of law is hampering business development.

### Interest rates for businesses

Interest rates per amount per bank	PCB	RBKO	BKT	BPB	NLB	BEK	TEB
€ 10,000	15.6%	14%	14%		14%	14%	-
€ 25,000	13.8%	14%	13.5%		14%	14%	-
€ 50,000	13.2%	13.5%	13%		14%	14%	-
€ 100,000	NEG	13.5%	12.5%		14%	14%	-

Gap Institute, 2009

Poor transport and telecommunication infrastructure hinders the expansion of private sector activities. Many small and medium enterprises (SME-s) suffer from limited access to online (internet) services. Lack of transportation, and services that are related to IT technology, hamper the access of Kosovo businesses in the EU market, it limits the benefits from the integration of regional trade. The technological basis of the economy remains very poor. The structure of enterprises is dominated by micro enterprises. Almost half of all businesses deal with wholesale and retail transactions, followed by food processing, construction and other social and personal services.

The level of the informal economy remains high, and it has an impact on the competitive ability of the economy. The agricultural sector continues to suffer from unresolved property issues and low level of capital investments. As a result, Kosovo has not been capable of using its potential to substitute imports with homemade products. Thus, the country has lagged behind in the production of unprocessed and processed food products. This could prove to be a powerful mechanism for trade and employment, which would have an impact in reduction of the deficit of external trade but also in generating employment.



The agriculture sector in Kosovo has a particular potential for development, especially in rural zones, where the majority of the population lives (around 60 %). Currently this sector contributes with only around 30% of Gross Domestic Product (GDP)<sup>25</sup> per year. The relationship between the agricultural sector, the population living in rural areas and development of economy is important. This importance needs to be emphasized more in government spending or in the reform efforts of this sector. Lack of political ownership, combined with serious budgetary constraints, and lack of sufficient financial resources, has hampered the implementation of Government's Rural and Agricultural Development Plan 2007 – 2013<sup>26</sup>.



## Public Services

**Housing and property (including agricultural land)** lag behind in the aspect of social inclusion. There are accumulated problems in relation to property: widespread ignorance of building permits and urban planning, not finalized process of property claims, expropriation procedures undertaken by municipalities in order to construct public infrastructure often fail to inform and to compensate the property owner. As a result access to quality housing remains a challenge.

<sup>25</sup> Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita in Kosovo, according to the Statistical Office of Kosovo is around € 1612. When compared to the region, Kosovo places very low with the level of GDP. GDP in Kosovo is almost four (4) times lower than that of Macedonia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Albania. Information on GDP can be accessed at [http://www.ks-gov.net/esk/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=73&Itemid=59](http://www.ks-gov.net/esk/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=73&Itemid=59).

<sup>26</sup> Rural and Agriculture Development Plan 2007-2013 for Kosovo, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Rural Development.



Social inclusion is closely related to ensuring of a just, complete and efficient enjoyment of the right to property. Currently there are a lot of challenges in Kosovo which without any distinction hinder the enjoyment of the property rights by all citizens of Kosovo. This situation calls for a need for improvement of legislation in this field as well as the infrastructure, which would enable efficient enforcement of the respective legislation. Not all citizens have the possibility to be safe from misappropriation of property documentation, or have the right to utilise the services of an advanced cadastral and property registration system.

Another aspect of the same importance is a legal system for expropriation because the incorrect and arbitrary expropriation by institutions risks the property right which is an unalienable right in a democratic society. On the other hand, the inclusion is also related to legal constructions by citizens because the illegal constructions simply harm the property rights of citizens at a high degree. The first step towards addressing these challenges would be to improve the legislation, infrastructure and increase the accountability of officials who are involved in this field in exercising their public functions<sup>27</sup>.

Roma, Ashkali, and Egyptian communities are still excluded at a large scale. Many informal settlements still exist, which makes for unhealthy living conditions.

The contradictions among the different pieces of legislation in this field, and the different actors in charge of decision making and actions, may lead to lack of access to housing and property in principal (including agricultural land) and respectively to the exclusion of some groups such as IDPs and Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities.

The first steps which will address these challenges are improvement of legislation, infrastructure and increase the accountability of officials who are involved in this field in exercising their public functions.

