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Functional Review of the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology

January, 2018



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THE REPUBLIC OF KOSOVO¹

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integration**

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Disclaimer

This Report has been prepared by the project team. The findings, conclusions and interpretations expressed in this document are those of the Contractor alone and should in no way be taken to reflect the policies or opinions of the European Union Office in Kosovo

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¹ This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSC 1244/1999 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo Declaration of Independence.

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1. Introduction

This Functional Review of the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MEST) is organized in the framework of the EU- financed *Project Preparation Facility (PPF)*, a project aiming at increasing the capacity of Kosovo administration for planning, programming and implementation of EU funds. The task emerged as an ad-hoc request from MEST senior management and the European Union Office in Kosovo (EUO).

The Functional Review team (FR team) comprised three experts² that performed the assignment over three-month period, from November 2017 to January 2018. This report summarizes the overall approach of the review process as well as the key findings and recommendations of the team with respect to the current state of play and potential improvements of the organization and functioning of the ministry.

The report is structured in seven sections. Following this introduction, an overview of the education sector is presented, highlighting the current sectoral priorities setting the policy agenda of the ministry and linking the review with the broader effort of programming IPA funds for the sector. The methodology of the review is presented in the third section, followed by a set of principles that guided the review process. The fifth and sixth section represent the bulk of the report, as they present the key findings and recommendations. The final section proposes a calendar for the implementation of the proposed measures.

The FR team would like to express its gratitude for the constant support and time dedicated to participate in meetings and interviews from MEST representatives as well as other officials in Ministry of European Integration, Office of the Prime Minister or the Ministry for Public Administration. The team is also grateful to the counterparts in the EUO, especially to the education task manager, for their continuous support and high-quality feedback provided throughout the entire FR process. Last, but not least, the team thanks the colleagues from the PPF Project for their assistance and peer review of this report.

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2. Brief overview of the Education Sector

The public education system in Kosovo operates through a network of 43 pre-school institutions, 985 primary and lower secondary schools, 119 upper secondary schools, and nine public higher education institutions. In addition, there are 10 licensed private institutions offering primary and secondary education, as well as 30 licensed private higher education institutions. There are also, a number of private institutions offering pre-school services.

While there is an overall increase of attendance in education, pre-school attendance remains a big challenge mostly due to the lack of preparation for this level and lack of premises. Increase in attendance though in pre-university and higher education, with a gross enrolment rate of 95.2% (95.1 for boys and 95.4 for girls) in compulsory education and 83.4% in secondary education (86.3 for men and 83.4 for women), Kosovo compares well, in terms of participation, with other countries in the Region³, except for pre-school level where participation of the age group 4-5 years is still at 40.7%, which is quite far from the EU 2020 benchmark – 95%⁴.

Also, attendance in higher education has increased significantly: in 2015 Kosovo had 6,669 students per 100,000 inhabitants, which is nearly double the EU average⁵. A balance of men and women enrolled in Bachelor's and Master's university programs in 2015/2016, though more women tended to attend public university and more men private university⁶. Despite higher participation in education, the participation in pre-school but also of children with special needs and RAE quality teaching and learning persists.

The students' skills remain an issue of concern in the system. Not only low Matura exam results but also recent PISA results show that Kosovo education system remains very low compared internationally. While detailed analysis are not yet available, the results show that 77% of 15-year-old Kosovar students scored below the baseline level in reading proficiency lagging, the equivalent of 3.5 years of schooling, behind the OECD average in this discipline (70% for girls and 83% for boys). Similarly, 78% of test-takers scored below the baseline level in mathematics (81% of girls, 75% of boys) and 68% in science (66% for girls, 70% for boys). This is a great challenge in relation to EU 2020 benchmarks, which requires that fewer than 15% of 15-year-olds should be under-skilled in reading, mathematics and science.

Despite the fact that quality assurance strategy is in place and the attempts to build a quality assurance system by division of powers of MEST, MED and schools amongst others, overall quality in education is low. The role of education inspectorate is not clearly divided among inspectors, however a new law on

³ Annual Statistical Report & Education Indicators 2015/16, MEST, December 2016.

⁴ Kosovo Education Strategic Plan 2017-2021, Government of Kosovo, 2016.

⁵ Ibidem

⁶ Kosovo Agency for Statistics, Education Statistics 2015/2016.

Inspection on Education clarifies further the roles of inspectors. At present, quality assurance remains problematic even in terms of organizing of teaching and learning in Kosovo schools. The in-service teacher training is still at its initial stage in terms of systematic and organized training provision to assist them in licensing and improvement of performance.

Policy development is an ongoing process, though policy implementation is hardly measured. The Pre-university New Curriculum Framework approved in 2011 and now fully implemented Kosovo wide, shows already many challenges in implementation. Despite the competence based learning framework, this comprehensive reform requires a structured and intense in-service teacher training and numerous educational tools and supporting materials.

While the teacher training programs up to now were scattered and project driven, the new curriculum implementation requires a numerous new set of skills that require multiple sources of teaching and learning. Moreover, new curriculum requires alignment of pre-service and in-service training. At present, due to the lack of professional and financial capacities, delays in preparation of supporting materials for implementation of the curriculum, lack of suitable textbooks, improvement of school and classrooms conditions amongst others are limiting its implementation.

Policy analysis overall is difficult due to limited data collection through EMIS. Capacity for collecting and processing data on education has improved significantly but further capacity development is required to provide more detailed data on students and pupils, integration of reporting databases, external examination results and the impact of education on employment amongst others. Although some improvements in data collections are noted over the years, still there is a need for more capacity building in providing more detailed data to assist policy analysis. The monitoring of the implementation of policies are hardly evidence based. In spite of reporting organized by MEST for the KESP, there is still a need for further capacity building for evidence based reporting.

Decentralization process that divides the roles between the central level and municipal level is still in its initial stage. The Law on Education in Municipalities sets this division clearly but the implementation lacks. While Ministry plays the central role in policy development and municipalities in implementation, the coordination of plans and priorities within a coordinated framework of planning and monitoring is lacking.

The VET sector accommodates approximately half of the students. It has been the priority of MEST for years but the efforts to improve vocational education did not bring structural changes and sustainable results. Due to the specificity of the sector and attempts of various donors to tackle the issue, the ongoing VET curricula reform shows little results. Inclusion of the entire VET system in the Kosovo Curriculum Framework with the lack of specific VET Core Curriculum remains problematic. Challenges remain in the development of textbooks and more so in improvement of workshops. The majority of VET schools lack workshops to develop practical skills or consumables within workshops. The opportunities to develop practical training in enterprises remain limited.

Internships are still sporadically organized and there is a lack of structured approach to internships. As such, development of practical skills in majority of profiles is low. Despite many efforts, the links are not systematic.

Moreover, the linkages between VET curricula and labour market needs are not yet satisfactory. Out of the existing profiles, gender segregation by VET profiles is rather high thus making many profiles available and participatory only for men and not women. VET seen as a priority for many stakeholders lead to the establishment of the Agency for VET and Adult Education (AVETAE) in 2014 but still the functioning and the capacities of the AVETAE are a challenge and the cooperation of the stakeholders still needs further improvement.

There has been a significant growth of the higher education system both in public and private institutions in terms of programs and attendance. The number of students in higher education and the programs have increased however despite the increase of programs, the alignment with labour market is very weak. There are hardly any links of graduates with the enterprises on the programs where more practical skills are needed to be developed further. The quality assurance remains an important point of intervention in higher education. The Kosova Accreditation Authority has brought some results on external quality assurance becoming a member of ENQA and EQAR thus conducting a high number of external assessment. There are additionally a number of offices for quality assurance but the overall perception is that the system is weak. The research in higher education moreover is scarce thus having higher education institutions serving more as teaching rather than research institutions.



3. Methodology of the Functional Review

This section presents the overall methodological approach for the functional review, highlighting the objective of the assessment, its scope and data collection methods, as well as the principles the team has established to guide the review process.

3.1. Objective, scope, data collection and analysis for the Functional Review

The objective of the functional review process, as mentioned in the task ToRs was further clarified during the initiation meetings the team has organized with MEST senior management⁷ and EU Office. The Functional review would hence constitute an overall assessment of the ministry contributing to increase its organizational efficiency. The scope of the review would be limited to the organizational set-up of the ministry. The relations within the education portfolio (i.e., with the subordinated agencies) were not addressed in details, with the exception of the Education Inspectorate that required particular attention.

