



**POLICY  
ANSWERS**

## **The Research and Innovation Sector in Kosovo from the Perspective of the Research Community**

Main author: Isuf Berisha

Responsible organisation: Riinvest Institute

Date: May 2023



<https://www.facebook.com/WBInfoHub>



<https://x.com/wbinfohub>



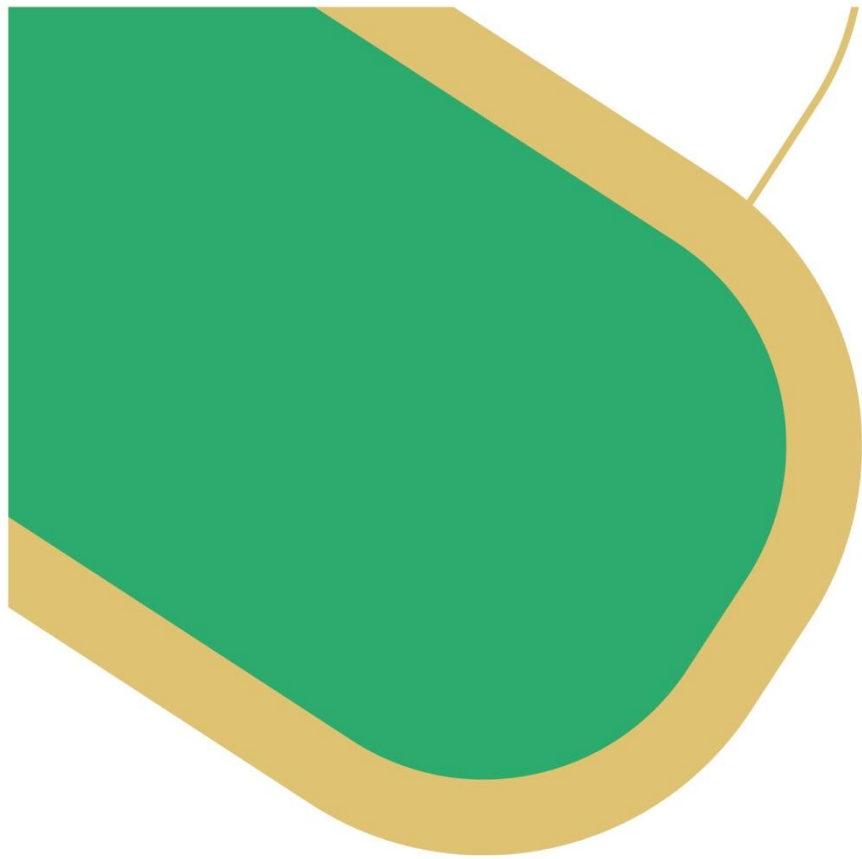
<https://www.linkedin.com/company/wbinfohub/>

**[www.westernbalkans-infohub.eu](http://www.westernbalkans-infohub.eu)**

POLICY ANSWERS is funded by the European Commission through the Horizon Europe project "R&I POLICY making, implementation AND Support in the WEsteRn BalkanS", Grant Agreement N° 101058873.



**Funded by  
the European Union**



**Contributing authors**  
**Work Package**  
**Submission date**  
**Dissemination level**  
**doi**

Muhamet Mustafa, Liridon Kryeziu and Gent Beqiri  
WP3 Capacity Building  
May 2023  
Public  
n.a.



## Revision History

Version	Date	Author	Contributors	Description
v0.1	May 2023	Muhamet Mustafa, Liridon Kryeziu, Gent Beqiri (RIINVEST)		Report delivery
v0.2	January 2025		Alma Bajramaj (RIINVEST)	Delivery in POLICY ANSWERS format
v0.3	February 2025		Katharina Lehmaier (DLR)	Quality Assurance comments
v1.0	March 2025		Elke Dall (ZSI)	Preparation of the report for inclusion into POLICY ANSWERS Deliverable D2.5 (Collection of Policy Briefs)