**Electricity supply** remains unreliable in Kosovo, especially in rural and remote areas. Power cuts are still frequent. The implementation of the necessary refurbishment of key mining equipment and the preparations for the timely opening of the Sibovc Southwest mine as well as the increasing

<sup>27</sup> Corruption in land administration / land management in Kosovo, Transparency International, 2008.  
<http://www.u4.no/helpdesk/helpdesk/query.cfm?id=175>

revenue collection and disconnection for illegal consumers, are essential for Kosovo.

The raising of funds to implement the Kosovo Energy Efficiency and Renewable Sources Programme remains a challenge. There is a lack of adequate infrastructure development and investment in the distribution network. This affects rural and remote areas in particular.

Sustainable and regular access in energy supply would offer solid grounds for progressive development in many fields of social life, particularly business environment.

A large proportion of the population reports of being deprived on multiple dimensions. For instance, some are materially poor and have no access to indoor tap water and proper sanitation. Only 79.1% of households in Kosovo have access to drinking water from the water supply companies<sup>28</sup>. Others have no access to telephone connection or bathroom in the dwelling<sup>29</sup>. Community services are central to economic growth.

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<sup>28</sup> Social Inclusion Survey, UNDP 2009

<sup>29</sup> According to the Social Inclusion Survey 2009, around 40% of households have access to landline telephones, while 82% possess mobile phones.

## **Chapter III**

### **The Excluded Groups**

#### **Groups Exposed at High Risk of Exclusion**

The excluded groups face different types of threats, including poverty and exclusion. There are many dimensions of vulnerability. They have varying, but generally insufficient, resources to cope with such threats. Vulnerability does not recognize the background, ethnicity or group affiliation; it is a matter of facing certain risks that could lead to further exclusion.

Apart from poverty, people can also find themselves in excluded positions due to lack of population census since 1981, lack of sufficient statistical data, civil registration, lack of educational opportunities, inadequate personal (physical) security, poor housing conditions, or poor access in healthcare, physical, mental, or emotional disabilities, age or family circumstances (e.g. single parents). Hence a list of vulnerability determinants could be assembled and applied to both individuals and groups.

Amongst groups who are especially at risk from poverty and exclusion are persons with disabilities, women, children, Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities, IDP-s, persons with post traumatic stress disorder, larger households, refugees and returnees, and Diaspora. Lack of education and unemployment are over-arching themes that affect all these groups.

#### **Persons with Disabilities**

Persons with disabilities suffer multiple deprivations: adequate access for children with special needs to quality education, lack of access to social assistance schemes due to inadequate eligibility criteria and less employment opportunities. Access to information and social rights is especially difficult for persons with disabilities, mainly due to lack of accessible public infrastructure and social services provided in a form which would allow them to understand<sup>30</sup>.

#### **Women**

Women suffer multiple deprivations that lead to exclusion. They may have a lower level of education, enjoy less employment opportunities, are faced with early marriages, and in some cases, with unfavourable values,

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<sup>30</sup> From the meeting between municipal officials and the civil society in municipalities of Mitrovicë/Mitrovica and Gjiilan/Gnjilane, November 2008.

traditions and stereotypes. Despite legislative quotas in some areas they are still subject to gender discrimination – especially in access to decision-making positions and economic life.

In some cases women are subject to domestic violence and trafficking. Women are often subject to economic discrimination and lack of access to income or capital. Only 2 % of the total number of credit loans is given to women. Awareness of women's rights in society is low.

## **Children**

The life of children in Kosovo is characterized by poor health treatment, lack of access to preschool education, poor quality of education, early school drop outs due to mainly the need to work to support their families and early marriages. Child labour remains one of the main problems, as poverty and exclusion is a general feature of households with many members and especially with many children and women heads of household. Poverty is higher among children than the larger population. Children comprise of one third of the population living in extreme poverty (16, 7%)<sup>31</sup>.

The budget allocated to protect children's rights is insufficient to achieve this purpose. The infant mortality rate in Kosovo remains high<sup>32</sup>. Protection mechanisms for children are inadequate to protect Kosovo children from violence, trafficking and child labour, to enhance the inclusion of children with special needs and children from minority groups, particularly in education. Preschool education is not compulsory, and is often of poor quality. Family and social services laws are not implemented and are in some cases contradictory, especially with regard to adoption and fostering.