The methodological approach the FR team applied consisted in a series of data collection and analysis tools that are illustrated in the scheme below:

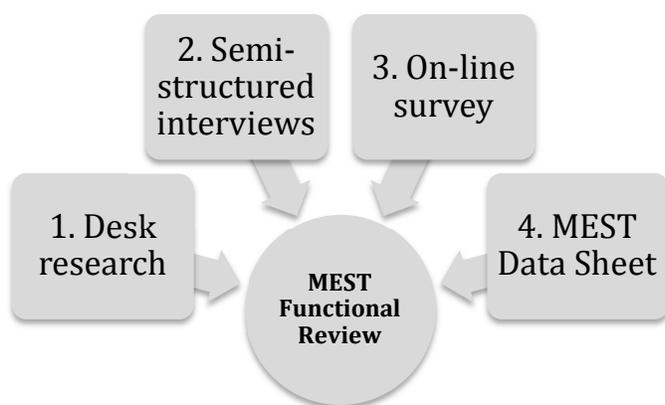


Figure 1: Data collection tools for the FR

Desk research was the first stage that has been initiated by the FR team. It consisted of collecting and analyzing key legislative and policy documents that were relevant for MEST. Additional reports and previous analysis on the topic were also analyzed for the purpose of the review. The following list provides examples of the documents the team has scrutinized as part of the functional review:

- Law on education No 04/L-032 approved on 29th of August 2011
- Systematization Act of the Ministry of Education No 39/2013 approved on 9th of January 2014

⁷ Meeting with the Minister of Education, Science and Technology on November 6th and series of meetings with the Secretary General on November 3rd, 6th and 10th

- Law on education Inspectorate No 2004/37 approved on 8th of September 2004
- Draft Law on Education Inspectorate approved by the Government on 27th of December 2017
- Public Administration Modernization Strategy (2015-2020) No 04/51 approved on 25th of September 2015
- Sector Reform Contract for Public Administration IPA 2016

Semi-structured interviews were organized with *i)* senior management of MEST (including political and civil service level), *ii)* all heads of departments within MEST (including the Education Inspectorate), *iii)* representatives of other relevant government bodies, such as MEI, OPM, MPA, *iv)* representatives of EU Office and *v)* other relevant stakeholders, such as international donors active in education sector. A total of about 30 interviews were held during the review process. A list with the meetings and interviews organized is annexed to the report.

The topics for the interviews for each of the targeted category of interlocutors are briefly summarized in the table below:

Interviewed	Topics addressed
MEST Senior management	Objective of the FR; priorities of the ministry; main difficulties and challenges; overall steering of the education sector;
Heads of MEST Depts	Organizational issues; systematization act in practice; processes they are involved in and associated procedures; main results obtained; key challenges; ideas for improvement;
OPM	Overall performance of the ministry; policy making and coordination at MEST level – results and capacity;
MEI	MEST performance in respect to EI agenda – results and capacity;
MPA	Civil service policy, provisions of the new draft law on public administration, SRC, systematization act and internal organization of MEST.
EU Office	Overall approach for the FR; past performance of MEST; key issues to guide the review;
Donors	Donor coordination at MEST level; areas and type of support provided; mechanisms used for project management; building support for recommendations.

Table 1: Examples of topics addressed during interviews per category of beneficiaries

An **on-line survey**⁸ was designed and used as a self-assessment tool. It was addressed to all staff of ministry and was structured around 5 main areas targeting important HRM features - e.g., workforce planning, recruitment, managing workforce or staff performance appraisal. Aspects regarding the priorities of the institution and the key challenges affecting the effectiveness of their interventions were also included. A five level Likert scale was used for each item with space for comments and additional opinions being made available for each particular section.

⁸ Web-based, using Survey Monkey – for more info on this survey development tool, see www.surveymonkey.com

47 staff members participated in the survey, representing all categories, as can be noted from the table below:

Heads of Dept	12.20%	Heads of Div.	29.7%
Officers	56.10%;	Assistants:	2.44%

Table 2: Respondents to the survey

In addition to the survey, a **specific managerial questionnaire** was developed and used to collect feedback from heads of departments on their key results, main challenges and priorities. Nine out of eleven line departments have responded.

The **MEST Data Sheet** represents a collection of mostly quantitative data summarizing the resource allocation per ministry, the staffing profile of each department and the key results obtained over the last year. This provides an overview of the organization. It is annexed to the report.

The team carefully analyzed all the collected data. In assessing the organizational set-up and efficiency of delivering specific functions, **benchmarking** was largely used. Both *(i) internal* - comparing various aspects of MEST activity with those registered in other Kosovo line ministries, and *(ii) external benchmarking* – looking comparatively at the same issue in peer countries or systems –informed the review process. When selecting countries to benchmark against, to ensure the relevance of the comparison, the team used some criteria, such as population of the country, administrative tradition, EU membership/ potential membership.

3.2. Principles guiding the review

The rules for overall organization of the public administration in Kosovo are currently being (re)defined through the draft Law on Organization of Public Administration, and draft Law on Civil Service expected to be approved in 2018⁹. Hence, in the absence of a clear framework for analysis, the FR team has developed a set of *principles* to guide the review process.

These principles are general rules that some countries have already embedded in national legislation, such as, the split of main responsibilities and accountability lines between an agency and a ministry, the management span or the minimum number of positions to set up a particular type of administrative unit, etc.

The definition of these principles for the functional review was based on *(i)* the local context - administrative tradition in Kosovo, existing practices for the organization and functioning of the public administration and *(ii)* international benchmarks and *soft acquis* embedded in the *Principles of Public Administration*

⁹ Kosovo commitment within the Sector Reform Contract for Public Administration (indicator 6.1.2 of the SRC)

issued by OECD SIGMA Program¹⁰, used to assess PAR developments in candidate countries.

The following principles were used to guide the functional review process of the MEST:

Principle 1: The Ministry is the core administrative body responsible for policy development and ensuring oversight over the education sector, while the subordinated agencies perform regulatory and policy implementation functions

This principle sets the general rule that policy and coordination are the key attributes of a ministerial structure (in this case MEST), while the subordinated agencies (14 agencies as these are currently organized under the ministry) are mostly tasked with implementation/ regulatory functions. The MEST mandate should, therefore, be defined and exercised around development and oversight of its key policy areas (education, science and technology) while the role of subordinated bodies should be mostly to support policy implementation.

This is built on the SIGMA Public Administration Principles (further on SIGMA Principles), namely, Policy Development and Co-ordination section, Principle 8 that states: *The organisational structure, procedures and staff allocation of ministries ensure that developed policies and legislation are implementable and meet Government objectives. As a general rule, the key policy-making functions remain in the ministries and are not transferred to subordinate bodies.*

Principle 2: There is a clear separation between the roles and responsibilities of political appointees and professional civil servants; Political decision-makers are responsible for at least one major policy area of the ministerial mandate.

Political steering and ensuring political support for the key areas in education is of crucial importance to advance the ambitious policy agenda of the ministry. This principle was used to guide the team to look into the particular mandate of the Deputy Ministers, their relation with the professional civil servants and their accountability lines with the relevant departments. It is also intended to limit the number of deputy ministers who have no particular policy responsibility assigned.

This relates to the SIGMA Principle 1 of the Public Service and Human Resources Management Section, namely – *The scope of public service is adequate, clearly defined and applied in practice. The vertical scope clearly determines the upper and lower division line between political appointees, public servants and support staff.*

¹⁰ OECD SIGMA, Principles of Public Administration, November 2014

Principle 3: The policy priorities of the ministry are reflected in its organizational structure

The team assessed whether the ministry is well equipped and adequately organized to ensure the fulfillment of its mandate and delivery on ministerial priorities defined by various legislative and policy documents. The principle is about ensuring that the defined priorities receive the necessary resources, hence the organization of the institution (structures and staff allocation) is aligned with the existing policy priority matrix for the education sector.

From this perspective, attention was given to the way the top priorities within the education sector have been translated within the organization structure of the ministry, as the core policy maker – i.e., there is adequate administrative unit in place to ensure policy development for the priority area and that enough staff is allocated (in number and capacity) to support policy analysis and formulation. Key requirement 1 and Principle 5 of the SIGMA Principles, requires that [...] *The institutional framework and distribution of staff reflects the workload of ministry departments in order to fulfil Government commitments.*

Principle 4: When resources are limited, scattering them across the organization is not advisable

Proliferation of small units dealing with similar or connected policy areas has been noted as a dominant tendency in some of the countries of the region. Ministries have been setting up small administrative units within the internal organization to manage similar or closely-linked policy areas. Such units might focus on narrow policy area with 2-3 positions assigned to such units.

Such organizational fragmentation proved to be inefficient: it creates additional costs and coordination issues. In many cases, this approach was largely driven by a compensation (salary) motivation without considering the organizational effectiveness. This organizational pattern becomes more problematic when confronted with high vacancy rates, as there are simply too few junior positions for operating an efficient civil service system.

Principle 5: A management span of at least 1 to 2 is applied across the organization

This principle is connected with the previous one. In the absence of particular rules setting the minimal number of positions for establishing a particular administrative unit, management span would prevent extreme fragmentation (e.g., where there is one manager for one executive position).

