

KOSOVO AND 2030 AGENDA: From Political Rhetoric to Concrete Actions



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Programme: **Sustainable Development**

Date of Publication: **July 2019**



Zhvillimi i Qëndrueshëm
Sustainable Development

Institute for Development Policy – INDEP

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Supported by:



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This paper was published with the support of the Rockefeller Brothers Fund. The content of this document, including express opinions, does not necessarily reflect those of INDEP's donors, their staff, associates, or the Board.

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1. Introduction

In 2016, Kosovo institutions released a key policy document, the National Development Strategy (NDS) 2016-2021 that would define country's development path for the next five years. The Strategy completely neglects one vital sector in great need of institutional interventions, health. While, only to some extent deals with justice sector as it tends to offers solutions only in relation to economic growth - when indeed this is a sector where corruption continues to flourish and undermine the overall development process in the country. Albeit the strategy contains elements of development, it entirely lacks an elaboration of the main development agenda which the country pledged to implement, the 2030 Agenda. Despite of some efforts in initiating sparks of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) implementation, Kosovo institutions have continued to ignore the importance of 2030 Agenda. In contrast to other countries that have already established strategies for nationalizing 2030 Agenda and published evaluation reports on implementation of SDGs, Kosovo today falls short of a clear development framework for the 2030 Agenda and a clear budget line for its implementation, and established development strategies that barely align with Agenda's 17 goals.

Knowing Kosovo's stance in the context of sustainable development helps in outlining the path and vision the country needs to follow. Therefore, the essence of this report is to evaluate Kosovo's efforts in meeting the 2030 Agenda, and present policy and data collection challenges. The country is not a member of the United Nations (UN) neither of the European Union (EU), but the attainment of 2030 Agenda helps Kosovo towards integration into both of the systems as well. Numerous countries, have already integrated SDGs in their strategies towards EU accession. Albania, for example, has already included the 2030 Agenda in its European Integration strategy and has published its first evaluation of national strategy from an SDG perspective. Kosovo possess the capacity to follow suit, as it provides all the necessary mechanisms to do so; international organizations concerned with development policies, active civil society and functional institutions.

This report consists of two sections. The first section presents brief introduction of how 2030 Agenda came to place, explains the role of main institutions on development and their relation with SDGs. In this section, analysis of Kosovo's policy-making efforts in attaining the 2030 Agenda are addressed as well. This part notes that 2030 Agenda consist of high importance for the development path of Kosovo and its integration process into international arena. The second part aims to evaluate the progress country has achieved towards attainment of the SDGs. It presents a statistical overview of the most recent trends of the SDG indicators in Kosovo, in which the specific years depend on data availability for the individual indicators. All 16 SDGs are grouped into five pillars - 1) environmental, 2) economic, 3) human rights, 4) education, and 5) health.

Challenges of data collection, finding reliable and consistent information regarding the indicators of SDGs are noted as obstacles towards measuring country's progress in attaining 2030 Agenda. This paper, thus, encourages relevant institutions to provide data and improve capacities to prepare detailed and reliable data. It is therefore that Institute for Development Policy (INDEP) decided to commit in evaluating country's efforts towards 2030 Agenda, compile a report of where obstacles remain in

defining development path for the country. This in order to enable a realistic implementation of the SDGs, and stimulate official institutions in setting clear framework for the development spectrum in the Kosovar context.

2. Context of SDGs

2.1. Precursors to SDGs

The UN has led the efforts towards advancing sustainable development through high level conferences. In 1992, the Earth Summit was held in Rio de Janeiro – a significant global conference regarding environment and sustainable development.¹ In 2000, another global effort was initiated in tackling the indignity of poverty, 189 countries signed the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). For 15 years, among numerous development priorities, the initiative drove progress in establishing measurable and universally-agreed objectives for education, health, poverty and hunger.² The legacy and achievements of MDGs paved the way for in 2015, the UN to further integrate sustainable development at all levels of policy making of countries by replacing MDGs with Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) – the new goals - by adopting the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

It is stated that the 2030 Agenda is “...of unprecedented scope and significance. It is accepted by all countries and is applicable to all, taking into account different national realities, capacities and levels of development and respecting national policies and priorities. These are universal goals and targets which involve the entire world, developed and developing countries alike....”³ At the core of this Agenda are 17 sustainable development goals, 169 associated targets and 230 Indicators – each goal has its assigned number of targets and indicators which help to measure the level of progress towards the targets. The initiative sets forward the following goals:

1. End poverty in all its forms everywhere,
2. End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture,
3. Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages,
4. Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all,
5. Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls,
6. Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all,

¹ UN Conference on Environment and Development (1992). Accessible at: <https://www.un.org/geninfo/bp/enviro.html>

² United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). Sustainable Development goals, Background on the goals. Accessible at: <https://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/sustainable-development-goals/background.html>

³ UN Resolution A/RES/70/1 – Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Accessible at: <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/index.php?page=view&type=111&nr=8496&menu=35>

7. Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all,
8. Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all,
9. Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation,
10. Reduce inequality within and among countries,
11. Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable,
12. Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns,
13. Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts,
14. Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development,
15. Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss,
16. Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels,
17. Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development.

While the MDGs remain as the antecessor of SDGs, the World Bank Group (WBG) and Human Development Reports (HDR) tend to be crucially linked with SDGs as well, such precursors form the SDG package in which all of them operate based on meeting one agenda.

The World Bank Group (WBG) holds a pioneering role guiding the UN system in reaching the SDGs as the goals are aligned with the WBG's objectives. The WBG is working with its member countries to deliver on the 2030 Agenda through three key areas: 1) finance, 2) data, and 3) implementation – facilitating countries to attain the SDGs.⁴ The Bank's goals align with the SDGs, notably the poverty and inequality related SDG targets. Many of the other SDGs are directly linked with the Bank's work, namely, Health (SDG 3), Education (SDG4), Water (SDG6), Energy (SDG7), and Climate Change (SDG13).⁵ The World Bank is also formally engaged with monitoring and developing of around 42 indicators. As a result, Bank's role remnants to be critical in the development arena as it tends to

⁴ The World Bank. Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the 2030 Agenda. Accessible at: <http://www.worldbank.org/en/programs/sdgs-2030-agenda>

⁵ World Bank Group Blogs. The World Bank's role in SDG monitoring. Accessible at: <https://blogs.worldbank.org/opendata/world-bank-s-role-sdg-monitoring>

facilitate the implementation of SDGs by providing funding opportunities, poverty reduction schemas, and promoting long-term economic and social development, mainly to developing world. Though World Bank as an inter-governmental institution rather focused on the economy of aforementioned aspects, in 1990 the first Human Development Report presented a new approach for advancing human wellbeing essentially focused on the richness of human life – aspects crucially linked with the 2030 Agenda. As countries in the international community move towards meeting the SDGs, the human development approach continues to serve as facilitating approach “to articulating the goals and improving people’s well-being by ensuring an equitable, sustainable and stable planet.”⁶ Both the World Bank Group and Human Development Reports play essential roles in exploring different themes through the development and have had an extensive influence on development debate globally and regionally, the correlation of them with SDGs has enabled such bodies to report, monitor the attainment of the 2030 Agenda, explore ideas, and constructively challenge policies.

On the other hand, for members of the European Union and aspiring member countries the EU plays a key role in bringing about sustainable development. The EU has been presenting integrated policy strategies that tackle directly sustainable development in order to generate better regulations and guiding principles. A particular one is the EU Sustainable Development Strategy that aims to making “an efficient use of resources able to tap the ecological and social potential of the economy and in the end able to ensure prosperity, environmental protection and social cohesion.”⁷ As Kosovo’s aspirations remain focused on the EU membership, the sustainable Development Strategy of the EU, although not legally binding, should be seriously taken into consideration when establishing key development policies, making sure policies fully align with EU development principles.

2.2. Relevance of the Agenda 2030 for Kosovo

The adoption of the 2030 Agenda is on voluntary basis, numerous countries already consider the Sustainable Development framework a vision for how their country should be in the 2030. Kosovo happens to follow its development plan based on the same idea and the best illustrator of this is the agreement of the Assembly in passing the resolution to commit in undertaking steps towards achieving 2030 Agenda.⁸ The resolution aimed to establish partnership with different stakeholders for the implementation of the Agenda and to functionalize a Council to monitor and ensure the implementation of the SDGs. Both end-results of the resolution have been left to the rhetorical discourse. The partnership has been rather immobile with no significant efforts in meeting the 2030 Agenda, and the Council on SDGs rather inactive after one year of establishment with no evaluation reports or sustainable development framework generated so far.