## **Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian Communities**

Economically disadvantaged Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities are highly indebted; their average outstanding utility bills amount to more than 12 times their total monthly expenditures. Households accumulate unpaid bills for electricity, water supply and housing. School attendance by Roma, Ashkaeli and Egyptian children is poor at all levels of education. Better access to quality education is widely seen as a precondition for increasing employment and therefore income potential.

<sup>31</sup> Child Poverty in Kosovo, UNICEF, University of York and Social Policy Research Unit, 2008.

<sup>32</sup> The Report of Millennium Development Goals, UNDP 2006

Women from Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities, have fewer job opportunities and much more limited access to income and capital than men. Women also face more obstacles in escaping poverty, so they could influence their own lives. Unemployment rates are significantly higher for these communities than for majority communities in principle. Employment among Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities is concentrated in the trade, agriculture, construction and public utilities sectors. Low-skilled work predominates and is associated with low incomes, poor job quality, and weak social and employment protection. Self-employment is less common among them.

Limited access to bank finance is a serious constraint; prospective borrowers are often hampered by their lack of credit history and collateral (which are major problems for the poor in general, not just Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities). Age is less of a factor regarding unemployment for them. Location however is an important determinant of unemployment. Seasonality also matters, since Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities take agricultural jobs during the fall (harvest) and spring (planting) seasons.

Health and nutrition conditions, different threat perceptions and housing situation are important aspects of vulnerability. Roma, Ashkali, and Egyptian communities lack access to healthcare services including family doctor and often cannot afford to buy medicines that are prescribed. The lack of proper identity and health documents is a particularly pronounced barrier for them too.

### **Internally Displaces Persons**

Internally displaced persons are a vulnerable group which faces greater-than-average risks of poverty and social exclusion. Displaced households face limited opportunities for employment and access to basic services. In some cases, they lack their civil status as well (registration, IDs, etc.)<sup>33</sup>. Displaced households have a high tendency to fall into deeper poverty. Poverty rates among the displaced are almost double in urban areas, while in rural areas they benefit more from extended family networks and the needs for living are less.

Displaced workers are overrepresented in sectors dominated by manual,

<sup>33</sup> Displaced Roma Property Rights, Jose-Maria Arraiza and Linda Öhman. Forced Migration Review. <http://www.fmreview.org/FMRpdfs/FMR32/43-45.pdf>

low-skill labour, and are underrepresented in public sector employment. The displaced also face limited opportunities for self-employment and access to credit and they tend to rely on family and other informal credit sources. The displaced are also less likely to own land. A large share of displaced households borrow for home improvements and this may help explain the reluctance of banks to lend.

Youth unemployment is slightly higher among the displaced than majority households. Unemployment rates for women are higher than for men. The high unemployment rate of this group is irrespective of ethnic background.

Data shows that the displaced face a very insecure housing situation. Most live in accommodations for the displaced and refugees with an infrastructure for access to tap water and sanitation below the normal standards. These conditions, and the fact that they have left behind more than they have now, means that the displaced possess less basic materials for the household such as furniture and books.

Access to information and communication technologies is often limited and inadequate. The health situation among the displaced rates lower than the rest of the population. Some important gender differences exist in terms of incidence of chronic illnesses; more women are affected by chronic illnesses. The displaced are more likely to suffer from neurosis and disorders related to psychological traumas from displacement. Large physical distances to health facilities, low income, and lack of proper identity documents, are major barriers for access to health services for displaced households. Insufficient vaccination coverage (most often due to inadequate identity documents or cards for immunization) is a major determinant of vulnerability, particularly for displaced children.

The children of displaced families are particularly vulnerable to educational risks due to distance to school or language barriers. Chronic illnesses, lack of proper clothing, and intolerance from local children can add further difficulties. Even when children show an interest in school, cultural attitudes to education complicate the practical and psychological barriers for attendance to school. Some of the children are in orphanages, others are in foster care, and others live with close or distant relatives. Nutritional risks

are also present. To date, school meals have not been part of education programmes. While such risks are present for the entire population, they can be particularly difficult for displaced children.

### **Persons with Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder**

It is not clear to what extent the percentage of people suffering from post-traumatic stress has been mapped out. The conflict has affected people psychologically and mentally. The concerns of those in most need have been addressed in one way or another. But it is considered that there is a group of people suffering different levels of hidden post-traumatic stress reflected through many forms of depression. In many cases this is not even admitted or recognized.