## Disclaimer

POLICY ANSWERS is funded by the European Commission through the Horizon Europe project "R&I policy making, implementation and support in the Western Balkans", Grant Agreement N° 101058873. Views and opinions expressed are, however, those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union (EU) or the European Commission (EC). Neither the EU nor the EC can be held responsible for them. For further information regarding POLICY ANSWERS visit [www.westernbalkans-infohub.eu](http://www.westernbalkans-infohub.eu)

## Table of Contents

Executive summary .....	8
1. Introduction .....	10
2. Methodology .....	12
3. Data analysis .....	13
3.1. Analysis of respondents' answers to structured questions .....	13
3.2. Situation of the R&I sector .....	13
3.3. Causes or sources of problems .....	16
3.4. Challenges and possible solutions .....	18
3.5. Funding .....	19
4. Reflections of comments and explanations from respondents regarding their evaluations 20	
4.1. Insufficient institutional support and lack of dedication from academic staff in research activities .....	20
4.2. Low level of internationalisation and limited capacities for fundraising/acquiring funds 20	
4.3. The need to contribute towards evidence-based policies .....	20
4.4. Advancement and completion of the legal framework and regulations for effective utilisation of public funds dedicated to R&I .....	21
4.5. Implementation of EU/international standards for policies and procedures .....	21
4.6. The need for decentralisation of research administration and management in public universities .....	22
4.7. Involvement of international experts in project evaluations .....	22
4.8. Increasing incentives for researchers .....	22
4.9. Integration of research into the workload of academic staff .....	22
5. Annex .....	24

## List of figures

Figure 1: General assessments regarding the situation in the R&I sector. Source: Author's calculations based on survey data .....	14
Figure 2: Application for project support from public funds. Source: Author's calculations based on survey data .....	15
Figure 3: Application with projects for European/international funds. Source: Author's calculations based on survey data .....	15
Figure 4: Establishing cooperation relations with any international partner based on a signed memorandum of understanding. Source: Author's calculations based on survey data.....	16
Figure 5: Assessments of the legal/regulatory framework for the R&I sector (in percent): Author's calculations based on survey data .....	18
Figure 6: Assessments of institutional structures for implementing the NSP (in percent). Author's calculations based on survey data .....	18

## List of tables

Table 1: Challenges, problems and/or obstacles of the R&I sector in Kosovo (percentage of answers "Yes"). Source: Author's calculations based on survey data .....	17
--	----

## List of abbreviations

AAB	AAB College
ASAK	Academy of Sciences and Arts of Kosovo
ZSI	Centre for Social Innovation
EC	European Commission
ERIA	European Research and Innovation Area
EU	European Union
HEI	Higher Education Institution
HE	Horizon Europe
MESTI	Ministry of Education, Science, Technology and Innovation
NSC	National Science Council
NSC	National Science Council
NSP	National Science Programme
R&I	Research and Innovation
UBT	UBT College
UHZP	University “Haxhi Zeka” in Peja
UIBM	University “Isa Boletini” in Mitrovica
UKZGJ	University “Kadri Zeka” in Gjilan
UUHP	University “Ukshin Hoti” in Prizren
UFAGJ	University “Fehmi Agani” in Gjakova
UASF	University of Applied Sciences in Ferizaj
UP	University of Prishtina
WB	Western Balkans

## Executive summary

This report presents the results of a research conducted by the Riinvest Institute on the current situation of Kosovo's\* Research and Innovation (R&I) sector and is based on assessments by Kosovo's R&I community. The study was carried out within the frame of the POLICY ANSWERS project, which is supported by the European Commission (EC) through Horizon Europe (HE) and implemented by a consortium of European and regional institutions and entities.

For the purpose of this study, 26 researchers and innovators from higher education institutions (HEIs) and research entities were interviewed. The vast majority of them believe that the situation of the R&I sector in Kosovo is characterised by a significant lag, even compared to the neighbouring Western Balkans (WB) economies in the region, and especially the European Union (EU) countries. Interviewees are calling for a determined and long-term commitment from the Government and other responsible institutions, based on an informed and well-thought-out vision, to overcome this lag in the R&I sector in Kosovo. They require increased financial support for this sector and improvement of appropriate legal and administrative implementation infrastructure so that it becomes supportive and stimulating for the development of the R&I sector, rather than discouraging or hindering as it currently is in some instances.