⁶ UNDP Human Development Reports. About Human Development. Accessible at: <http://hdr.undp.org/en/humandev>

⁷ European Commission. EU Sustainable Development Strategy. Accessible at: http://ec.europa.eu/environment/sustainable-development/strategy/index_en.htm

⁸ Kosovo’s SDG Progress 2018. Accessible at: <http://www.kuvendikosoves.org/?cid=2,1139>

Kosovo as a country where millions of funds have been infused in order to create a modern statecraft and sustainable development does no longer is an embryonic concept, the 2030 Agenda poses an important role for the future of the country. A role that pertains to be rather unique from other countries, the Agenda intends to shed light on the country's ability to act as an entity able to nationalize global initiatives, contribute on global matters, and demonstrate aptitude to integrate itself into the international arena.

The 2030 Agenda tends to prepare the country towards the EU integration. This considering that the nationalization of SDG and the EU accession process remain closely linked as complementarities between both accession agendas exist. Although the EU integration agenda and 2030 Agenda differ in many aspects such as in dimension of scope (EU agenda narrower) and on their end goals (one being achievement of sustainable development goals, the other membership), they both tackle a number of similar issues that push countries towards progression. Knowing such relation, Albania has integrated 2030 Agenda to its European integration process.⁹ Yet, when it comes to Kosovo, in its key developing document - National Development Strategy (NDS) 2016-2021 - the country only affirms that "... is at an important stage of its development agenda towards European integration in all areas" – with no further elaboration on how Agenda 2030 could serve as the main driver on reforms or what policies could be undertaken in order to facilitate the implementation of SDGs mutually reinforced with EU requirements.

Since September 2015 the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its 17 SDGs, the EU has played a crucial role in the process. The European Council confirmed that the EU and its member states will act as frontrunners when it comes to the implementation of the SDGs, specifically adhering that: " the EU and the Member States are strongly committed to implementing the 2030 Agenda in a full, coherent, comprehensive, integrated and effective manner in close cooperation with partners and other stakeholders, including sub-national authorities, civil society, the private sector, social partners and academia."¹⁰ Albeit this is not directed to non-EU member states, one of the European Commission's most important agencies, Eurostat, is already issuing reports particularly for seven candidates and potential EU members,¹¹ on their progress mainly on five SDGs (including Kosovo). This shows that the implementation of SDGs within the aspiring countries' region is taken seriously by EU institutions. Hence, the progress in implementing these measures will be of great importance to the integration process. In this matter, Kosovo holding the status of potential

⁹ Republic of Albania, 2018. Voluntary National Review on Sustainable Development Goals. Accessible at: https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/20257ALBANIA_VNR_2018_FINAL2.pdf

¹⁰ Council of the European Union, 2017. Outcome of Council meeting. Accessible at: <http://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-10370-2017-INIT/en/pdf>

¹¹ Presently, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Albania, Serbia and Turkey have candidate status, while Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo hold the potential candidates' status. See Eurostat, 2019. Enlargement countries – indicators for Sustainable Development Goals. Accessible at: https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Enlargement_countries_-_indicators_for_Sustainable_Development_Goals#General_overview

candidate, putting efforts in nationalizing the 2030 Agenda framework, establishing focal point instruments that would contribute towards achieving SDGs serves in setting positive trends of its progress towards the EU integration.

The government itself had recognized that the first contractual agreement signed between Kosovo and the European Union, the Stabilization and Association Agreement 2016, aiming to enforce good governance, rule of law and economic development, should be analyzed particularly from SDGs perspective.¹² Consequently as 2030 Agenda's relevance increases for aspiring EU members and for Kosovo, SDG nationalization and integration into country's top developing priorities remnants vital for country's future into EU. Simultaneously, initiatives regarding the implementation of the 2030 Agenda should began to enter into practice and generate their effects, otherwise if they continue to be used only in the political discourse the country risks undermining the importance of the Agenda which that follows with a negative impact on its European future.

¹² Assembly of Republic of Kosovo. Kosovo's SDG Progress 2018. Accessible at: <http://www.kuvendikosoves.org/?cid=2,1139>

3. Institutional Framework

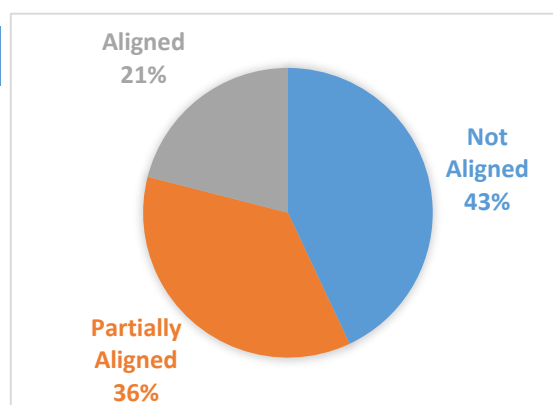
Thematic groups of sustainable development are deeply rooted in the legislative framework, such as for example; the Law on Environmental Protection¹³ or the Law on Agriculture and Rural Development.¹⁴ Yet there is a clear lack of institutions in place to implement it. Hitherto, Kosovo has largely failed to institutionalize the 2030 Agenda and integrate Agenda's critical indicators into key policy developing documents.

There is a particular need for integrating global goals into domestic level in order to accelerate action on the goals and create a common vision for path forward. A large number of countries have institutionalized the share implementation of SDGs. For instance, the Netherlands, has appointed Ministry of Foreign Affairs the leading body in consultation with other institutions, while has established SDG focal points to all ministries.¹⁵ Neighboring countries like Albania and Montenegro have followed suit.¹⁶ While in Kosovo, not only the Council for the implementation of SDGs continues to remain largely inactive, the country has largely failed to even integrate SDGs in policy documents and actions when the opportunity to do so existed.

Ministry of Health

Strategies reviewed:

1) Sectoral Strategy for Health 2017 – 2021



Before passing to the next chapter that deals concretely and in-depth with the country's core document on development, the National Development Strategy 2016-2021, the Institute for Development Policy (INDEP) reviewed 4 strategies of two central bodies, Ministry of Health and Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare (MLSW) in order to understand whether the SDG goals are reflected in these

¹³ Assembly of Republic of Kosovo. Law on Environmental Protection, Law No. No.03/L-025. Accessible at: http://www.assembly-kosova.org/common/docs/ligjet/2009_03-L-025_en.pdf

¹⁴ Assembly of Republic of Kosovo. Law on Agriculture and Rural Development, Law on Law No. 03/L-098. Accessible at: https://www.kuvendikosoves.org/common/docs/ligjet/2009_03-L-98_al.pdf

¹⁵ Statistics Netherlands, 2018. The Sustainable Development Goals: the situation for the Netherlands. Accessible at: <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/59f7031e8dd0415634a7fc46/t/5b9b8d8388251b4c42ff386f/1536920971476/the-sustainable-development-goals.pdf>

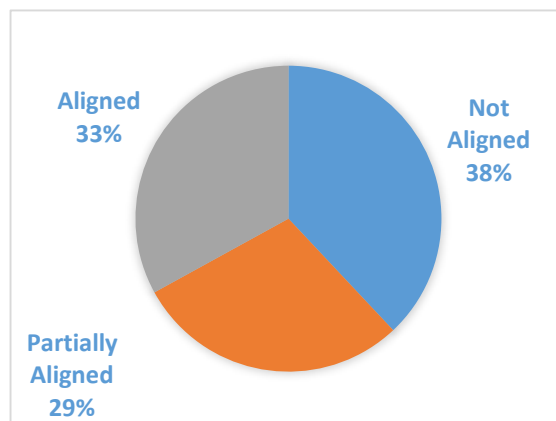
¹⁶ Council of Ministers, Republic of Albania and United Nations Agencies in Albania, 2018. Albania, Report on Harmonization of Sustainable Development Goals with Existing Sectoral Policies. Accessible at: <https://www.un.org.al/sites/default/files/Albania%20Report%20on%20the%20Harmonization.pdf>

documents. INDEP has selected these two institutions due to its limited internal capacity, its close work with pension reform working group, and currently the organization is in the process of publishing two papers on pension reforms and health insurance issues in Kosovo.

Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare

Strategies Reviewed:

- 1) Action Plan to Increase youth Employment 2018-2020
- 2) MLSW Sectoral Strategy 2018-2022
- 3) Strategy on inclusion of Roma and Ashkali communities into the Kosovo society 2017-2021



The graphs show the alignment of SDGs with the strategies generated by the afore-mentioned institutions at the central level. Deriving from a comparative analysis between the SDG target and the goal of the strategy, we looked whether the SDG target was reflected in the document. If the goal was reflected, we then look to what degree was that alignment – fully, partially or not aligned.¹⁷ As it can be seen in the presented graphs below, almost more than 35 % of all documents showed to remain not aligned with the SDG goals, with a very low % of alignment.