4. Findings

1. The Ministry has the mandate for policymaking and coordination, however the agencies seem very small in size and might be affected by the GoK commitment to merge/abolish the agencies with less than 50 employees.

The provisions in the existing regulations¹¹ set the mandate for MEST to ensure overall policy development for education, science and technology, as well as coordination of the subordinated agencies in implementing those policies. From this perspective, there seem not to be any legal constraints for the ministry to act as the main coordinator in the sector, while other bodies in the sector have a more regulatory and implementation role.

In absence of the Law on Government, the mandate, duties and responsibilities of the Ministries are regulated with the Regulation No 02/2011 on the Areas of Administrative Responsibilities of the Office of Prime Minister and Ministries, as presented below:

MEST responsibilities:

- To develop policies and implement legislation for the development of education, including higher education and science in Kosovo;
- To support a non-discriminatory education system, which respects the right of every person for education and where the opportunity for quality learning is available for everyone;
- To provide informal education and adult education at all levels, including remote areas, and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all;
- To design, implement and oversee right and effective forms of educational administration and school management;
- To improve the quality, relevance and efficiency of education at all levels;
- To facilitate the development and qualitative improvement of education and delivery of educational services;
- To support research related to social, economic, scientific, technological and cultural development in Kosovo;
- To build a comprehensive library system, which will include libraries and school libraries;
- To support a comprehensive policy for the integration of disabled and handicapped persons;
- To support parental and municipality participation in educational activities and appropriate forms of partnership school-community in the local level

Table 3: MEST main responsibilities, as per Regulation No 02/2011 on the Areas of Administrative Responsibilities of the Office of Prime Minister and Ministries

It should however be noted that most of the subordinated agencies are very small in size and this comes into contradiction with the recent commitment of the Kosovo Government as expressed in various strategic documents - *At least*

¹¹ Regulation No 02/2011 on the Areas of Administrative Responsibilities of the Office of Prime Minister and Ministries and Regulation No 39/2013 on internal organization of the ministry

27 agencies under the government and with less than 50 employees have been merged or abolished or integrated as an organisational unit within the ministerial hierarchy by 2020¹².

Agency	No of positions	Agency	No of Positions
VET Agency	6	Education Inspectorate	56
National Qualification Authority	6	Kosovo Accreditation Agency	9
Pedagogical Institute	21	Institute of History	31

Table 4 – subordinated agencies and allocated number of positions – extract -

2. Despite the large number of Deputy Ministers, they do not seem to have clear policy responsibility assigned nor accountability lines with individual departments

There are five Deputy Ministers currently appointed for MEST. This puts the ministry on the top of the list of Kosovar ministries, as can be seen from the table below:

Line Ministry	No of DMs
Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare	6
Ministry of Education, Science and Technology	5
Ministry of Economic Development	5
Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning	5
Ministry of Foreign Affairs	4
Ministry of Finance	4
Ministry of Internal Affairs	4
Ministry of Diaspora and Strategic Investment	4
Ministry of Health	4
Ministry of Returns and Communities	4
Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports	4
Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Rural Development	3
Ministry of Kosovo Security Forces	2
Ministry of Local Government Administration	2
Ministry of Regional Development	2
Ministry of Infrastructure	2
Ministry of Justice	1
Ministry of Innovation and Entrepreneurship	1
Ministry of Public Administration	1
Ministry of Trade and Industry	1
Ministry of European Integration	0
Average	3.04

Table 5: Number of Deputy Ministers in Kosovo line ministries

In administrative systems where deputy ministers are present, their role is generally to support the overall coordination of the sector, basically representing the Minister for the respective policy area. They are expected to act as the

¹² Indicator 6.2.2 and 6.3 of the Sector Reform Contract for public administration

political lead for that policy area, representing the ministry and setting the agenda for the sector. However, this seems not to be the case within MEST. The DMs do not have clear policy areas assigned and there are no accountability lines between the DM and respective departments.

Looking at small EU governments¹³, the role of Deputy Ministers has little variation. A less common practice is not to have them at all: e.g., in DK, management below the Minister's level is professional. More common is to have Deputies - usually one, maximum two - with a mostly political role (e.g. chiefly to substitute the Minister in LV, CR, IR). A third interpretation is to have Deputies combining a political and some more specialized managerial role: for instance in Slovenia, and also of Lithuania, where the law also allows up to 4 Deputy Ministers per portfolio, marked as "*politically selected civil servants*" appointed upon minister's indication:¹⁴

Country (population)	Latvia (1.9m)	Slovenia (2.0m)	Lithuania (2.9m)	Croatia (4.2m)	Ireland (4.6m)	Denmark (5.6m)
Number of ministers*	14	16	15	21	15	17
Nr. of deputies of ministers	13	32	46	20	15	0
Total nr. top political management	27	48	61	41	30	17
Average nr. of deputies per minister	0.9	2.0	3.0	0.9	1.0	0.0
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Including the position of Prime Minister and any other political position equivalent to a Minister • All data on the situation as of January 2016 						

Table 6 – average no of Deputy Ministers in selected EU countries

According to the current organizational arrangements in the Systematization act, as well as the practice of the ministry, most departments are accountable to the Minister through the Secretary General and do not get the policy guidance and support from the deputy ministers.

3. The main results of the ministry (i.e., policy documents and legislation) are very limited in number and lack in substance

As explained in Principle 1 above, the main results of a ministry are represented by pieces of legislation or policy documents that are prepared and approved to ensure the fulfillment of the ministerial mandate and the pursue of the policy priorities within the sector.

¹³ As highlighted in the Guidelines for Organization of Ministries in Central Government, Georgia whole-of-government review, La Ferrara, Dinu, 2016

¹⁴ Law on Government of Lithuania, (as amended) article 31.

The following table is summarizing the number of items ministries submitted to government approval in 2017:

Ministry	No of decisions
Office of Prime Minister	155
Ministry of Finance	127
Ministry of Environment	54
Ministry of Justice	25
Ministry of European Integration	22
Ministry of Internal Affairs	18
Ministry of Trade and Industry	16
Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare	12
Ministry of Education	10
Ministry of Economic Development	10
Ministry of Health	9
Ministry of Local Government	9
Ministry of Public Administration	9
Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports	6
Ministry of Foreign Affairs	6
Ministry of Infrastructure	4
Ministry of Diaspora	3
Ministry of Kosovo Security Force	2
Ministry for Returns and Communities	1
Ministry of Innovation and Entrepreneurship	1
Ministry of Regional Development	1
Total	500

Table 7 – No of items submitted for government approval in 2017

As can be noted, with only 10 items tabled to Government, Ministry of Education Science and Technology stands towards the second part of the chart. This proves a limited recent policy development activity of the ministry. Moreover, an analysis of the typology of the documents the ministry has prepared shows that there are practically no clear policy documents or pieces of legislation that have been prepared by the ministry in 2017. There are also no documents initiated by the ministry that were submitted for consultation using the mandatory on-line consultation platform to support government decision-making system¹⁵.

The implementation of the MEST legislative plan (depicted below) also shows that the laws with the clear policy content were not finalized/ approved as per the original commitment:

¹⁵ Methodology for minimum standards for public consultation approved in 2017

MEST commitments in the 2017 Legislative program	Status
Law on innovation, knowledge and technology transfer	NA
Law on Education Inspectorate	NA
Law on Ratification of the International Agreement between the MEST and Stitching Spark of the Netherlands SPARK on the support of Mitrovica International Business College	A
<i>NA – Not approved</i>	<i>A - Approved</i>

5. The 5% vacancy rate seem not to be problematic, however, the resources are scattered across the organization with many divisions of just 2 positions (1 to 1 management span)

The vacancy rate is not very high, hence it should not pose many problems to the overall activity of the organization. However, it should be noted that there are some position that were vacant for a long period of time, and that might impact on the functioning of the respective department affected by that vacancy.

With respect to the way the existing structure is satisfying Principle 4 and Principle 5 above, it should be noted that there are many units (i.e., 40% of all divisions of the ministry) currently composed of two or three positions, indicating scattering of resources and very low management span (i.e., one manager to oversee one execution-level civil servant).

Division	No of occupied positions	Ministry	% of Divisions < 3 positions
Division for private pre-university education	1	Ministry of Health	28%
Division for pre- school education	3		
Division for international cooperation in higher education and science	2	Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare	0%
Division for science	1		
Division for technology	3	Ministry of Economic Development	15%
Division for innovation and transfer of technology	1		
Division for planning and standards for school space	3	Ministry of Education, Science and Technology	32%
Division for European integrations	3		
Division for Internal Audit	2		
Division for Communication with Public	3	<i>Divisions under 3 positions within selected line ministries</i>	

Table 8 – Divisions with 3 or less occupied positions and internal benchmarking

The new law on organization of public administration is currently being drafted by MPA and consideration is given to having concrete provisions on the minimum number of positions for establishing a division or department. If such rules would be enacted, MEST should apply it and consolidate its existing structure anyway.