The vast majority of respondents (respectively, nearly three-quarters) assess the current situation of the R&I sector in Kosovo as unsatisfactory or highly unsatisfactory. Similarly, most of the respondents think that the Government and other responsible institutions, as well as other actors and stakeholders in the R&I sector, have not yet adequately addressed the vital importance of this sector for the overall development of Kosovo.

Insufficient funding is one of the main reasons for the unsatisfactory situation in the R&I sector. Additionally, the majority of respondents believe that the legal and regulatory framework poses obstacles or limitations to the faster development of the R&I sector in Kosovo. Institutional structures or mechanisms, policies and procedures for administering the National Science Programme (NSP) are considered a bottleneck or an obstacle to a more efficient implementation of defined research and development objectives through legal solutions and strategic documents. Inadequate legal and statutory solutions of HEIs, institutes, and other entities in the R&I sector regarding funding issues, which do not promote R&I development, are among the leading causes of stagnation in the R&I sector. The academic staff of universities/HEIs are not incentivised nor required to engage in research within contractual obligations. There are no functional organisational units for research at faculties and departments. Research is currently mainly limited to individual initiatives and activities. Regarding this, there is almost a unanimous consensus among respondents that the budget for research in HEIs should be separated from other budgetary items and that the work obligations of the academic staff should include research work, and that all of this should be reflected in the structure and level of salary.

---

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



**Recommendations:**

In line with the perceptions and assessments of the research community presented in this report, there is a need

1. to adopt a more integrative and inclusive approach towards the R&I sector to create legislative, institutional, budgetary, and administrative synergies that ensure an organic connection between them;
2. to increase funding for the development of the R&I sector from public funds, aiming to reach at least the regional level within three to five years.
3. to increase the capacities of the research community and academic and research institutions to provide funding resources for R&I activities from international funds, particularly from EU schemes and programmes such as Horizon Europe (HE), as well as the development of mechanisms and practices for cooperation with the private sector and industry to increase funding sources.
4. to analyse the most viable options regarding the institutional structure managing the distribution of funding in the R&I sector, considering the establishment of an independent fund or agency for R&I sector, advancing and completing the necessary legal solutions, and, in the short term, revising the existing by-laws.
5. to improve the existing legal frame including the Law on Public Finance, university statutes, contractual obligations of academic staff, administrative and procurement procedures to create a research friendly environment and facilitate implementation of research projects through ensuring more autonomy and decentralisation competences for research units at public HEIs. This should enable faculties and research units to manage projects within their budgets through their accounts/subaccounts contracted from public funds, donors including international funds and from industry/business sector. This should ensure financial incentives and avoid unnecessary restrictions and limitations related to salaries created out of public budget finance.
6. create built principles (formula) at the universities and academic units within regulations for the distribution of the income generated by research projects which should ensure a necessary incentive for researchers and faculties to generate more revenues and income out of the public budget sources.
7. to foster activities for establishing a National Fund for R&I as independent agency for the implementation of the NRP, evaluation of projects and monitoring of their implementation based on EU standards and practices, including engagement of international experts in evaluation of projects, ensuring transparency, accountability and avoiding conflict of interest.
8. to condition, or respectively to allocate a part of the budget of universities/HEIs for the development of scientific R&I, including incentives for academic and research staff.
9. to include obligations for scientific research in the workload of academic staff so that it consists of teaching and research, which should be reflected in the staff salary, avoiding administrative limitations of parts of the salary that originate from research created funds.
10. to include the evaluation of the implementation of strategies for scientific research and innovation of universities/HEIs in their process of academic accreditation.
11. The Government, namely the Ministry of Education, Science, Technology, and Innovation (MESTI), and other responsible institutions for the development of the R&I sector, should establish regular periodic formats of consultation and dialogue with the R&I community through public discussions regarding the situation of the R&I sector and come up with measures for improvement.