¹⁷ The applied terms are referred as follow: Aligned – Exist a target in the planning strategy that is consistent to an SDG target; Partially Aligned – Exist a target in the planning strategy that is consistent to an SDG target but no entirely either in its scope or the aim; Not Aligned – Exist no target in the planning strategy that is consistent to an SDG target

4. Policy and Data Challenge

4.1. National Development Strategy (NDS) 2016-2021

Development has been a vital part of the National Development Strategy of Kosovo (2016-2022). The strategy established a development plan that is focused on ‘new approach to development policy’ that recognizes the need for addressing all factors that currently limited economic growth and improvement of standard of living, accordingly applying an approach that ‘treats development as a multi-faceted enterprise’.¹⁸ Compared to other national strategies, the strategy 2016-2021 contains an improved quality and tend to address pillars that are crucially linked mainly with the economic aspect.¹⁹ The strategy correspondingly selects the priorities and measures needed to be undertaken towards eliminating obstacles and enable economic development. The NDS identifies four pillars as the areas where intervention is needed the most: 1) on the human capital with focus on generating labor, technical skills; 2) good governance and rule of law in order to remove particularly barriers remaining in the market economy; 3) competing industries; and 4) infrastructure focused mainly on energy.

The strategy offers concrete actions for implementation of each pillars contented with other areas of strategic planning, prioritization of financial aid, building of capacities, monitoring of progress, as well as establishment of a fund for development and employment. The strategy however, remains limited in its scope of priorities. In order for a country to achieve sustainable development, a wide range of issues interlinked with one another are necessary to be tackled. In overall, what the strategy does is link all four pillars towards reaching one predominant goal, that of employment. While on one hand, its focus on human capital, good governance and enterprises, with reasoning that Kosovo’s young labor force provides cheap labor completely neglects human development potential and its relation with the overall sustainable development. On the other, the strategy as a key policy document is developed around the government’s aim to justify the construction a coal-firing power plant²⁰ - an action that tend to jeopardize the environmental sustainability process, which has also been a highly contested process by the civil society organizations in Kosovo.

Four policy areas that the Strategy is focused on, are dealt independently on their own space without explaining their shared feature between them and the SDG targets. INDEP’s assessment of the strategy shows that these areas stand in some ways directly or indirectly linked with 11 SDGs, out of 16 applicable goals to the case of Kosovo. Yet, an extremely small number of targets of 11 SDGs are covered by the strategy’s policy areas, although some of the policy areas were country-specific the evaluation shows that on average each area covers around 3 targets out of the total number of targets

¹⁸ Government of Republic of Kosovo, 2016. National Development Strategy 2016-2021 (NDS). Accessible at: http://www.kryeministri-ks.net/repository/docs/National_Development_Strategy_2016-2021_ENG.pdf

¹⁹ INDEP, 2018. Sustainable Development Indicators in Kosovo. Accessible at: <https://indep.info/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/Sustainable-Development-Indicators.pdf?fbclid=IwAR2F0WliveRwcU4FjRQIX925yQ7bj7cZ7EYdBa1AbbYBhJKgijcpuWR3SBk>

²⁰ Ibid.

of each SDG. Below is clear presentation (Table 1) of the direct number of goals and targets linked to each policy area of the NDS.

Table 1: The alignment of National Development Strategy policy areas with SDGs and its targets

NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY (2016-2021)	SDGS LINKED WITH NDS	NUMBER OF TARGETS RELATED TO POLICY AREAS
1. HUMAN CAPITAL	SDG4 (10 Targets)	6
	SDG8 (12 Targets)	2
2. GOOD GOVERNANCE AND THE RULE OF LAW	SDG10 (10 Targets)	1
	SDG12 (14 Targets)	1
3. COMPETITIVE INDUSTRIES	SDG2 (8 Targets)	1
	SDG7 (5 Targets)	1
	SDG9 (8 Targets)	1
	SDG10 (10 Targets)	1
3. INFRASTRUCTURE	SDG4 (10 Targets)	4
	SDG5 (9 Targets)	1
	SDG6 (8 Targets)	1
	SDG7 (5 Targets)	1
	SDG9 (8 Targets)	3
	SDG11 (10 Targets)	2
SDG15 (12 Targets)	1	

In addition to the insufficient number of targets integrated in the strategy, Table 1 proves that such key policy document seems to lack an application of an indicator-based approach when outlining the challenges. Because of the limited number of tackled targets, automatically leads to conclusion that from all the indicators a target may have, the strategy has included only some of them.

The degree of the overlap between the SDGs and National Development Strategy (2016-2021) policy areas, leaves country behind in the realization of the goals and define the priorities in regards to sustainable development. As consequence, in the future when the time comes to report the UN or to the EU on the implementation of the SDGs, Kosovo will be left behind other countries in the region that have already infused the 2030 Agenda in their domestic policies. Important to note is the fact that the integration of the SDGs in the National Strategy it also helps the country in orienting the international donors towards the areas in need of urgent intervention – areas that are rather obscuring the country's ability in framing its development future. For instance, both health and justice sector are deemed as highly in need of institutional interventions (as analyses in the second section will show) and call for a development-oriented strategy for them, yet the Strategy misses both of such critical sectors for development.

The strategy, at the same time, lacks explanation over the trends each policy area follows. For examples, it briefly presents the reasons why that policy area has been considered an issue, what are the challenges and solutions, and a closing paragraph with the impact on the economic development. This without demonstrating if the last years have followed a progress or not, if yes, what policies were undertaken that helped progress. If regress appeared, then proving with accurate data would only increase Strategy's reliability.

The 2016-2021 Strategy provides essential detailed information on all policy areas in relation to the economic development in the country. However, generally pertains to be largely irrelevant guidance on demonstrating the path Kosovo needs to follow in attaining sustainable development, perhaps the sector where it loses its credibility and relevance the most is particularly for the health and justice sector as both of these sectors are completely left out.

4.2. Data collection challenges

The willingness and substantial commitment of Kosovo's institutions in undertaking sound policy actions that contribute towards the achievements of SDGs and providing reliable data in monitoring country's progress stand at the heart of framing a national vision for the year 2030. Identifying policy gaps and acceleration of intervention in policy areas remain a challenging process in cases where data are missing. Although Kosovo's institutions including Kosovo's Agency of Statistics (KAS) produce data series that to some extent could serve as basis for monitoring progress on a limited number of sectors, the availability and collection of data continue to remain highly challenging. While collecting the data three main challenges have been reported as obstacles that obscure the evaluation of country's efforts towards SDG implementation. Based on the following considerations, INDEP has compiled a table presenting the availability of the data per indicator in Kosovo from the global indicator framework (Table 2).

1. Lack of accountability when it comes to providing data

Kosovo Agency of Statistics neither Ministries nor other official institutions in Kosovo do not provide data regarding their respective functions. Exist scarce statistics, insufficient to evaluate institution's work towards reaching the SDG targets, even when data is present, access to those data is difficult as they remain close for the public access.

2. Inconsistent data among and within institutions

Institutions tend to provide data that do not correspond with other data provided by other state-owned bodies. In addition, data confusion and inconsistencies appear to be present within one institution as well something that undermines data reliability. For example, Kosovo Agency of Statistics tends to put different numbers in the webpage and different ones on its publications.²¹

3. Data lacks correlation with the SDG Targets

KAS and other official institutions such as Kosovo's Central Bank tend to not provide sufficient data that correlates completely with the SDG Targets. For example, data for Indicator 11.6.1 specifies that data should be gathered for solid waste that has adequate treatment by cities, while in Kosovo there is data available only for waste that is collected by Regional Waste Management Companies. A number of reports, e.g. A study of World Bank 2015 warns that the so far

²¹ See for example in page 118 of <http://ask.rks-gov.net/media/2074/te-dhenat-kryesore.pdf> data for the same variables (landline telephone and mobile telephone) varies from data on its webpage accessible in this link: http://askdata.rks-gov.net/PXWeb/pxweb/sq/askdata/askdata_14%20Census%20population_Census%202011_3%20By%20Municipalities/tab%205%2025.px/table/tableViewLayout1/?rxid=eb6c9da8-94d5-4df1-a7a3-5e9722e02df7

treatment of waste can be hazardous for the future generations. This indicator is solely related to urban areas since they produce the majority part of waste. Recommendations should be given to regional companies to gather data for urban and rural areas separately.

Table 2: Availability of global indicators in Kosovo

	Total Number of Indicators²²	Readily Available	Available with efforts	Partially Available	Not Available	Not Applicable
SDG1	14	3	0	2	9	0
SDG2	13	0	0	0	13	0
SDG3	26	7	0	1	18	0
SDG4	11	1	0	0	10	0
SDG5	14	2	0	0	12	0
SDG6	11	1	0	1	9	0
SDG7	6	3	0	0	3	0
SDG8	17	2	2	0	13	0
SDG9	12	4	0	0	8	0
SDG10	11	2	1	0	8	0
SDG11	15	1	0	0	14	0
SDG12	12	0	0	0	12	0
SDG13	8	0	0	0	8	0
SDG14	10	0	0	0	0	10
SDG15	14	0	1	1	12	0
SDG16	23	4	0	0	19	0
SDG17	25	3	1	1	19	1

²² Readily Available refers to data for the indicators is complete, fully available and provided by official state institutions and reliable sources. Available with efforts means that the data has been collected by numerous reliable sources in order to present complete data, this also includes data that has to be manually calculated such as for example investments in education. Partially Available refers to data that are not complete. Not available refers to data that is missing and not provided by any reliable source. Not applicable means that the indicator is not applicable to the context of the country.