In EU countries, the tendency is to have larger administrative units, allowing for a higher management span and ensuring greater flexibility to the manager in allocated human resources to the tasks. There are however particular situations when exceptions are allowed, mainly in respect to support functions in smaller organizations (e.g., Human resources or internal audit unit in small ministry that could be composed of three positions) or for the highly automated functions

(e.g., call center) or repetitive functions where a high management span could be found (e.g., one manager to twenty employees).

Country (population)	Latvia (1.9m)	Slovenia (2.0m)	Lithuania (2.9m)	Croatia (4.2m)
Minimum size of the lower-level unit in comparable governments of EU Members	5 (with exceptions)	8 (exceptionally 3)	4 (exceptionally 3-2)	5 (with exceptions)

Table 9 – Minimum size of the lower level administrative units in selected EU member states

6. There is potential overlapping between departments and limited use of existing interlinks between connected policy areas (mainly with respect to Pre-university policy and Higher education and science)

The current organization of the ministry leaves room for overlapping and scattering resources for similar or closely-connected policy areas, with i) two separate departments dealing with pre-university education and ii) higher education policy being managed separately from science and technology.

The Systematization act sets the core responsibilities for the two departments dealing with pre-university policy, distinguishing between overall policy development (allocated to pre-university education policies department) and mainly curricula and professional development of teachers (in the realm of the Development of pre-university department). This distinction is however not convincing, since curricula is one of the key instruments for education policy and quality of teachers stands as its critical success factor.

Main responsibilities in pre-university policy management, as per the Systematization Act (Art 7, Art 14)	
Dept. for pre-university education policies	Dept. for the development of pre-university education
Proposes drafts and ensure implementation of policies, strategies/ legislative documents in education institutions in the field of pre-primary education, primary, lower secondary education and upper secondary education, and other educational institutions of the pre-university level in Kosovo;	Proposes drafts and ensure implementation of curricula in the field of pre-primary education, primary, lower secondary education and upper secondary education, and other educational institutions of the pre-university level in Kosovo;
Supports professional recognition and inter- institutional educational cooperation inside and outside of Kosovo	Provides advice on professional recognition and incentive links with educational institutions within and outside Kosovo
Supports decentralization (from central level to municipalities and municipalities to schools)	Support for teachers' licensing and certification
Inclusive education/ Access to education	Supports access to education provided at certain quality standards
Vocational education and adult education	Organizes Test of Achievement and Matura Exam
Supports pre-university private education institutions	
<i>Text box: Main duties and responsibilities in pre-university education</i>	

The organization of two separate departments to manage pre-university policy – Department for pre-university policy and the department for development of the pre-university education - is not a practice for countries the team benchmarked against. Most common cases are with a strong pre-university administrative unit that ensures overall policy development and oversight for the sector. As for higher education and science, there are two patterns that could be noticed – in countries with a Yugoslav administrative tradition, these are organized in different units (sometimes even different ministries) while in others, these topics are jointly managed.

The table below is summarizing the organizational arrangements in some of the countries in the region, as well as in some EU member states with comparable population.

Country	Pre-university		VET		Higher Education		Science	
	1 dept	2 depts	Separate	Pre-univ	Separate	With Sc.	Separate	With HE
Albania	X			X		X		X
Macedonia	X		X		X		X	
Montenegro	X		X		X		X	
Slovenia	X		X		X		X	
Croatia	X			X	X		X	
Latvia	X			X		X		X
Finland	X			X		X		X
Kosovo		X		X	X		X	

Table 10 – Organization of pre-university, higher education and science in selected countries

7. The school network policy seems to be absent from the ministry mandate (i.e., it is not clearly allocated to any of the existing structures).

The decentralization process that was implemented in education has moved a lot of responsibilities to the local administration. However, the key policy issues for the education sector are, and should remain, a ministerial attribute. As highlighted in the first Principle the team proposed for this review, it is the ministry who holds responsibility for the overall education policy development and oversight.

Besides potential overlapping between various units of the ministry, the team also analyzed whether there are any areas that are absent from the ministerial mandate. Most of the policy areas that a typical ministry of education would be responsible for are covered by MEST. The only exception the team identified, relates to the school network policy. Assessment of the systematization act and follow-up interviews showed that there is no particular unit of the ministry responsible for developing a coherent policy on school network. This is important, as ensuring appropriate access to education in fiscally sustainable conditions is a core part of delivering good education services to society.

The policy on school network would deal with analysis and decision over conditions to establish new schools (including criteria for new schools), typology and number of schools in the country or conditions where individual schools are no longer feasible to operate. Demographic data and trends (migration, birthrate etc) are to be factored in for this policy and close cooperation with local governments is needed. Given the obvious tension and difference in agenda between local and central government (e.g., no local government would like to have schools closed), as well as the central nature of the policy (it has clear systemic impacts) such a responsibility needs to be placed within the ministry.

Criteria for establishing a new school, Irish example¹⁶

- It was clearly established that the proposed educational service met a need that could not be reasonably met within existing provision
- The formal application for a new school was preceded by public local community consultation
- The patron was registered or was in the process of obtaining registration
- There was a verified intention to establish a management structure that was recognised by the Minister for Education & Science
- There was a verified intention to manage the school according to the principles set out in the "Rules for National Schools"
- Enrolment criteria:
 - a) the minimum guaranteed enrolment for the first year of operation: 17 unior infants
 - b) the minimum projected enrolment for the third year of operation: 51 pupils

8. Internal communication and coordination between the departments is limited and the existing coordination mechanisms relies solely on the General Secretary staff meetings

Interviews organized during the functional review process have showed that there is limited practice for coordination and communication within the ministry. The existing mechanism that is currently in use, with the staff meeting organized by the Secretary General is very good, however, it is not enough to ensure proper outcomes that an education system requires. Moreover, it seem that some departments do not attend the weekly staff meetings (e.g., Internal Audit Unit).

The Department for European Integration and Policy Coordination with its current capacity cannot play the role of the ministerial coordinating unit, developing horizontal procedures and leading on ministry-wide coordination and communication processes. The same applies to the Office of the Secretary General that is mainly concerned with providing support to the Secretary General in its oversight exercised on all departments. In these circumstances, the normal tendency of line departments is to focus on their own attributions (work in silos), impacting on the overall performance of the ministry.

There is acknowledgement at the level of the organization on the importance and prevalence of this issue - The difficulties in internal coordination and communication have been widely identified by the staff of the ministry as the first priority issue to be address in order to improve policy development and implementation.

Four main issues to improve the development and implementation of the policies in the fields you are involved:

1. Intersectorial and interdepartmental communication and coordination;
2. Access to and better management of training;
3. Depoliticization of recruitment and promotion;
4. Political support for education policies.

Text box: Priority issues to be addressed (source - Staff Survey used for this functional review process)

¹⁶ Revised Criteria and Procedures for Establishment of New Primary Schools, Report of the Commission for School Accommodation, February 2011.

9. Ministerial level policy coordination remains limited, with no formal procedure for policy formulation or legislative drafting in place and weak methodological guidance capacity.

Policy coordination, entailing methodological assistance provided to line departments in policy formulation, as well as ensuring consistency of the various policies different departments are proposing should be a key feature of a complex system such as the one put in place to manage the education sector. Looking from a government-wide perspective, this is a horizontal functions, whose standards of organization and performance are set by the Office of the Prime Minister (SPO and GCS are the two units within OPM to lead on this effort).

The central unit has provided guidance and procedures to establish policy units in ministries and to ensure their relation to the decision making process. The Strategy for improving Policy planning and coordination¹⁷ recognizes the importance of the ministerial units and plan for the increase of their capacity. Kosovo has decided to set-up joint unit to deal with European Integration and policy coordination. This is an excellent development since the European integration agenda and the one for *national* policies largely overlap.

However, when looking at the policy coordination unit in MEST, there are obvious shortfalls that could be noted. The unit has not imposed itself yet as the central coordinating department and does not necessarily play a role in policy development or legislative drafting the ministry is involved in (e.g., the unit does not endorse all policy documents or draft legislation that are prepared by the ministry). Moreover, ensuring the methodological framework and support for policy formulation is not a practice for the unit. Their current focus is on monitoring activities related to ministry's input to government-wide policies/documents.

Donor coordination is another horizontal task the unit is performing. Interviews with various stakeholders have pointed out the need for a more systemic approach to coordinating external aid. The existing management system for this does not produce the expected outcome, with competing and overlapping assistance, development partners pursuing their own priorities without real consideration for internal needs. The donor coordination meetings are generally poorly prepared and do not have the required frequency.