# 1. Introduction

The research contributing to this report was conducted within the frame of the POLICY ANSWERS project, carried out by the Riinvest Institute as part of a consortium with partners from Austria, Germany, Italy, Croatia and the six Western Balkans economies. POLICY ANSWERS is a four-year Horizon Europe project coordinated by the Centre for Social Innovation (ZSI) from Vienna. It focuses on monitoring and supporting policy coordination for strengthening cooperation between the European Union (EU) and the Western Balkan (WB) economies, as well as to support the enhancement of the WB economies' potential for successful participation in regional and European research and innovation (R&I) activities. This is expected to lead to the integration of the region in the European Research Area (ERA), where Kosovo still lags behind and has relatively symbolic participation.

The Riinvest Institute, as the responsible entity for implementing the project in Kosovo, has carried out a series of activities for project implementation so far. In addition to contributing to all project Work Packages, Riinvest leads the task "Capacity Building and Project Implementation Support in Kosovo". It has identified and communicated with around 30 stakeholders as well as potential beneficiaries of the project. The Riinvest Institute will keep the stakeholders informed and take into consideration suggestions and requests from the respective Ministries, primarily the Ministry of Education, Science, Technology and Innovation (MESTI), the Ministry of Economy (ME), the Ministry of Health (MoH), and the Ministry of Environment, Spatial Planning, and Infrastructure (MESPI), as well as the Assembly Committees, the Academy of Sciences and Arts of Kosovo (ASAK), public universities and colleges, research institutes, and civil society organisations. In addition to regular communication and coordination, which helps the project deliver the expected results, the Riinvest Institute has also established a stakeholders' forum for the project, where progress and achievements are reported every six months to ensure the effective implementation of its activities in favour of the beneficiaries.

One of the project's foci is on supporting institutions and organisations engaged in the implementation of the Green Agenda and the Digital Transformation, improving health and gender aspects, and particularly advancing policies for R&I development. For this purpose, a Capacity Building programme for research related to the EU-Western Balkans (WB) Agenda has been drawn up. Based on the project's objectives, the capacity building programme prioritises the improvement of the institutional environment for R&I as well as the capacity building for research project planning, preparation and implementation including the application under the Horizon Europe Programme, an increase of resources, specifically funding sources, as well as improve policies and administrative procedures for their administration.

The importance of the R&I sector as a necessary condition and a decisive factor for the economic, technological, and overall development is a well-known fact. In Kosovo, the importance of this sector can only be reiterated and emphasised with great urgency. In fact, Kosovo has the least developed R&I sector in the region and consequently remains the least developed economy in the region with the highest unemployment rate.

Kosovo has a relatively short history of the R&I sector. Some rudimentary research capacities began after the Second World War, while a more significant development in this sector occurred during the short period of Kosovo's autonomy<sup>2</sup>. However, the capacities developed during this

---

<sup>2</sup> The first known research entity in Kosovo, the Small Centre for Kosovan Studies, was established in 1943. After World War II, several limited research capacities were established, mainly within state enterprises or educational and cultural institutions. However, the most significant research and innovation capacities in Kosovo were developed after 1967, during its short period of autonomy within the former Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (1967-1981/1989). Thus, for example, the Metallurgical-Mining Complex

period in the R&I sector were either closed or degraded after the abolishment of Kosovo's autonomy and its placement under Serbian administration during the last decade of the previous century<sup>3</sup>.

After the war, the institutional structure had to be established from scratch. Following the adoption of the Law (2004/42) on research and scientific activities by UNMIK, an initial legal framework for the R&I sector was drawn up. In 2007, based on this law, the Assembly of Kosovo appointed members of the National Science Council (NSC), which in 2010 drafted and approved the National Science Programme (NSP). However, for various reasons marked in this report, the implementation of this programme had failed, and for many years, the NSC was not active as its mandate had expired. Instead of the legally obligated 0.7 % of Kosovo's budget dedicated to research, in recent years, the budget for this sector has been extremely modest, and has executed only to the level of 0.1 % of Kosovo's budget.