5. SDG's in Macro Terms

As a whole, the Agenda 2030, is considered to be the most ambitious effort in development spectrum.²³ Although this holds truth for the case of Kosovo as well, the country has managed to integrate sustainable development into the legislature and institutional framework. One such attempt, and probably to date the most important initiative taken by the institutions is the inauguration of the Council office as the head body responsible for coordinating the implementation and functionalization of the SDGs in Kosovo.

However, when it comes to enforcing the implementation of priorities linked directly with the achievement of 2030 Agenda, the country seems to lag behind other neighboring countries. Therefore, this section aims to analyze the development trends on each sustainable development goals grouped into five pillars: environmental, economic, human rights, education, and health. Considering the limited number of statistics generated by Kosovo Agency of Statistics, we base our analyses on the collection of primary and secondary data. This in order, to have an expanded grasp of information needed to comprehend how has Kosovo progressed towards the SDGs, where is it working and where is stagnating.

²³ United Nations Development Plan (UNDP), 2016. Kosovo Human Development Report 2016. Accessible at: http://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/human_development_report_2016.pdf



5.1. Environmental Dimension

The framework for environmental sustainability in the SDG notes that the success of such environmental-related goals depends on the institutional and political framework and governance regimes to ensure their implementation and the compliance with other goals.²⁴ This results from the embodiment of environmental dimension in sustainable development, and the capacity the decision-making institutions possess in protecting the environment surrounding us by undertaking environmentally friendly policies and actions.

Environmental issues have now for a long time been part of the international agenda, to the developed and developing countries. Global actors are determined in placing the environment in the forefront before harmful consequences for the future of the planet are generated. When it comes to Kosovo's environmental situation, as the paper will show, is an especially challenging aspect where the country is severely lagging behind. This is because institutions do not provide sufficient readily and reliable data for environmental-related aspects, as well as institutions concerned with environmental issues tend to neglect the opportunities to undertake efforts to integrate SDG's targets into strategies focused in improving the environmental situation. Should responsible institutions pay the needed attention to the environmental situation of the country by tackling the aforementioned obstacle, the country would be able to undertake well-informed decision regarding environmental matters, establish sound policies and promote the attainment of 2030 Agenda in respect to environmental dimension.

The environmental goals cover a variety of issues crucial for the environmental sustainability such as ensure affordable and modern energy services (SDG 7); create sustainable, and safe cities (SDG 11); combat climate change (SDG13); efficient use of the oceans, seas and marine resources (SDG 14); and maintain the restoration and protection of ecosystems, land degradation and biodiversity (SDG15).

²⁴ United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), 2013. An integrated approach to goal-setting for sustainable development. Accessible at: <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/2226UNEP%20Post%202015%20Disc%20Paper%201%20Summary%20for%20decision%20makers%20Sept2013.pdf>

Energy

	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
<i>Proportion of Population with Access to Electricity (%)</i> ²⁵	98.377	0	99.43	99.774	99.943	99.943	100	100	/	/
<i>Total energy Consumption (GWh)</i>	5,275	5,506	5,584	5,467	5,520	5,399 ²⁶	5,570 ²⁷	5,342 ²⁸	5,686 ²⁹	/
<i>Renewable Energy Share of the total Energy Consumption (%)</i>	/	/	/	4.54	4.49	4.7	4.77	6.89	6.42	/

In Kosovo, the proportion of population with access to electricity has followed an increasing trend. According to the latest data provided by World Bank, in 2016, 100 % of population have access to electricity. The overall energy consumption for the past years has followed an increasing trend, with few exceptions. The highest consumption of energy has been in 2017 at 5,686. Worth noting is that according to the annual reports from the Office for Energy Regulation, the unauthorized consumption of energy continues to remain at 17.3 % of the total demand. One of the reasons this unauthorized consumption of energy occurs is because of the electricity being largely unaffordable for the mass society. Subsequently, leading the country to struggle in meeting the targets of SDG7.

Environmentally sustainable development goals call for affordable and environmental-friendly energy sector. Nevertheless, the most recent research argues that the functionalization of new Kosovo power station, ‘Kosova e Re’ - as part of the agreement of the government of Kosovo with American company ContourGlobal - energy prices will increase for 92%, whereas environmentally wise will release negative effects as it entirely relies on lignite.³⁰ Precisely, the new power plant will for the next

²⁵ World Bank, Access to Electricity (% of population). Accessible at:

<https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/EG.ELC.ACCS.ZS?end=2016&locations=XK&start=1990&view=chart>

²⁶ Office of the Regulatory energy, Annual Report 2014 (pg.43) accessible at: http://eroks.org/Annual%20Report/2014/Raporti_Vjetor_2014_ZRRE.pdf

²⁷ Office of the Regulatory Energy, Annual Report 2015 (pg. 41), accessible at:

http://eroks.org/2016/Raportet/Raporti_Vjetor_2015_ZRRE_shq.pdf

²⁸ Office of the Regulatory Energy, Annual Report 2016 (pg. 69), accessible at:

http://eroks.org/2016/Raportet/Raporti%20vjetor%202016%20ZRRE_alb.pdf

²⁹ Office of the Regulatory Energy, Annual Report 2017 (pg. 62), accessible at:

http://eroks.org/2017/Raportet/Raporti_vjetor_2017_ZRRE.pdf

³⁰ Institute for Development Policy (INDEP), 2018. Kontrata për Ndërtimin e Termocentralit “Kosova e Re”.

accessible at: https://indep.info/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/INDEP-Kontrata-me-Kosoven-e-Re-fin.pdf?fbclid=IwAR1_NPqVgFT0rmKAaqaCy89SEWoXsEfned46nRzahZsWxUyThaEsvKIFGc

20 years make Kosovo entirely dependent on coal energy, thus hinder the opening of the market for renewable energy in the future.

Considering the impact, the renewable energy has in public health and in decreasing CO2 emissions, for Kosovo nevertheless, this is just another obstacle towards establishing a sustainable energy sector as the country's energy consumption relies extremely low on renewable energy sources. Data provided by the KAS (data available only from the 2012), shows that albeit the reliance on such sources has followed an increasing trend, yet it has only remained for around 6% for the past few years.

When it comes to creating sustainable and safe cities, data for these indicators remain largely scarce. Only 1 out of 14 indicators data has been found. This makes it impossible to measure the progress the country has achieved in this regard. Nonetheless, regarding the waste collection, the collected amount per year has followed an increasing trend, thus from 302,205 ton in 2014 to 363,742.87 ton in 2017.³¹

In this respect, this is the only indicator that data is found for- although not provided by the state statistical agency - and shows to rather follow a positive progress.

No data is available for goals linked with combating climate change (SDG 13) and protect and restore sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems (SDG15) – data that would help analyze the alignment between the goals and Kosovo's efforts in fulfilling them. However, when it comes to protecting the biodiversity, currently in Kosovo there are only two protected areas in Kosovo for specific mountain biodiversity “Sharri” and “Bjekshket e Nemuna” national park. While the SDG concerned with oceans and seas (SDG 15) is inapplicable to the case of Kosovo.

³¹ Institute for Development Policy, INDEP (2018). Waste Management in Kosovo: Identifying Challenges in the Sector. Accessible at: https://indep.info/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/WM_ENG.pdf



5.2. Economic Dimension

The most strategic and widely discussed dimension of sustainable development spectrum is deemed to be the economic sustainability. If this dimension is weak, then the system as a whole is unsustainable. The end-goal of both these dimensions is to safeguard a promising future even for the generations to come. Presently, Kosovo is at very critical stage of economic development. The country is struggling to fight unemployment, create opportunities equally for everyone, and make a good and efficient use of its own resources.

As a dimension it covers several crucial areas of sustainable development, such as poverty (SDG1), establishment of jobs and economic growth (SDG8), improvement of innovation and infrastructure sectors (SDG9), and endurance of responsible consumption and production (SDG12).

Poverty

(%)		2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
<i>Extreme Poverty</i> ³²		/	/	/	8.1	5.8	6.9	5.2
<i>Poverty Level</i>		34.5	29.2	29.7 ³³	22.9	17.6	21.1	17.6 ³⁴
<i>Poverty level by sex</i> ³⁵	Male	/	/	/	22.7	17.2	20.3	17.2
	Female	/	/	/	23.1	18.0	22.0	18.0

³² Kosovo Agency of Statistics (KAS), World Bank Group, 2015. Consumption poverty in the Republic of Kosovo 2012-2015. Accessible at: <http://ask.rks-gov.net/media/3187/poverty-report-2012-2015.pdf>

³³ INDEP, 2017. Sustainable Development Indicators in Kosovo, Trends, challenges and opportunities. Accessible at: https://indep.info/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/Sustainable-Development-Indicators-in-KosovoINDEP-2016-09-Sustainable-Development.pdf?fbclid=IwAR0u_Kct11bADxxVSqG76iC2-QuPUB806KNIBhzp8LL-pSpWrSWmOm7ITcw

³⁴ Kosovo Agency of Statistics (KAS) & World Bank Group, 2015.