The unit is also responsible for managing the data system in education (EMIS). The staff is mostly focusing on data collection, without data analysis being used extensively to inform policy development. It should be noted that the data related to higher education are not yet included in this system (but managed separately by the Higher Education Department). Access to all the relevant data and the expected connection between the various databases could constitute a real opportunity for moving towards an evidence-based decision making in education.

¹⁷ Approved in 2016

Capacity of the staff of the department remains very limited. It is insufficient to allow for a proper performance of the horizontal mandate of the unit.

Ministerial policy units - example of Romania

In 2005 when ministerial policy units were established in Romanian central administration, preference was given to include graduates of the complex Young Professional Scheme (YPS). The *public managers* (special category of civil servants graduating YPS) were proficient in English/ French and had in-depth training in policy analysis and public management. They were leading on the horizontal processes at ministerial level – e.g., policy formulation, strategic planning – and were considered as the *change agents* of the ministry and administration at large.

Text box: Ministerial policy units in Romania

10. There is not enough capacity at the DEIPC to properly manage the European Integration agenda of the ministry

Despite the fact that most of the resources of the DEIPC are assigned to support the European Integration process, this is still not effectively managed. The capacity of the department for providing substantive inputs to the ambitious EI agenda of the ministry would require a set of skills and capabilities that are currently not possessed by the existing staff.

This lack of capacity impacts on the performance of the department functions and the results obtained – e.g., relating to counterparts at the European Commission (participation in working groups, negotiation of relevant chapter etc) as well as fulfilling the already committed measures included in various EI-related action plans.

Report on implementation of the National Plan for Implementation of the Stabilization and Association Agreement during January- June 2017

12.51% of measures in MEST responsibility have been fully implemented

Text box: Share of short term NPISAA measures implemented by MEST

11. The HRM Division plays a more *administrative support* role and does not seem to assume a strategic mandate to reform the existing HRM arrangements (especially workforce planning, recruitment and managing workforce).

The joint organization of administrative services within the *Department of finance and general services* is a good practice that generally occurs in case of small organizations. It allows central provision of support services, flexible allocation of resources for that under a cost-controlled framework. The department in MEST provides for HR, budget, IT and logistics, while legal and procurement are organized in separate units. On a positive note, it should also be observed that the department provides support to some of the small agencies under the ministry as well.

The previous organization of HR and budget as independent departments could be noted through the dual subordination that the head of HR and head of Budget is subject of – to the Secretary General on content and to the Head of Department on administrative aspects¹⁸. These two are the only units having a double subordination formally established.

¹⁸ Art 34 point 2 and Art 35 point 2 of the Systematization Act

The tasks of the HR department include coordination of HR planning, capacity development of ministerial staff or performance appraisal, however, the interviews and opinions expressed through the survey have pointed out to a more administrative role of the unit (i.e., personnel management) and less focus being given to strategic issues – such as workforce planning, use of incentives and mobility to ensure that there is the *right employee* in the *right position* at the *right time*.

A task that seems misplaced in the Division for Human Resources is represented by the responsibilities on human rights and the connection with the advisory office for good governance in the office of Prime Minister on the activities of human rights. These are being exercised by a human rights officer that generally operates with a high degree of independence from the rest of the unit. Given the interdependence of these tasks with the core education policies (mainly pre-university area) strong coordination is needed.

12. Recruitment process and procedures are perceived as politicized and seem to be directly affected by the existing requirements of MoF approving each individual recruitment

Managing recruitment processes and associated procedures at the level of the ministry is part of the responsibilities of the HR Division. The overall rules for recruitment are set by the general civil service policy, which is led by the Ministry of Public Administration. A new law on civil service is currently being drafted (its approval is scheduled for mid this year and for part of the government commitments under the Sector Reform Contract).

As it is the case in other countries in the region, there is a disconnect between the provisions of the Systematization act and the reality of the staff in posts. Ministry of Finance continues to apply a tight fiscal control, endorsing every single recruitment request from line ministries. Despite the fact that the FR team understands this mechanism and the need to operate under fiscal rules, this procedure clearly affects the credibility of the systematization act itself (e.g., why to approve systematization act with particular number of positions for each department, if ministries cannot then fully implement these and are required to obtain again MoF approval for each individual recruitment).

Interviews and opinions expressed through the survey have pointed out to recruitment process as being one major issue affecting the institution. Besides the complicated procedure (with MPA and MoF endorsement of each recruitment) the lack of transparency and politicization has been selected as key challenges that need to be addressed.

Issues affecting the organization

The survey results show that there is a lack of respect for Civil Servants laws and information of the staff on their rights. There is a high mentioning of political influence resulting in unfair recruitment. As such, the lack of qualified staff in various positions is regarded as an issue of concern that is highly influenced by politics and nepotism.

Text box: Opinions on main issues affecting the organization, as per the Staff survey applied for the FR

13. As long as the Education Inspectorate is concerned, the following conclusions could be highlighted:

13.1 Workload seem to be dominated by administrative tasks of managing complains, affecting the time and quality of their main inspection/ quality assurance function – Interviews pointed out to the time allocated to managing various complains from the education system (between 40 to 60%) that is negatively impacting on the time inspectors dedicate to their main duties.

13.2 Given its existing mandate, the Education Inspectorate seem to be understaffed and the profile of existing inspectors does not match the particular needs of the system – The current staffing profile of the inspectorate favors more general competencies. This would pose problems should the institution reform towards more specialized inspections where particular/specialized competencies and capacities are required.

13.3 The general focus of inspection activities is on respecting the rules/ procedures or curricula, and less attention is dedicated to overseeing the overall quality of the education process – This is a general tendency that was noted for the activity of the ministry. The inspection is mostly focused on ensuring compliance with the rules and procedures, or curricula and its practical delivery. There is less concern to methodological assistance, evaluating results of the education services provided and feedback to the policy development.

Finally, there are a couple of **general conclusions** that the FR team identified as key features of the general approach that set the trend for managing education sector in Kosovo. These are not limited to MEST and would probably require a more systemic approach towards public administration and policy development and evaluation. However, reforming important sectors (such as education) requires first of all acknowledgement of the root causes and then planning and implementing gradual measures to addressing those:

14. Controlling vs Supporting - There is a clear appetite for control and establishing associated mechanisms (to monitor/ control/ inspect) focused on respecting the rules/procedures and less concerned with the outcomes of the education process;

15. International Driven vs Internal Need - There is a certain lack of ownership over some important education policy results that seem to be more connected with development partners agenda and support, than with the internal need and acceptance for reforms.

5. Recommendations

1. Ensure appropriate political support over the key policy areas of the ministry by appointing Deputy Ministers as formal coordinators

In order to ensure a proper steering of the ministerial agenda, and to have adequate support provided to the Minister, in accordance with the second principle, the FR team proposes that deputy ministers are formally assigned responsibility around the main policy areas of the ministry. Briefly, this would require a decision of the Minister to allocate concrete coordination role to the deputy ministers and formalization of that decision.

Following internal consultation on the split of responsibilities (e.g., one deputy minister to formally assume coordination for pre-university education, one to oversee higher education and science etc), adjustments to the systematization act and internal procedures would be required. It is advisable that all modifications to the Systematization act are carried out simultaneously, hence this particular recommendation should be timely organized to match the impact of other proposals on the systematization.

Deputy ministers would then be included in all coordination mechanisms related to the area they are leading and would relate to the Heads of departments for guidance and political representation of their policy agenda. Attention should be given to the relation between the Deputy Ministers and the Secretary General, as the latter would remain the highest-ranking civil servant administratively leading the ministerial apparatus. The following table depicts the main activities to support implementation of the recommendation.

Activity	Deadline	OVI
Initiate internal consultation with existing DMs to agree on assigning the responsibilities (e.g., DM for pre-university; DM for higher education)	Month 1	Proposal for coordination role of DMs
Formally assign responsibility and accountability relation to concerned departments	Month 3	Ministerial decision on assigning specific coordination tasks to DMs
Adjust the systematization act to reflect the new accountability system in place	Month 6	New Systematization Act approved

2. Manage priorities with priority – consider alternative mechanisms to ensure priorities receive the attention they require, including the use of *Task Force* led by political appointee (DM or MA) with clear short term calendar of activities, milestones and deliverables

Taking into account the comprehensive reform agenda of the ministry and the current limited capacity, one way of addressing and delivering on key priorities is by engaging through a different, more focused and result-oriented mechanism.

The proposal is for the Minister or coordinating Deputy Minister to establish an *ad-hoc Task force* to deal with a particular issue that is priority activity for them.