### **Larger households**

The poverty incidence in households with more than 7 members is higher than in the households with 1 to 3 members. In addition to household size, the composition of the household introduces an additional burden for the improvement of welfare. Households with more dependants than working adults have higher incidence of poverty compared to households with more adults than dependants. Households with female heads, households with more children and elderly are at particular risk to falling into exclusion.

### **Refugees and Returnees**

The number of refugees who are expected to return in their homes in Kosovo remains high. Difficult social and economic conditions and low living standard, characterised with high unemployment rates and low social assistance schemes, hamper the provision of a smooth and sustainable reintegration of those who return to Kosovo. Lack of employment opportunities in Kosovo and long period of absence from the labour market could prove to be an additional burden in their living conditions.

### **Diaspora**

The number of Kosovo citizens who live abroad is estimated to be around half a million. Those who have not settled their housing status yet face difficulties in obtaining Kosovo documents. They face difficulties in enjoying their rights for obtaining personal documents due to inability to be physically present at the offices which issue such documents.

Lack of proactive methods for reaching the constituency outside of Kosovo as well as lack of information has prevented this part of population from participating in elections.

10 percent of population lives in multi member households with 8-9 persons and 12 percent with 10 and more persons per household.

UNDP Mosaic Kosova, 2006



## **Chapter IV**

### **Additional Exclusion Dimensions**

#### **Regional Dimension**

The concept of social inclusion is significantly characterized by the ? areal dimension. The area-based inclusion can be defined as developing inclusion policies in a defined geographical area that seeks to address certain special problems or needs of a given area. The notion implies that (1) policies at the national level may be inadequate or less effective than tailored solutions within a well-defined region or locality; and (2) the inclusion challenges to be addressed have a multi-sectioal character, and as such require an integrated, consistent response.

Local problems are often associated with tensions, fissures or conflicts in local communities, particularly along ethnic or religious lines. This can make policies and programming that focus on group identity and affiliation quite risky. This approach emphasized comprehensive multi-sectoral responses to the inclusion challenges of a defined geographic area, often with a strong agricultural emphasis. The area-based inclusion often replaces the rural development emphasis with crisis prevention or post-conflict recovery themes. It retains, however, the multi-sectorality and the geographic (as opposed to thematic) developmental focus. The support and active involvement of local communities are often seen as both a precondition for success and an important outcome of area-based projects. Overall, rural urban and areal inequality in Kosovo is low. Inequality, though low, shows signs of being on the increase, especially in rural areas. As expected, urban inequality is higher than that observed in rural areas. The rising inequality in rural areas accounts for the observed increase in overall inequality. But in rural areas, remittances appear to be driving the increased inequality, since the better off households are observed to receive substantially more remittances.

Migration remains one of the most effective mechanisms for reducing poverty in Kosovo. Moreover, unlike growth, the impact is immediate. For as long as migration flows continue, Kosovo can rely on the remittances that are associated with it to protect a sizeable fraction of its population from

poverty. But clearly a development strategy that is over-reliant on remittances is neither desirable nor sustainable. The reasons are numerous, but three are worth noting. One is that migrants change. Over time, as migrants settle in their host countries, ties to their “home” country will tend to decline. This deterioration in “attachment” accelerates rapidly in subsequent generations.

The other reason is that host country policies change. This is particularly poignant for Kosovo, since a number of countries in the European Union that were major recipients of migrants from Kosovo have either shut their borders or have threatened to do so. The final reason is that remittances, which are essentially private transfers, cannot be effective substitutes for more reliable, domestically generated resources to finance public investments in infrastructure, human capital, social services, and so on. This means that there is a need, eventually, to transition out of high dependence on migration and remittances.

At present, about 1 in 5 Kosovars report having at least one household member who is a migrant abroad. By comparison only 13 percent of the population receives social assistance benefits, which is targeted at the poorest groups. Those with migrants abroad also report higher levels of consumption and are estimated to be less poor. Taken together these findings suggest that without migration poverty incidence would be higher and more concentrated in rural areas. So any efforts that lead to drastic reductions in the current migration patterns has the potential to worsen the well-being of the Kosovo population, to widen the already emerging rural-urban disparities in well-being, and possibly to lead to instability, especially in the rural areas.