³⁵ Ibid.

Extreme poverty is defined as the proportion of when people living under 1.90 US dollars (1.70 EUR) per day. Although data for Kosovo provided by appropriate institutions is missing, the latest published ones for the 2015, shows that 5.2% of people live in extreme poverty. Comparing the two years, it can be noted that the poverty rate fell by 6.8 % from 2011 to 2012, but then it increased from 2014 to 2015 by 3.5 %.

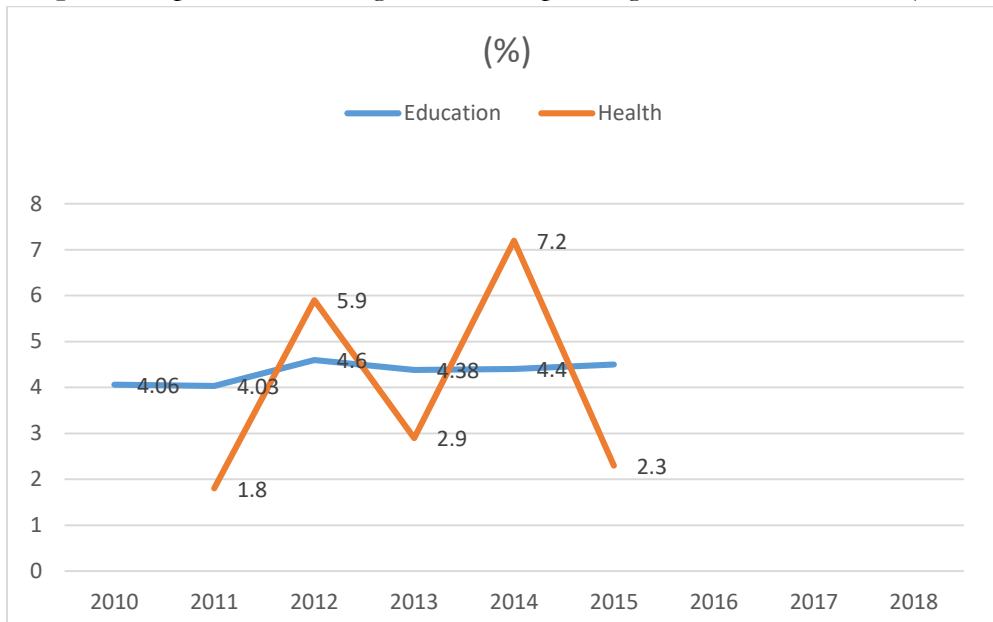
Sustainable development target in this respect is to eradicate poverty as a phenomenon in all its dimension. Nevertheless, considering that poverty rate is characterized with rather slow decreasing rates, and distributed unequally among male and female (as table above demonstrates it), does not positively contribute to country's economic prosperity. This at the same time taking into account the slow reduction of unemployment rate as well. For example, in 2017 was 29.6 while decreased only to 29.4 % in 2018.³⁶ Besides, another obstacle that evidences that eradicating poverty in Kosovo can be challenging is that the last two years, the social protection scheme has followed a slowly decreasing trend. The data evidences that the number of families receiving social benefits in 2017 was 2,761 and it decreased to only 2,206 in 2018. Further, the average poverty line in EU is 9.8 %, while the latest provided data shows that for Kosovo is at 17.6%.³⁷ Thus, despite the slow progress (figures following a decreasing trend), the level of poverty continues to remain at an alarming 2 times higher than the average poverty line of the EU countries.

Graph 1 shows the proportion of Kosovo's budget invested in the education and health sector. While there is no sufficient data as per UN methodology to project any trends for social protection.

³⁶ Kosovo Agency of Statistics (KAS), 2018. Anketa e Fuqisë Punëtore. Accessible at: http://ask.rks.gov.net/media/4671/anketa-e-tregut-te-punes-2018.pdf?fbclid=IwAR3fTvxGPtGiO3A7A1Jts3L-8jNe5Ba6l7jL6n7-d8OtKYvVLDTiYkw_elk

³⁷ Borgen Project, 2018. 12 Facts About Poverty in Europe. Accessible at: <https://borgenproject.org/facts-about-poverty-in-europe/>

Graph 1. Proportion of total government spending on essential services (education and health)³⁸



The graph shows that there has been a sharp decline of investment in the health sector in 2015. The lowest of the investments are injected in the health sector, which is a sector that no wonder continues to pertain fragile and vaguely managed. While spending in education has been continuing to follow a slow increase. This issue is critically important to enabling the establishment of sustainable development in the country as tends to initiate improvements of the quality of life and development of innovative solutions to problems such as poverty. All these three aspects are well integrated in the SDGs and considered as essential services in ensuring the establishment and implementation of programmes and policies that contribute in ending poverty in all its dimension. However, if the country continues to neglect the importance of allocating adequate funding to such sectors, it then undermines the possibility in setting Kosovo a leading country in the region for the 2030 Agenda implementation when the time comes to report to international agencies such as UN.

³⁸ Instituti GAP, 2018. Si I shpenzon shteti paret tona? Accessible at: <https://www.institutigap.org/spendings/?buxheti-i-kosoves----planifikimet/2018>

Economic Development

		2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
GDP (€ millions)		4,814.5	5,058.8 ³⁹	405,326.7	5,567.5	5,807.0	6,070.1	6,070.1	6,528.0
Real GDP growth (%)⁴¹		4.4	2.8	3.4	1.2	4.1	3.4	/	/
Unemployment rate (%)		/	30.9 ⁴²	30.0	35.3	32.9	28.0 ⁴³	30.6 ⁴⁴	29.4 ⁴⁵
Unemployment rate by gender (%)⁴⁶	Female	/	/	/	41.6	36.6	37.8	33.4	30.6
	Male	/	/	/	33.1	31.8	26.2	28.5	29.1

As it can be seen, the country's GDP has increased throughout the years from 4,402 € millions in 2010 to 6,070.1 € millions in 2018. Nevertheless, real GDP growth has experienced a decline, thus almost going back to the same level as in 3.3 % in 2010. Albeit in 2015 reached its peak with 4.1 % growth, it is still insufficient for the level of economic progress in the country. Should the country enjoy a stable economic performance, then a GDP growth of approximately 7% should occur.⁴⁷ On the other side, unemployment certainly is a good indicator to see the dynamics of economic performance of the country. Kosovo has one of the highest unemployment rates in the region, reaching as high as 35.2 % in 2014. Women unemployment rate continues to be in large percentage, according to Kosovo Agency of Statistics although women employment status has improved throughout the years their unemployment still remains higher than man. Precisely, 30.6 % for women and 29.1 % for men. While

³⁹ INDEP, 2017. Sustainable Development Indicators in Kosovo, Trends, challenges and opportunities.

⁴⁰ Kosovo Agency of Statistics, 2018. Accessible at: <http://ask.rks-gov.net/media/4684/bpv-tm4-2018.pdf> (including the year 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018)

⁴¹ Kosovo Agency of Statistics. Accessible at: http://askdata.rks-gov.net/PXWeb/pxweb/sq/askdata/askdata_Country%20and%20regional%20data/tec00115.px/table/tableViewLayout1/?rxid=0b4e087e-8b00-47ba-b7cf-1ea158040712/

⁴² Kosovo Agency of Statistics, 2016. Labor Force Survey. Including the year 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015. Accessible at: <http://ask.rks-gov.net/media/1684/rezultatet-e-anketes-se-fuqise-punetore-2015-ne-kosove.pdf>

⁴³ Kosovo Statistics of Agency, 2016, Labor Force Survey. Accessible at: <http://ask.rks-gov.net/media/3229/afp-2016.pdf>

⁴⁴ Kosovo Statistics of Agency, 2017, Labor Force Survey, Accessible at: <http://ask.rks-gov.net/sq/agjencia-e-statistikave-te-kosoves/addnews/anketa-e-fuqise-punetore-afp-tm4-2017> and Kosovo Statistics Agency Annual Report 2017

⁴⁵ Kosovo Agency of Statistics, 2018, Labor Force Survey, http://ask.rks-gov.net/media/4671/anketa-e-tregut-te-punes-2018.pdf?fbclid=IwAR3fTvxGPtGiO3A7A1Jts3L-8jNe5Ba6l7jL6n7-d8OtKYvVLDTiYkw_elk

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ INDEP, 2017. Sustainable Development Indicators in Kosovo, Trends, challenges and opportunities.

in regards to youth NEET rate,⁴⁸ when it comes to Kosovo, in 2015, the proportion of youth not in education, employment or any training was 31.4 %. The most recent data shows that the situation is not any better, with no significant decline, remaining at 30.1%.⁴⁹ Albeit, the GDP trends continues increasing and, in some ways, shows some prospect for the future economic development, country should undertake immediate adequate measures to address the most urgent economic indicators that show regress such as the youth and women unemployment.