The following aspects have to be considered when setting-up a task force:

- High priority level - the issue is top priority for the Minister/ Deputy Minister (e.g., all day in school initiative, improve teachers; assessment system, improve PISA scores or higher education institutions' assessment etc));
- One task force per priority issue - there is one task force dealing with a particular priority, and not several priorities being managed by the same task force;
- Well-defined priority - The priority issue is well-defined, could be measured and its success easily assessed. Very complicated measures, including several policy areas and interventions are not appropriate for this mechanism and would normally be addressed through the regular policy coordination mechanism of the ministry;
- Right expertise of the task force members – The experts assigned to the task force should be selected based on their expertise and capacity related to the task and not based on their current affiliation (i.e., position within the organization). Too little or too big number of experts is to be avoided (5 to 7 members would generally suffice);
- Strong monitoring of progress - The Minister or Deputy Minister leading the task force will actively monitor the progress – e.g., several meetings per week, identify bottlenecks and work to solve issues; careful attention to the agreed workplan;
- Limited life span - The task force is established to deliver on a particular policy priority. When its mission is completed, the task force ceases to exist.

The following activities are to be put in place to implement the recommendation:

Activity	Deadline	OVI
Select 1, maximum 2 policy priorities to focus the delivery mechanism on the short term	Month 2	Internal priority setting document approved by Minister
Establish a team of 5-7 staff of the ministry to lead on managing that priority	Month 3	Ministerial decision on setting up the task force
Task force to prepare a short-term workplan to ensure achievement of the intended results	Month 4	Short term workplan to implement priority policy measure
Ensure adequate procedure and active monitoring over the processes for delivery of the selected priority	Month 6	Procedures in place and regular monitoring mechanism with minister's involvement

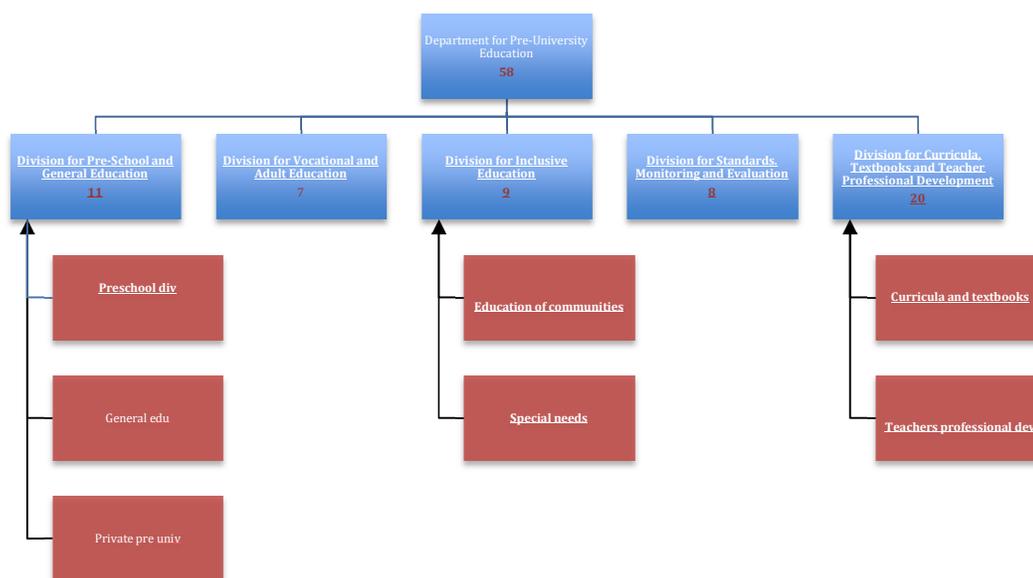
3. Promote an integrated approach to make best use of the existing limited available resources. More specifically, it is proposed to:

- **Establish a strong Pre-university Policy Department (merging the existing two) while analyzing the possibility of establishing a separate VET Department**
- **Integrate Higher Education and Science into one stronger department**

In accordance with 4th and 5th principle guiding the review – avoid scattering of resources and ensure at least a 1 to 2 management span – the FR team argues for a more integrated approach, where similar or connected policy areas of pre-university policy or higher education and science, respectively, are managed by strong, larger departments. Besides avoiding any coordination and communication issues stemming from organization in separate departments, this approach would allow for more managerial flexibility over assigning task to a larger number of employees, based on the priorities that should be addressed at a particular time.

Establishing a strong **Department for Pre-university Education** would mean merging the two existing departments dealing with pre-university policy (the Department for Pre-university Policy and Department for Development of Pre-university Education). Moreover, the human rights officer currently part of the Human Resources Division would be incorporated here. The existing structure of the two departments, as well as an indicative structure of the proposed department is presented in the scheme below (proposal on integrating the existing divisions is highlighted in red):

1. Department for Pre-university Education	2. Department for Development of Pre-university Education
1.1. Div. for pre-school education	2.1 Div. for curricula and school textbooks
1.2 Div. for general education	2.2 Div. for standards, monitoring and evaluation
1.3 Div. for VET	2.3 Div. for professional development of teachers
1.4 Div. for education of communities	
1.5 Div. for special needs education	
1.6 Div. for private pre-university education	



The proposed new Pre-university Education Department would consist of five divisions. Some of them exist in the current structure of the two departments (i.e., VET Division and Division for Standards Monitoring and Evaluation) while others have resulted through merging of existing divisions, based on the interdependency of their duties and international practice). The following table presents the proposed structure of the Department highlighting the divisions in its competence and their main role.

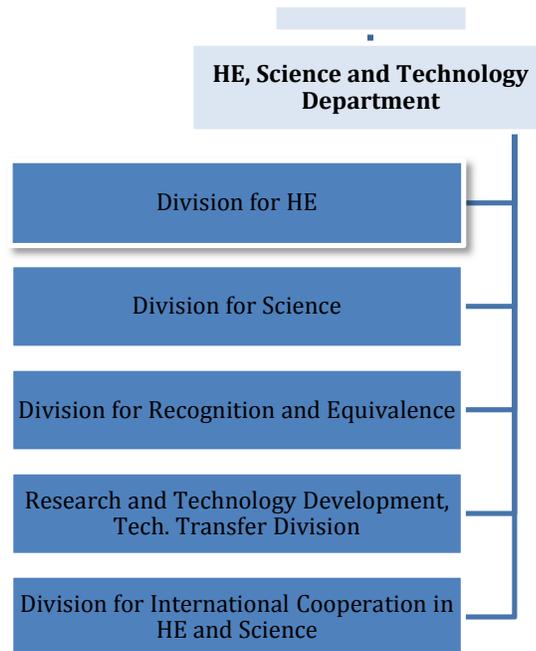
Department for Pre-university Education (58 positions)		
Division	Composed of the following existing:	Main role
1. Division for Pre-School and General Education (11 positions)	Pre-school education division General education division Private pre-university division	Development and oversight of pre-school education policy Development and oversight of pre-university policy Supports development of private providers of pre-university education School network policy/ school optimization
2. Division for Vocational and Adult Education (7 positions)	Division for Vocational and Adult Education	VET policy
3. Division for Inclusive Education (9 positions)	Div. for Education of communities Special Needs Division Human rights officer (from HR Unit)	Policy for education for all ethnic communities Inclusive education Human rights in education sector
4. Division for Standards Monitoring and Evaluation (8 positions)	Division for Standards Monitoring and Evaluation	Policy evaluation of education outcomes and standards Preparation and administering of tests for the three levels of pre-university education
5. Division for Curricula, Textbooks and Teacher Professional Development (20 positions)	Division for Curricula and School Textbooks Teacher Professional Development Division	Preparation and monitoring of implementation of curricula for pre-university education Support for school textbook Prepares and support implementation of teachers' professional development policy

Table 11 – Proposed structure and main role of the Department for Pre-university Education

In case the existing VET Agency is abolished (as part of the government effort to cut down on the executive agencies with less than 50 employees), and its staff relocated within the ministry, consideration should then be given to establishing a separate VET Department.

The same approach is proposed to bring together the Higher Education Department and the Department for Science and Technology. Given the current fragmentation of the two departments, with several divisions of one to three occupied positions (see *Table 8 - Divisions with 3 or less occupied positions and internal benchmarking* for details), as well as provided the very low level of funding allocated for research that the departments are to manage, a consolidation under one single management and interchangeable use of resources seem appropriate.

A potential structure of the Higher Education and Science Department is illustrated below:



Proposed structure of the Higher Education, Science and Technology Department

The following activities are to be carried out to implement the proposed recommendation:

Activity	Deadline	OVI
Initiate consultation on the proposed consolidation measures and the associated tasks	Month 2	Consultation document
Prepare job descriptions for the personnel and re-assign staff when needed	Month 4	New JDs prepared and staff assigned to new positions
Adjust the Systematization act to reflect the reorganization measures	Month 6	New Systematization Act approved

4. Prepare a ministerial policy coordination procedure that clearly describes the process for policy/legislative development and empower the EIPCD with a clear coordination role

Addressing the intra-ministerial coordination processes is a must in the current circumstances within MEST. Different units should have a clear framework for cooperation and coordination of their distinct policy initiatives. It is proposed that a formal coordination procedure is developed, mapping the core processes and associated responsibilities of the various departments. From the technical perspective, the role of the central coordinating unit is assigned to the European Integration and Policy Coordination Department.