Poverty rate is higher in rural than urban areas. Furthermore, rural families have substantial lower access to tap water, sanitation and central heating compared to urban families. In urban areas, 88.3% of households are connected to water supply system, whereas in rural areas only 59.1%<sup>34</sup>. Also, quality of water, quality of health services and quality of life respectively are known to be lower in rural areas.

In fact the evidence from the flow of internal migration suggests that the

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<sup>34</sup> Social Inclusion Survey, UNDP 2009

poor may already be moving to urban areas to pursue better opportunities. Urban areas are doing slightly better, despite the higher flows of remittances to rural areas. Aside from taking pressure off of the need for international migration, urban renewal will also go a long way to solving some intractable problems in rural development. In particular, larger rural-urban migration flows could reduce further land fragmentation, improve agricultural labour productivity and improve rural welfare.

### **Environmental Dimension**

The situation of the environment relates closely to poverty and human rights. Any negative effect on the environment directly harms the life of the people. Air pollution, lack of tap water, and degradation of the ecosystem greatly affect the health of the people. Many chronic diseases, among them cancer, which has become more widespread in the past decade, could result from these negative developments.

Global warming leads to change of climate conditions, and any such change could result in problems with planting and harvesting, particularly in rural areas. Environmental problems cause difficulties for many individuals and groups, especially those that are poor. The poor have limited possibilities to protect themselves from the effects of air pollution, to cover medical expenses, to get access to the tap water, or to re-start planting and harvesting their agricultural land. For many households this is the only means of income. Such challenges endanger their wellbeing, which is a basic right for each individual.

### **Annex 1:**

#### **The text of the Millennium Declaration Resolution of the Republic of Kosovo**

Establishing a new and sovereign country, and strengthening functional democracy;

Reaffirming the provisions of the Constitution of the Republic of Kosovo for its duty to comply with principles and values and of international covenants;

Recognizing the United Nations efforts for a better, more just, peaceful and prosperous world, and aiming to actively contribute to these efforts;

Aware that the adoption of the Millennium Declaration, from which are drawn the Millennium Development Goals, will help further the overall development processes of Kosovo;

Recognizing that the United Nations Millennium Agenda is in line with the European Integration processes, with it strengthening our European Integration aspirations;

With confidence that the achievement of Millennium Development Goals will strengthen regional and international cooperation;

With good conscience that the improvement of the wellbeing of all the people of Kosovo, through the achievement of Millennium Development Goals will help the country become a source of stability internally and in the region;

In spirit with the principles and values of the United Nations, and striving to achieve the Millennium Development Goals,

The Assembly of the Republic of Kosovo:

1.Endorses the Millennium Declaration, according to the text of the United Nations General Assembly A/RES/55/2, as approved on September 8th, 2000;

2.Entrusts the Government of the Republic of Kosovo to seek global partnerships, and welcomes international support towards the achievement of Millennium Development Goals in Kosovo;

3.Encourages the central and local authorities of the Republic of Kosovo, civil society, private sector, and international organizations to engage in the process of achieving the Millennium Development Goals, and also to monitor and evaluate the progress until 2015;

4.Commits to approve necessary legislative framework and establish appropriate policies which enable the achievement of the Millennium Development Goal through national development plan;

5.Ensures necessary institutional mechanisms and capacities, as well as financial resources to facilitate the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals; and

6. Holds an annual plenary session to discuss the progress achieved on Millennium Developments Goals, based on a report from the Government of the Republic of Kosovo.

## **1. Text of the Resolution on Kosova Priorities and Strategies for European Union Integration**

Based on Article 65 (1) of the Constitution of the Republic of Kosovo and Rule 31 of Rule of Procedure of the Assembly, the Assembly of Republic of Kosovo, in its plenary session held on 26 February 2009, on proposal of the Committee on European Integration, adopted

### *The Resolution on Kosova Priorities and Strategies for European Union Integration*

Taking into consideration the strategic goal and full consensus of the institutions of the Republic of Kosova and its citizens for Kosova's integration in the European Union,

Aiming at building a state based on rule of law, sustainable economy and functional democracy with equal opportunities for all, in line with European family values and principles,

Expressing the willingness of institutions of the Republic of Kosova to achieve European standards as preconditions for membership in the European Union,