In such issue, another part of SDG is the indicator that demands for looking if national strategies tackle youth employment or if the country has established a strategy particularly for the issue.⁵⁰ Institutions in fact seems to have undertaken such initiatives, as we find that all five strategies that tackle social welfare, education, and economic issues deal with the unemployment of youth. This leave ones to conclude that such strategies could be expected to show their effects in the long-term future, as at present the data proves that such national planning documents had little or no significant impact in improving youth employment situation.

For two other sustainable development goals; improvement of innovation and infrastructure sectors (SDG9), and endurance of responsible consumption and production (SDG12), there is an extremely limited data for them which at this stage are insufficient to analyze trends.

⁴⁸ This is referred to the proportion of youth (aged 15-24 years) not in education, employment or training (also known as "the youth NEET rate").

⁴⁹ Kosovo Agency of Statistics, 2018.

⁵⁰ See Annex: SDG8, Target 8.b, indicator 8.b.1.



5.3. Human Rights

Alongside a wide range of environmental, social, and economic goals the 2030 Agenda strives for a world that is “*more peaceful, just and inclusive societies which are free from fear and violence*”.⁵¹ Human rights principles are strongly integrated in the Agenda and the implementation strongly depend on political commitment and effective state mechanisms to promote and protect human rights, as well as countries’ institutions to monitor the progress of such rights.

Recently, the European Commission progress report for Kosovo regarded the existing mechanisms responsible for coordination and implementation of human rights as ineffective.⁵² This is definitely reflected on the data for the indicators of SDGs that are concerned predominantly with human rights. The enforcement of Human rights in Kosovo remains challenging for the local institutions regardless the fact that all the necessary legal framework with the highest EU standards are set in place.

Human rights as a dimension are in one way or another interconnected with all goals of SDGs, be that economic, education or health-related aspects. However, for the purpose of dealing with each dimension separately human rights aspect will cover the SDGs directly linked with the dimension, thus gender equality (SDG5), reduced inequalities (SDG10) and peace, justice and strong institutions (SDG16).

⁵¹ Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), Human Rights and the 2030 agenda for Sustainable Development. Accessible at: <https://www.ohchr.org/en/issues/SDGS/pages/the2030agenda.aspx>

⁵² European Commission, 2019. Kosovo 2019 Report. Accessible at: <https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/near/files/20190529-kosovo-report.pdf>

Gender Equality

		2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
<i>Women Sexually Violated</i>		/	/	17	12	7 ⁵³	/
<i>Proportion of seats held by women in the national parliament (%)</i>		43.6	43.6	43.6	44.2 ⁵⁴	44.4	44.4 ⁵⁵
<i>Gender representation in municipal level (%)</i>	Female	56 ²⁵	25	28	/	57 ^{33.0}	33.4
	Male	75	75	72	/	66.8	66.5
<i>Gender Representation in Government (%)⁵⁸</i>	Female	39.6	38.8	41.0	40.6	40.5	41.6
	Male	60.4	61.2	58.2	59.4	59.4	58.0

In overall, there is an immense lack of data regarding gender-based violence and gender representation in institutions. However, we managed to collect data provided mainly by reliable secondary sources or manually gathered. Sustainable development goal that calls for establishing an environmental legal and practical context in the country ensuring gender equity, conveys a variety of important indicators, however the paper found that available data exist for an enormously low number of indicators, precisely for only three out of fourteen indicators.

The table above shows that there has been a positive growing trend in women representation in the national assembly, contributing towards the targets of the SDG5. However, gender representation remains limited in the municipal and governmental level, in spite of the legal requirement for equal representation in both levels (50:50).⁵⁹ In Kosovo's municipalities, women are only represented by only 33.4% compared to men who stand in higher representation (66.5%), while in the present government women are represented by 41.6 %. It appears that the law is not being fully implemented, as such gender equality remains a problem that requires adequate institutional intervention measures.

⁵³ Kosovar Institute for Policy Research and Development (KIPRED), 2018. Accessing Justice for Victims of Gender Violence in Kosovo: ending Impunity for Perpetrators. Accessible at:

https://eeas.europa.eu/sites/eeas/files/accessing_justice_for_victims_of_gender_based_violence_in_kosovo_eng.pdf

⁵⁴ Kosovar Gender Studies Center, 2017. Women's Participation in Decision-Making in Kosovo. Accessible at: https://eeas.europa.eu/sites/eeas/files/womens_participation_en.pdf

⁵⁵ Assembly of Republic of Kosovo, List of MPs for the 2017-2021 mandate. Accessible at: <http://deputetet.kuvendikosoves.org/Deputies/DeputiesList?languageid=1>

⁵⁶ Kosovo Gender Studies, 2017.

⁵⁷ INDEP, 2019. Women in decision making in public institutions in Kosovo. Accessible at: https://indep.info/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/INDEP_Women-in-decision-making-in-public-institutions-in-Kosovo-1.pdf?fbclid=IwAR2G0176mLOX6K3PrTOdLjDdf3d_HNp5qP_xKkJS45jFeEazun6uXASpSUG

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ See Law No. 05/L-020 on Gender Equality, particularly article 6 states that "equal gender representation in all legislative, executive and judiciary bodies and other public institutions is achieved when ensured a minimum representation of fifty percent (50%) for each gender, including their governing and decision-making bodies."

When it comes to gender-based violence, albeit the legal framework covers a few acts of gender-based violence, it continues to lack a comprehensive definition of gender-based violence in line within its criminal and civil proceedings.⁶⁰ This is affecting the effectiveness of institutions in prosecution and sentencing of gender-based violence, a factor that SDGs 16 demands from countries to establish – that of strong institutions. Consequently, this leaves the country lagging behind in ensuring safety and security of its society which at the same time undermines institutional effectiveness.

Corruption

		2016	2017	2018
Number of corruption cases for the past 12 months	Number of people	/	/	1389
	Number of cases	/	/	638
Corruption Perception Index (out 100)		36	39 ⁶¹	/
Citizens' satisfaction with the work of public institutions (%)		/	36	36

In addition to institutional effectiveness, another element that has largely contributed in undermining country's institutional work has been corruption. Indicator 16.5.1 of the SDG16 requires data on corruption cases for only the past 12 months, and in Kosovo the number for such period is 638. In overall, corruption as a phenomenon is deeply rooted in the country's key decision-making institutions.⁶² Although the number vary and the data continues to remain scarce the most recent research shows that corruption, unemployment, and poverty are the three issues that concern the citizens the most. This is an outcome of poor institutional performance. This was further evidenced when only 36 % of citizens claimed they are satisfied with the work of key institutions (the figure has no substantial increase over the years).⁶³ They also added that large-scale corruption is a constant element of the work of public institutions.

⁶⁰ KIPRED 2018.

⁶¹ Transparency International, 2019. Corruption Perceptions Index 2017. Accessible at: https://www.transparency.org/news/feature/corruption_perceptions_index_2017

⁶² Kosovo Law Institute, 2019. Pandëshkueshmëria e Korrupsionit Rrezik për Shoqërinë dhe Shtetin. Accessible at: <https://kli-ks.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/1.-Tri-vjet-kunder-korrupsionit-IKD-versioni-SHQIP.pdf?fbclid=IwAR1Tt2I6KIgLxAwzZ5Bhc49HhH5aXBwgrK0dH4OXhIWZ4iZryD8LMaTgmUA>

⁶³ United Nations Development Plan (UNDP) Kosovo, 2019. Public Pulse XV. Accessible at: http://www.ks.undp.org/content/kosovo/en/home/library/democratic_governance/public-pulse-xv.html

The majority of Kosovars (68.8 %) note that non-merit factors such as bribes, party alliances, friends, and to large extent family connections are the factors in gaining employment in public institutions.⁶⁴ This is a challenge for Kosovo in reaching the targets that require for establishment of strong institutions as citizens' basic right to be treated equally, just, and fair is not enforced.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

5.4. Education



Education is a significant aspect for measuring the prosperity of a society, yet in Kosovo is another sector that is facing numerous challenges and difficulties. It has been deprived of major investments necessary to improve the infrastructure and the quality of education.

Sustainable development goal focused on education, claim that by the 2030 countries pledged to implement the Agenda to have established quality education. By 2030, the agenda requires from countries to ensure that their youth is equipped with functional literacy and numeracy skills, and increase the number of children attending preschool education. Also, ensure equal access for all women and men to affordable and quality education, vocational training and university. Sustainable Development Goal grouped into such category is SDG4 predominantly concerned with the quality education.