The table below suggests the main division of responsibilities and interaction between the administrative units of the ministry for the horizontal functions of policy development and legislative drafted.

Policy development		Legislative drafting	
Initiating dept.	Drafting the policy doc; Defending the doc in front of other internal (and later) external admin units. Oversee respective policy implementation;	Initiating dept.	Preparing the draft legislation; Defending its provisions in front of other internal (and later) external admin units; Oversee implementation of the approved legislation.
EIPCD	Methodological guidance to LD on policy analysis and policy formulation; Comments on the draft policy document; Final endorsement that all policy development procedures have been respected and policy doc is ready for interministerial/ government debate	EIPCD	Assess compatibility of the proposed draft legislation with the existing policies; Assess the overall quality of substantiation note/ explanatory note/ RIA Endorse that all procedures have been respected and draft legislation is ready for interministerial/ government debate (if not task of a strengthened Legal Department)
Other concerned depts.	Input for policy development (when asked); Comments on the policy doc (that proposed policy solutions are aligned with their own policy interventions)	Other concerned depts..	Inputs for legislative drafting (when asked) Comments on the draft legislation (that is not contradicting other pieces of legislation in their area)

Table 12 – Main responsibilities for policy development and legislative drafting

The process for the development of the coordination procedure is to be organized with participation of representatives of all structures within the ministry. The EIPCD should be formally empowered to lead on this effort. The process itself would be a good opportunity (and a first step) for the EIPCD to exercise coordination and for all other structures of the ministry to engage in discussing further interactions and organizational details.

Activity	Deadline	OVI
Establish a working group under EIPCD coordination for preparation of the procedure	Month 4	Ministerial decision on establishing the WG
Draft the new procedure for ministerial level policy coordination and legislative drafting	Month 6	Procedures endorsed by OPM
Training for ministry staff on the new procedures	Month 7	Training delivered
New policy coordination and legislative drafting procedures approved	Month 8	Ministerial decision approving the procedures

5. Prioritize capacity development for EIPCD staff

As mentioned earlier, the capacity of the EIPCD to perform its core functions needs immediate strengthening. All areas of its mandate – policy coordination, European Integration and donor coordination – should be targeted through a focused and tailored capacity development program.

This capacity development effort should be directed only to the EIPCD staff and, based on the experience of other countries, it could include:

- Tailored ministerial policy coordination training – 5-7 days training covering practical issues around i) policy analysis - qualitative and quantitative policy analysis methods, preparation of policy documents, specificities of policy analysis in education, use of data in decision making, manner and tools for ministerial-level policy coordination, etc -, ii) European integration - communication and negotiation, status of EI process, education acquis and specificities in EI for the education sector -, iii) donor coordination – typology of donors and related procedures, IPA management, project management cycle, challenges in ensuring donor coordination for the education sector.
- Workshop with OPM (SPO and GCS) representatives to discuss the challenges of policy coordination, their assessment and expectations for the policy coordination function in MEST;
- Workshop with MEI representatives to discuss the challenges faced in European integration process, their assessment and expectations for the EI function in MEST;
- Use the opportunity provided through internal mobility of civil servants and agree with OPM/MEI to identify suitable candidates from other (similar) units in line ministries and have those integrated in EIPCD, even if only temporary;
- Use the Young Cell Scheme to recruit new staff for the department

Activity	Deadline	OVI
Design specific training program on EI and PC	Month 8	TNA and training program designed
Deliver practical training to EIPCD staff	Month 10	Training evaluation report
Use staff mobility schemes and ensure new staff is deployed at EIPCD	Month 8	2 specialists temporary joining the EIPCD
Engage in discussion with MEI for a national scheme to support EI	Month 10	Policy proposal on attracting and retaining highly skilled experts for EI process

6. Design and launch a Comprehensive Capacity Development Program specific for MEST

Similar to the previous recommendation, this one suggests an overarching capacity development program, targeting all staff of the ministry. The program should respond to the conclusions of the staff capacity assessment that needs to be conducted. However, in comparable situations, few modules have been prepared as part of such a program. Generally, these would include – policy analysis and strategic planning, public management, internal and external communication, monitoring and evaluation, human resources management, etc. A special module on managerial abilities could also be included, targeted those with managerial positions.

The core idea of this capacity development program is that it belongs and addresses the entire organization. MEST could be looking for funding to support preparation and delivery of this program, however, it should be treated as an integral program and not separated into parts/ modules managed separately, eventually with different rules. There should also be a central unit of the ministry that acts as the coordinator for the program. This role could be played by the HRM Division or EIPCD.

Activity	Deadline	OVI
Perform a Staff capacity assessment in MEST	Month 10	Staff capacity assessment report
Design the comprehensive capacity development program	Month 12	Capacity development program approved through ministerial decision
Deliver the capacity development program	Month 24	Capacity development program evaluation report

7. Prepare a HRM Strategy and annual implementation plan to ensure there is the right employee, in the right position at the right time. Change HRM towards a more strategic support function

Since HRM is critical to any organization, - that being also highlighted through the staff survey - the FR team proposes that a clear path for planning and managing human resources in MEST should be developed. That would take the form of a MEST Human resources management strategy to set the ground for organizational development in the ministry.

The process should be led by the HRM division and would include all departments of the ministry. Several workshops need to be organized to discuss and agree on the vision for HR development and the objectives for various components on HRM function. The main activities that need to be undertaken to implement the recommendation are presented below.

Activity	Deadline	OVI
Establish working group under the HR Division coordination to initiate the development of the MEST HRM Strategy	Month 5	Ministerial decision on establishing the working group
Prepare the first draft of the MEST HRM Strategy	Month 10	Consultation report on the draft MEST HRM Strategy
Prepare final MEST HRM Strategy	Month 14	MEST HRM Strategy approved

Activity	Deadline	OVI
Establish working group under the HR Division coordination to initiate the development of the MEST HRM Strategy	Month 5	Ministerial decision on establishing the working group
Prepare the first draft of the MEST HRM Strategy	Month 10	Consultation report on the draft MEST HRM Strategy
Prepare final MEST HRM Strategy	Month 14	MEST HRM Strategy approved

Activity	Deadline	OVI
Establish working group under the HR Division coordination to initiate the development of the MEST HRM Strategy	Month 5	Ministerial decision on establishing the working group
Prepare the first draft of the MEST HRM Strategy	Month 10	Consultation report on the draft MEST HRM Strategy
Prepare final MEST HRM Strategy	Month 14	MEST HRM Strategy approved

Human Resources Management Strategy of Ministry of Public Finance, Romania
The HRM Strategy was prepared in 2013 under the leadership of the MoF Human Resources General Directorate, with World Bank support. The strategy was organized around the following main components of HRM:

- Component 1 - Workforce Planning - which concerns in particular the way that the workforce is deployed and the identification of capacity requirements for the MoF which ensure that both the current and future needs of the organisation are properly planned for and met
- Component 2 - Recruitment and transfers - which looks at the recruitment processes in place. This includes the transfer of staff between different departments in the MoF and also from other parts of the Romanian public sector – currently this transfer process is particularly important as it is the only recruitment process in routine use by the Ministry.
- Component 3 - Managing the workforce - This is a wide-ranging component that includes promotion, the disciplinary process, ethical standards, salaries and wider reward systems
- Component 4 - Staff development - which concentrates particularly on training issues
- Component 5 - Staff performance - which looks in particular at the performance appraisal systems in use within the Ministry.
- Component 6 - the role of HR Departments – which depicts the role of the HR department as its focus moves towards a fully strategic approach

Text box: Example of ministerial HRM Strategy – MoF Romania, 2013

8. Engage in detailed discussions with MoF and MPA to agree one year in advance on the positions the ministry would be recruiting and ensure follow-up on these measures (respect workforce planning)

The recommendation is self-explanatory. Given the existing cumbersome procedures, with the approved systematization acts not being fully implemented and the MoF and MPA endorsing each new recruitment request, MEST should open discussion on what is the exact level of resources it could rely on during the following fiscal year. If the budget process is the right time to address this, then ministry representatives should do so and formally agree on the additional funds for HR that would be allocated, hence the recruitment processes it should be prepared for. Once agreed, MoF and MPA should not be in position to change this.