Recognizing the current cooperation of institutions of the Republic of Kosova with the European Union and the international presence in Kosova and its commitment for closer cooperation in the future,

Recognizing the parliamentary cooperation between the Assembly of the Republic of Kosova and the European Parliament and working towards closer cooperation,

Taking into account the achievements of the SAP tracking mechanism initiated in 2004 and being aware of the challenges of the stabilisation association process,

Being aware that the 1993 Copenhagen and 1995 Madrid criteria have been set by the European Council as the key criteria for membership with the European Union,

Taking into account findings of the 2008 Progress Report by the European Commission on Kosova and the need to address the challenges outlined in the Progress Report,

Concluding that the priority goal of the Republic of Kosova for 2009 is the achievement of a positive assessment of the feasibility study by the European Commission,

Calling upon the Kosova European Partnership Action Plan, conclusions of the Plenary on December 11, 2008, and the long term orientation of the Kosova institution for membership with the European Union,

### **The Assembly of the Republic of Kosova**

1.Reconfirms the commitment of institutions of the Republic of Kosova to fulfil the required standards to achieve the integration of Kosova into the European Union;

2.Commits itself to intensify efforts in achieving requirements of the Stabilisation Association process that leads to signing of the Stabilisation and Association Agreement;

3.Continues its commitments in guaranteeing the full implementation of the principles of Rule of Law, existing Democratic Institutions, Human Rights and protection of Minorities, competitive Market Economy, the capacity to cope with competitive pressure and market forces within the Union, implementation of the main principles of the Acquis Communautaire, as well as cooperation with the other countries of the Region, as established by the European Council of Copenhagen and Madrid, respectively in 1993 and 1995;

4.Declares the willingness of the Government of the Republic of Kosova, the Assembly of the Republic of Kosova and of the other national institutions to continue their full collaboration with the European Union and the International presence in Kosova, with a view of strengthening the Kosova's position in European integration processes;

5.Calls on all institutions of Republic of Kosova to streamline their efforts to fulfil the recommendations outlined in the “Kosova 2008 Progress Report accompanying the Communication from the European Commission to the European Parliament and the Council on the “Enlargement Strategy and the Main Challenges 2008-2009”, as the fundamental documents for the European Integration of Kosova;

6.Considers that the key priority for 2009 for all institutions of the Republic of Kosova is to achieve positive assessment from the feasibility study of the European Commission that will provide solid basis for strengthening the European dimension in Kosova;

7.Expresses its willingness for closer cooperation between the Assembly of the Republic of Kosova and the European Parliament at all levels;

8.Remains determined to achieve rule of law through meaningful reform of judiciary system, completion of institutional framework and enforcement of all legislation based on the principle that no one is above the law;

9.Notes critical importance of stability in Kosova and calls on Government of the Republic of Kosova to extend its authority in all territory with of a view of integrating all communities in Kosovar society;

10.Underlines that economic development is a key priority and expresses its full support for all economic actors, public and private, attracting foreign direct investments, resulting in creation of job opportunities and transparent completion of the privatisation process;

11.Requests from the Government of Republic of Kosova to intensify its efforts in reforming the public administration based on the principles of a modern public administration free from political interference;

12.Requires from institutions of the Republic of Kosova undertake decisive actions in combating the negative phenomena in fulfilling the requirements of the Justice, freedom and security chapter of Kosova 2008 Progress Report including corruption, organized crime and fiscal evasion;

13.Supports the Government of Republic of Kosova in attaining European Standards of the Internal Market as specified by Kosovo 2008 Progress Report including competition, education and research, public procurement and customs and taxation;

14.Supports the Government of Republic of Kosova in attaining European Standards of the Sectorial Policies as specified by Kosovo 2008 Progress Report such as Energy, Environment, Industry and SMEs, Transport policy, Information society and media, statistics, financial control and Agriculture and fisheries;

15.Calls on the Assembly Committee on European Integrations to exercise fully its mandate based on the conclusions of the Plenary Session of

11 December 2008 in analysing, planning and overseeing the implementation of the Assembly Action Plan on challenges of Kosova 2008 Progress Report. It invites all Committees of the Assembly to fully engage in realization of the Action Plan;

16.Supports the coherent strategy and harmonization of legislative agenda in coordination within institutions of the Republic of Kosova, taking into account particularly the challenges coming from the 2008 Progress Report.