Quality Education

Education Level	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
	<i>Number of Children Attending Pre School Education</i>	4,792 ⁶⁵	3,809 ⁶⁶	4,286 ⁶⁷
<i>Primary and lower secondary</i>	283,239	269,981	266,722	263,686
<i>Upper secondary education</i>	86,376	86,447	88,444	84,249

⁶⁵ Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, 2016. Accessible at: <https://masht.rks-gov.net/uploads/2016/01/shenime-statistikore-2015-16-arsimi-parauniversitar.pdf>

⁶⁶ KAS, 2017. <http://ask.rks-gov.net/media/3439/statistikat-e-arsimit-n%C3%AB-kosov%C3%AB-shqip.pdf>

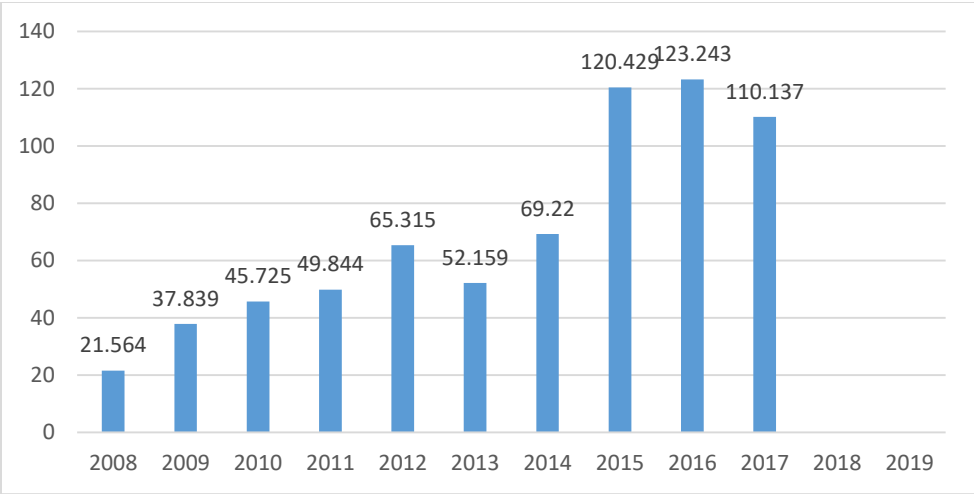
⁶⁷ KAS, 2018. <http://ask.rks-gov.net/media/4145/stat-e-arsimit-2017-2018-shqip.pdf>

⁶⁸ Ministry of Education, Science, and Technology, 2019. <https://masht.rks-gov.net/uploads/2019/02/shenime-statistikore-2018-19-arsimi-parauniversitar.pdf>

Adult literacy rate (%) ⁶⁹	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
	69.90	70.15	70.50	70.80	71.10	71.35	71.65	/	/
Investment on education (% of gdp) ⁷⁰	/	4.03	4.60	4.38	4.4	4.5	/	/	/

The number of children attending preschool education is critical in improving the children’s physical, social, intellectual and emotional development. In this aspect, in Kosovo, data provided by the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, shows that there is a positive growing trend of pupils attending preschool. While the number in 2017/18 was 4,286, it increased two times more in 2018/19, thus reaching 8,335.

Graph 2. The proportion of students attending university



In regards to university education attendance, the number has increased over the years. Albeit is commonly perceived as a positive trend, the present development circumstances prevent an overestimation of the situation. For instance, the data shows the number of registered students increased by six folds, 21,564 students in 2008 it reached 120,429 in 2015.⁷¹ Such indicators are rather used by the respective government institutions to fictionally fight high unemployment rate, rather than

⁶⁹ INDEP, 2018. Sustainable Development Indicators in Kosovo. Accessible at: <https://indep.info/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/Sustainable-Development-Indicators.pdf?fbclid=IwAR2F0WliveRwcU4FjRQIX925yQ7bj7cZ7EYdBa1AbbYBhJKgijcpuWR3SBk>

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ INDP, 2017. Sustainable Development Indicators in Kosovo. Trends, challenges and opportunities.

do such number indicate an overall quality of the education, in particular aptitudes gained by the students, in the country.⁷² The number slightly experienced a decrease in 2017, while data for 2018 and 2019 are not available yet.

When it comes to the budget for education sector as percentage of GDP, exist incomplete data. However, past research shows that state investment on education has been reduced by almost 50 % in 2015 compared to 2008 which was 8.20 %.⁷³ If the investment continues to follow same trend with no significant increase, then considering the overpopulation of universities, this could negatively affect the level of quality of education provided to them.

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ Ibid.



5.5. Health

The UN recognizes health related goals essential to sustainable development. Numerous efforts are necessary to fully eradicate range diseases and tackled many various persistent and emerging health issues. The agency calls for focusing efficient funds to the health systems, improve sanitation and hygiene, increase access to physicians and reduce ambient pollution.

Health section under the SDGs is linked in one way or another with environmental, economic, and human rights sections. However, mainly covers goals that directly tackle health and well-being, such as hunger (SDG2), establishment of facilities that ensure good health and well-being (SDG3) and access to clean water and sanitation (SDG6).

Regarding the availability of data on the health sector in Kosovo, there is an extensive lack of data provided by the official institutions. This tend to undermine the prioritization process of subsectors within the health system that need urgent interventions, as well as makes it almost impossible to evaluate the progress the country has been achieving in terms of meeting the targets of the above-mentioned goals. In overall is commonly agreed that such sector remains the most fragile and vaguely managed sector in the country. This a result generated by a highly eradicated limited investments and poor reforms on the health subdivision.

Mortality Ratio

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
<i>Infant Mortality Rate (Per 1000)</i>	12	12	12	12	12 ⁷⁴	11.4 ⁷⁵	/	/	/
<i>Maternal Mortality Rate In 100.000 Newborns</i>	/	3.7 %	3.7 %	3.7 %	3.7%	3.7% ⁷⁶	/	/	/
<i>Under-Five Mortality Rate (Per 1000)</i>	34	62	25	41	24	23 ⁷⁷	/	/	/

As it can be seen from the presented data, infant mortality in the country remains well manageable. The number of infants dying before they reach age of 1 per 1,000 live births has not experienced an increase for the available data found for four-year period (2010-2014), with a slight decrease in 2015. The lack of data makes it impossible to evaluate and compare infant mortality rate with other countries' rates. Nevertheless, with this rate Kosovo pertains to have the highest infant mortality rate in the region.⁷⁸ It can be realized that level of health stands in a better stance. The mortality rate under-five years old refers to probability of dying before age 5, per 1,000 live births. The numbers show that the trends have remained steady.

On the other hand, the aggregate maternal mortality which for the past four years have been 3.7 per 100.000 with no alternation, is lower than those for several other neighboring countries. Yet, this data should be treated with caution, as the Health Information System data remains scarce. It is also assumed that such data is higher for Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities.⁷⁹ The Agenda 2030 calls that by 2030 all people, in particular people in vulnerable situations, including the poor and infants to have access to nutritious and sufficient food all year round (Target 2.1). Despite the fact that there is an extremely extensive missing of data that help evaluate the targets of the SDG2, UN's agency operating in Kosovo concerned with such issue, UNICEF, reports that 1 in 3 children under 5 suffer from vitamin A deficiency, under 2 out of every 10 children under age of 5 have stunted growth. In

⁷⁴ UNICEF Kosovo, 2017. Analysis of the Situation of Children and Women in Kosovo (UNSCR 1244). Accessible at: https://www.unicef.org/kosovoprogramme/Raporti_unicef_anglisht_web.pdf

⁷⁵ INED, 2015. Births, deaths and infant mortality. Accessible at: https://www.ined.fr/en/everything_about_population/data/europe-developed-countries/birth-death-infant-mortality/

⁷⁶ Ibid.