Activity	Deadline	OVI
Prepare MEST workforce plan	Month 8	MEST workforce plan internally agreed
Consult MPA and MoF on the workforce plan and proposed recruitment schedule	Month 9	Consultation document

9. Establish a PIU and agree with donors (e.g., initially with bilateral ones) that they would allow and empower ministry to fully manage the projects

Ownership is critical for internalization of reform measures. If processes are fully internationally driven, some results might be noted, but, on the long run, the sustainability of these interventions remains very limited. Different administrations that faced this difficulty tried to respond in different manner, based on their own administrative tradition, relation and dependency on the donor community etc. The FR team proposes a phased approach that is to be built around the setting-up of a Project Implementation Unit.

Kosovo's administration has developed and grown. The times when international community was actually running the country are behind. The European Union, the main donor for the country, has recognized the development and maturity of the Kosovar administration by agreeing to the use of sector budget support for the country. That means that EU will no longer use its own system and mechanism to run project to support particular sectors, but would directly disburse funds to the Kosovo Treasury pending on the country reaching some commonly agreed targets.

These new developments, as well as the recent experience of the countries in the region, suggest that more and more, projects and funds of the donor community would be directly managed by the Kosovar authorities, using the national legislation and procedures. Public administration should be ready for this - having the right capacity in place for funds/project management is a joint interest of the country and the development partners.

The proposal the FR team is putting forward is not complicated. It entails the formal establishment of a PIU that would be responsible for planning, managing and implementing the projects the ministry is subject to. In the first stage, the PIU could be established around the existing World Bank PIU implementing a multi-year WB project. However, it is important that the PIU does not deal exclusively with the WB financed projects (otherwise there is no change to the existing situation) but manages funds from various donors to implement several projects.

In the initial stage, few donors that pool funds together would suffice. It might not be all the assistance that the donors are providing to education, but some of it. The core is that it starts with several donors financing few projects and that all this is managed by a single team. The status of that team is also important. In member states, or EU candidate countries closer to accession, this role is ensured by civil servants. In Kosovo it could start with a mixed system - donors and ministry could jointly provide funding for the salary of the PIU members.

In time, the system could evolve, with a PIU certification mechanism applied across government, fully civil service running the system and potential financial stimulus for the civil servants in the PIUs. At this stage, for MEST the FR team argues for the initial measures of such a systemic approach - develop the

existing WB PIU and develop ministerial capacity while increasing its ownership over the key promoted reforms.

Activity	Deadline	OVI
Develop ToRs for the new PIU, based on the existing World Bank-supported PIU	Month 3	PIU ToRs agreed by MEST
Engage in discussion with different donors on operationalization of the PIU and their potential interest/ support	Month 5	Consultation
Agree on the organizational model for the PIU and ensure adequate staffing and working procedure	Month 8	Functional PIU

10. Support the promotion of the new Law on Inspection of Education and act upon its provisions

Most of the issues affecting the Education Inspectorate seem to find their solution within the new draft law on the Education Inspectorate. Besides the formal approval of the law, the following measures should be carried out, so that the inspectorate fully performs in accordance with its newly updated mandate:

- Ensure appropriate staff is engaged as per the criteria in the law and their roles and duties are well defined
- Identify the capacity development needs for the staff (based on their new roles) and plan appropriate training and capacity building;
- Ensure that the unit for Administrative (legal) Inspection, a unit for Pedagogical Inspection and a Unit for Teacher Performance Assessment are well set

Activity	Deadline	OVI
Ensure proper defending of the law in the Education Committee of the Assembly	Month 3	Law approved
Prepare implementation plan of the new law and act accordingly	Month 5	Implementation plan agreed by MEST

6. Calendar for implementation of the FR recommendations – short term

<i>Activity</i>	<i>Deadline</i>	<i>OVI</i>
R1. Ensure appropriate political representation over the key policy areas of the ministry by appointing Deputy Ministers as formal coordinators		
Initiate internal consultation with existing DMs to agree on assigning the responsibilities (e.g., DM for pre-university; DM for higher education)	Month 1	Proposal for coordination role of DMs
Formally assign responsibility and accountability relation to concerned departments	Month 3	Ministerial decision on assigning specific coordination tasks to DMs
Adjust the systematization act to reflect the new accountability system in place	Month 6	New Systematization Act approved
R2. Manage priorities with priority – consider alternative mechanisms to ensure priorities receive the attention they require, including the use of Task Force led by political appointee (DM or MA) with clear short term calendar of activities, milestones and deliverables		
Select 1, maximum 2 policy priorities to focus the delivery mechanism on the short term	Month 2	Internal priority setting document approved by Minister
Establish a team of 5-7 staff of the ministry to lead on managing that priority	Month 3	Ministerial decision on setting up the task force
Task force to prepare a short-term workplan to ensure achievement of the intended results	Month 4	Short term workplan to implement priority policy measure
Ensure adequate procedure and active monitoring over the processes for delivery of the selected priority	Month 6	Procedures in place and regular monitoring mechanism with minister's involvement
R3. Promote an integrated approach to make best use of the existing limited available resources - Establish a strong Pre-university Policy Department (merging the existing 2) while analyzing the possibility of establishing a separate VET Department - Integrate Higher Education and Science into one stronger department		
Initiate consultation on the proposed consolidation measures and the associated tasks	Month 2	Consultation document
Prepare job descriptions for the personnel and re-assign staff when needed	Month 4	New JDs prepared and staff assigned to new positions
Adjust the Systematization act to reflect the reorganization measures	Month 6	New Systematization Act approved
R4. Prepare a ministerial policy coordination procedure that clearly describes the process for policy/legislative development and empower the EIPCD with a clear coordination role		
Establish a working group under EIPCD coordination for preparation of the procedure	Month 4	Ministerial decision on establishing the WG
Draft the new procedure for ministerial level policy coordination and legislative drafting	Month 6	Procedures endorsed by OPM
Training for ministry staff on the new procedures	Month 7	Training delivered
New policy coordination and legislative drafting procedures approved	Month 8	Ministerial decision approving the



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		procedures
R5. Prioritize capacity development for EIPCD staff		
Design specific training program on EI and PC	Month 8	TNA and training program designed
Deliver practical training to EIPCD staff	Month 10	Training evaluation report
Use staff mobility schemes and ensure new staff is deployed at EIPCD	Month 8	2 specialists temporary joining the EIPCD
Engage in discussion with MEI for a national scheme to support EI	Month 12	Policy proposal on attracting and retaining highly skilled experts for EI process
R6. Design and launch a Comprehensive Capacity Development Program specific for MEST		
Perform a Staff capacity assessment in MEST	Month 10	Staff capacity assessment report
Design the comprehensive capacity development program	Month 12	Capacity development program approved through ministerial decision
Deliver the capacity development program	Month 24	Capacity development program evaluation report
R7. Prepare a HRM Strategy and annual implementation plan to ensure there is the right employee, in the right position at the right time. Change HRM towards a more strategic support function		
Establish working group under the HR Division coordination to initiate the development of the MEST HRM Strategy	Month 5	Ministerial decision on establishing the working group
Prepare the first draft of the MEST HRM Strategy	Month 10	Consultation report on the draft MEST HRM Strategy
Prepare final MEST HRM Strategy	Month 14	MEST HRM Strategy approved
R8. Engage in detailed discussions with MoF and MPA to agree one year in advance on the positions the ministry would be recruiting and ensure follow-up on these measures (respect workforce planning)		
Prepare MEST workforce plan	Month 8	MEST workforce plan internally agreed
Consult MPA and MoF on the workforce plan and proposed recruitment schedule	Month 9	Consultation document
R9. Establish a PIU and agree with donors (e.g., initially with bilateral ones) that they would allow and empower ministry to fully manage the projects		
Develop ToRs for the new PIU, based on the existing World Bank-supported PIU	Month 3	PIU ToRs agreed by MEST
Engage in discussion with different donors on operationalization of the PIU and their potential interest/ support	Month 5	Consultation
Agree on the organizational model for the PIU and ensure adequate staffing and working procedure	Month 8	Functional PIU
R10. Support the promotion of the new Law on Inspection of Education and act upon its provisions		
Ensure proper defending of the law in the Education Committee of the Assembly	Month 3	Law approved
Prepare implementation plan of the new law and act accordingly	Month 5	Implementation plan agreed by MEST



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Gant chart for the main activities and key milestones to implement FR recommendations

	M1	M2	M3	M4	M5	M6	M7	M8	M9	M10	M11	M12	M13	M14	M15	M16	M17	M18	M19	M20	M21	M22	M23	M24	
R1	█	█	█	█	█	█																			
R2		█	█	█	█	█																			
R3		█	█	█	█	█																			
R4				█	█	█	█	█																	
R5								█	█	█	█	█													
R6										█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
R7					█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█											
R8								█	█																
R9			█	█	█	█	█	█																	
R10			█	█	█																				