17.Invites the Government of the Republic of Kosova to regularly and substantially inform the Assembly of the Republic of Kosova, on the progress achieved and communication with the European Union Institutions.

18.Remains determined to oversee the implementation of aforementioned obligations by institutions of Republic of Kosova;

This Resolution shall be delivered to the:

- •President of Republic of Kosova,
- •Government of the Republic of Kosova,
- •Deputy Prime Minister for European Integrations,
- •Minister of Foreign Affairs,
- •President of the European Parliament,
- •Chair of the European Union Council of Ministers,
- •European Council,
- •Chief and members of the European Commission, and
- •Heads of EU Member States.

This Resolution shall be published in the “Official Gazette of the Republic of Kosova”.



## 2.Laeken Indicators

<b>Nr.</b>	<b>Indicator</b>
1	At-risk-of poverty rate
1.a	Poverty risk by household type
1.b	Poverty risk by the work intensity of households
1.c	Poverty risk by most frequent activity status
1.d	Poverty risk by accommodation tenure status
2	At-risk-of poverty threshold (illustrative values)
3	Income quintile ratio (S80/S20)
4	Persistent at-risk-of poverty rate
5	Relative median poverty risk gap
6	Regional cohesion
7	Long term unemployment rate
8.a	Population living in jobless households: children
8.b	Population living in jobless households: prime age adults
9	Early school leavers not in education or training
10	Life expectancy
11	Selfdefined health status by income level.
12	Dispersion around the at -risk-of poverty threshold
13	At-risk-of poverty rate anchored at a moment in time
14	At-risk-of poverty rate before social cash transfers
15	Gini coefficient
16	Persistent at-risk-of poverty rate (50% of median equivalised income)
17	In-work poverty risk
18	Long-term unemployment share
19	Very long term unemployment rate
20	Persons with low educational attainment

### 3.The Millennium Development Goals

Nr.	Objectives
1	Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger
2	Achieve universal primary education
3	Promote gender equality and empower women
4	Reduce child mortality
5	Improve maternal health
6	Combat HIV/AIDS, Malaria, Tuberculosis and other diseases
7	Ensure environmental sustainability; and
8	Develop a global partnership for development
9*	Objective for Good Governance

•*While drafting the Second MDG Report in Kosovo, the civil society together with representatives of the Kosovo authorities defined the ninth objective for*

## **Closing Remarks**

In the specific circumstances in Kosovo, social inclusion presents a complex challenge which needs to be tackled with a sense of urgency by the institutions of Kosovo. Institutions of Kosovo need to utilize the political, legal and financial capacities and resources at hand, and seek support from the international community and organizations to tackle social exclusion issues.

The Assembly of Kosovo, individually and in cooperation with the government and other local and central governing institutions, will engage in planning more specific steps to address the improvement of the social situation, with emphasis on the fight against social exclusion and vulnerability.

In addressing the challenges of human development and social inclusion in the context of development and good practices of the countries in the region and European Union, the Assembly of Kosovo expresses its interest in benefiting from assistance from international and local organizations in the field of social inclusion as illustrated in the White Paper. Such assistance will help facilitate our institutions and society to approach more deeply the issues raised in this document. In this context, with a combination of good examples and practices from the European Union and the region, the Assembly of Kosovo encourages and welcomes the undertaking of initiatives with research, detailed analysis character and technical and advisory assistance; so that the social inclusion agenda will be constantly fed with real data related to the situation of excluded individuals and groups. In this way we could collectively evidence and address this situation. Assistance through such initiatives could help facilitate the processes of initiation of policies, strategies and planning activities, including the enrichment of monitoring the progress related to social inclusion and the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

In accomplishing these objectives that relate to social inclusion, the Assembly of Kosovo will also engage in the promotion of international cooperation between Kosovo and other countries in the region and beyond.

The White Paper serves as a foundation for other developments to take place related to social inclusion. The Assembly of Kosovo in particular will engage and support specific processes that aim to improve the current situation in the field. The Assembly of Kosovo will follow with high interest the development of these processes as a part of a Kosovo wide comprehensive approach, in conformity with the content of the White Paper and particularly of the Millennium Declaration.