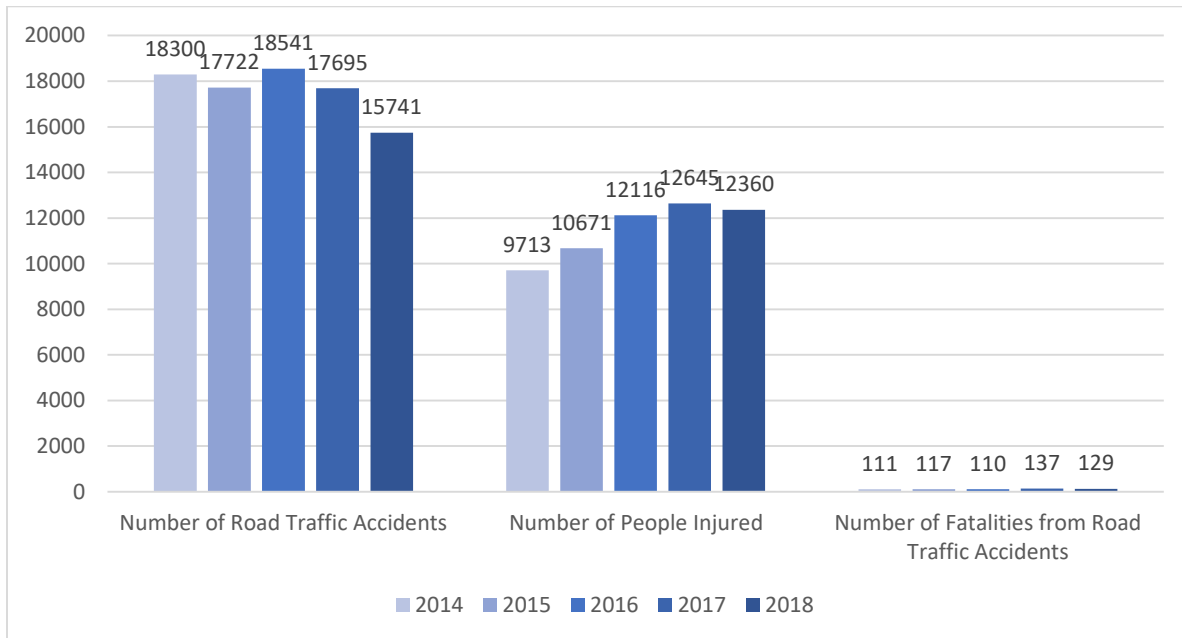
⁷⁷ INDEP, 2017. Sustainable Development Indicators in Kosovo. Trends, challenges and opportunities.

⁷⁸ The average infant mortality rate for EU countries is 3.5, while for other European countries (excluding Kosovo) is 4.8. See : https://www.ined.fr/en/everything_about_population/data/europe-developed-countries/birth-death-infant-mortality/

⁷⁹ UNICEF, 2017.

which 5 % of children in the country are considered malnourished and 1 in every 10 children under age of 5 suffers from chronic malnutrition.⁸⁰ This reflects country’s inability to manage health sector’s related issues, consequently undermining directly its prospect towards meeting 2030 Agenda.

Graph 3. Road traffic safety



An additional aspect that falls inconsistent with the requirement of the Agenda is for the countries to halve the number of deaths and injuries from road traffic accidents by the 2020. According to the statistics provided by the National Police of Kosovo, the number of accidents with fatalities and injuries are mainly following an increasing trend with no significant decline.⁸¹ This hinders public safety in which then demands for urgent institutional intervention. Albeit the number of accidents has predominantly decreased from the sharp rise that took place in 2016, the number of fatalities is rather experiencing a slow decline. Should the situation follow the same trend, in this respect the country will struggle to meet the target set for 2020 considering that is only two-year difference to reach the goal from when the latest data is available.

⁸⁰ UNICEF Kosovo, 2019. Early years. Accessible at: <https://www.unicef.org/kosovoprogramme/children.html>

⁸¹ Kosovo Police’s Annual Reports. Accessible at: http://www.kosovopolic.com/repository/docs/Raporti_vjetor_i_pun%C3%ABs_s%C3%AB_Policis%C3%AB_s%C3%AB_Kosov%C3%ABs_2015_-_SHQIP.pdf (2015); http://www.kosovopolic.com/repository/docs/RAPORTI_ANG LISHT_2017.pdf (2017); http://www.kosovopolic.com/repository/docs/RAPORTI_VJETOR_ANG LISHT.pdf (2018)

Drinking Water

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Proportion of Population with Access to Safe Drinking Water (Unit Mil M3) ⁸²	/	/	56.08	52.68	53.9	53.75	55.84	59.74	62.07	/	/

Access to safe drinking water has become a major problem impacting every region and a challenging aspect difficult for countries, especially developing ones to resolve. The UN reports that water scarcity has been affecting more than 40 % of people around the globe. This is rather an alarming figure that is anticipated to increase with the rise of global temperatures as consequence of climate change.

Ensuring access to safe and affordable water by 2030 calls for investments in adequate infrastructure, establishment of sanitation facilities and reassure hygiene at every level. In Kosovo, population access to safe drinking water has increased throughout the years, from 56.08 % in 2010 to 62.06 % in 2016. Nevertheless, limited data availability makes it impossible to review other crucial aspects affecting health and well-being, such as sanitation, portion of population using safely managed sanitation service nor how much of wastewater is safely treated. Simultaneously it is considered that poor grid infrastructure is depriving many of safe drinking water access therefore requiring allocation of adequate funds and facilities.

⁸² KAS, 2017. Statistics on Water in Kosovo. Accessible at: <http://ask.rks-gov.net/media/3980/statistikat-e-uj%C3%ABrave-n%C3%AB-kosov%C3%AB-2016-2017.pdf>

6. Conclusion

Kosovo has undertaken some positive steps on sustainable development agenda, notably the establishment of the Council concerned with the implementations of SDGs and release of the National Development Strategy 2016-2021, yet concrete actions remain rather limited and oftentimes are left to the political rhetoric only. The country has also achieved considerable progress on economic and to some extent on environmental dimension, but when it comes to other areas that stand at the heart of development such as health, education, justice, and establishment of strong institutions are aspects where the country is struggling the most. Simultaneously, there is a clear lack of monitoring of the implementation of the legislation that would serve as a comprehensive policy evaluation, and awareness raising policy and activities on the 2030 Agenda.

The relevance of 2030 Agenda for the future development of the country and its prospect for membership into international organizations and the EU, tend to be high. Nevertheless, having neglected the inclusion of the Agenda into key-policy document such as the National Strategy, obscures the probability of the country in presenting itself as an entity able to undertake tasks of international nature.

Evaluating the progress of work towards fulfillment of the 2030 Agenda for the country has rather proved to be a challenging process, considering that the availability and consistency of data is scarce. Albeit the data made available at the Kosovo Agency of Statistics has been gradually improving, it still remains insufficient and at times not relevant enough to provide the information needed to fill in the SDG indicators. SDGs global framework indicator is considered to be taken as a general structure of indicators which each country looks at them dependent on their application to the context. Thus, on the case of Kosovo for example indicators of the SDG14 (concerned with seas and oceans) do not apply as the country has no access to seas. Nevertheless, for other indicators that are important and normally are one of the main indicators to be provided by most of the countries, in Kosovo the data for them is immensely insufficient. Among of these indicators are: the proportion of population living in households with basics services; total official flows to agriculture sector, and concrete data on physical abuse, sexual and reproductive health care. Providing data for indicators of SDG targets are not only useful tools for Kosovo institutions to comprehend of what stage of development does the country stand, but they can serve valuable information to prevent impediments and help to adjust policies by taking well informed decisions.

Issues that 2030 Agenda has set forward are of great importance for the present and future generations of all countries, hence countries pledged to implement the Agenda have some work to do to accelerate actions in meeting the Agenda. Numerous entities have already started to so, while Kosovo could follow the example of its neighboring states such as Albania and Montenegro who are now leading on the efforts in SDG implementation in the region. This would happen when political rhetoric is left aside, and real practice on implementation of the Agenda come to place. The process towards SDG

implementation will be challenging but, in many aspects an enriching experience for the society of Kosovo.

7. Recommendations

1. Throughout our research, we have come across certain challenges in data collection. We, thus recommend specifically to Kosovo Agency of Statistics to:
 - a. compile a list of global indicators applicable to the context of Kosovo and suggest indicators as per the UN's offered method;
 - b. review the set of publications and ensure that gaps in statistics are filled with data – data that fall consistent with other data provided by other official institutions; and
 - c. ensure that quarterly data are provided for all sectors and all sectors cover global indicators, not only a limited number.
2. Council on Sustainable Development in Kosovo to monitor the law on official statistics (Law no.04/L-036) specifically with regards to the data and ask for accountability from the Agency when these data are not made available.
3. Kosovo institutions should begin undertaking actions that show that Sustainable Development Goals accelerate its European integration and how by working on them they mutually reinforce each other. One way to do so is by publishing policy paper that shows the importance of the relation of 2030 Agenda and EU accession to the context of the country; precisely what should be prioritized that would put country forward in both agendas, and define the obstacles.
4. Ministry of Education, Science and Technology to undertake initiative to incorporate sustainable concepts into high school curricula. This in order to increase awareness about the SDGs, familiarize students with the concepts pertaining in the sustainable development spectrum, and encourage understanding how the global agenda envision qualitative education.
5. Rather than starting from scratch or replicating work and strategies that has been already undertaken, the most immediate task for the government is to establish an official mechanism within the office of Prime Minister. This body would mainly coordinate the communication between institutions and civil society in order to contribute towards implementation of 2030 Agenda.
6. Strengthen institutions' relations with the international organizations concerned with sustainable development and collectively direct programmes and strategies towards the priorities within 2030 Agenda for Kosovo.
7. Government in cooperation with the Council on SDGs should ensure the operationalization of the 2030 Agenda at the local level. This is solved with the establishment of SDG focal points in each municipality. In case which the most neglected aspects that have become hurdles in the process of meeting 2030 Agenda are tackled, and no community is left behind.