Although the new composition of the NSC has been appointed and the draft of the (new) NSP has been prepared, issues that have remained pending for a long time require greater systemic efforts and coordination among all responsible actors and stakeholders. Kosovo's participation in Horizon Europe (HE) remains modest. Out of more than 50 applications under HE in the last two years, Kosovo has been part of five projects or consortia, with a total value of just over EUR 0.5 million<sup>4</sup>, while Kosovo's annual budget contribution to HE funds in these two years is twice as high. Meanwhile, according to data from the Ministry of Finance, within the budget of Kosovo for 2023, the budget for research and science for the University of Prishtina (UP) and for MESTI is EUR 5,516,658. The budget for research and science at the UP is 10 % of the overall UP budget, specifically EUR 3,266,658. The allocation of approximately EUR 3.2 million for research within the university's budget can be considered as advancement<sup>5</sup>. This modest improvement still lags behind legal obligations and represents only about 0.17 % of the consolidated budget (instead of 0.7 %).

Against this background, the purpose of this research, following the objectives of the POLICY ANSWERS project, is to provide a realistic assessment of the current situation in the R&I sector in Kosovo, from the perspective of the research community. Therefore, in this assessment, we have chosen to rely heavily on the perceptions and opinions of the community of researchers and innovators.

---

"Trepça" and the Kosovo Energy Corporation (KEK) developed their own research and innovation institutes, employing hundreds of researchers and other technical and support staff. These institutes conducted research and innovation not only to meet the needs of applying new technologies and creating new products in these large industrial corporations but also provided various consultancy and research services to other enterprises in Kosovo and throughout Yugoslavia at that time.

During the same period, various new research entities were established, such as the Academy of Sciences and Arts of Kosovo (ASAK), the Albanological Institute of Prishtina (AIP), the Institute of History of Kosovo (IHK), and various research units within the University of Prishtina, including numerous institutes of the Faculty of Medicine, the Economic Institute of Kosovo, the Institute of Philosophy and Sociology, etc. (see academic Rexhep Ismajli's "Scientific Developments" in academic Rexhep Ismajli and academic Mehmet Kraja (Ed.), Kosovo: A Monographic Overview, ASAK, Prishtina, 2011, pp. 421-435.)

<sup>3</sup> The majority of these research entities were closed when the Serbian administration expelled Albanian professors from the University of Prishtina and effectively halted all research activities and teaching in the Albanian language at this institution. Some of these institutions, such as ASAK, AIP, etc., attempted to continue their activities even after Serbian police forcibly removed them from their premises. In the spirit of resistance against the aforementioned campaign by Serbian authorities to close and/or impede the work of Kosovo research entities, Riinvest - Institute for Development Research was established in 1995.

<sup>4</sup> Data from MESTI (2023)

<sup>5</sup> The budget for science, research, technology and innovation in MESTI for the year 2023 is EUR 2,250,000 and that for goods and services EUR 850,000; subsidies and transfer EUR 1,250,000; capital expenditure EUR 150,000.

In order to complement the research with the perspective of an innovator when approaching the implementation of the project, the report also includes a case study (interview) of an innovator who aimed at realising a research-based innovation project which was unsuccessful due to administrative barriers.

In the following, the research methodology as well as both the quantitative and qualitative analysis of the data and information generated from this study are presented.

## 2. Methodology

Following the objective of this research, it was considered as an added value to address the situation in the R&I sector primarily from the perspective of researchers and innovators. For this purpose, a semi-structured questionnaire was developed to collect both qualitative and quantitative data on the perceptions and assessments of researchers and innovators in Kosovo regarding the key issues they face. The questionnaire includes 26 questions, addressing the most significant topics, problems, and challenges identified in earlier evaluations and studies of the R&I sector.

The first question is about a general assessment of the situation of the R&I sector. In the following two questions, respondents should identify the main problems, obstacles and challenges in this sector. Questions 4, 5 and 6 address the legal and institutional/ administrative framework of the R&I sector, while questions 7 and 8 address the policy implementation structures for the development of the R&I sector. Questions 9-11 asks about funding issues, while question 12 targets monitoring issues. In question 13, a response is sought on how to encourage a greater engagement of HEIs in the development of R&I, and question 14 enquires whether a part of the budget of HEIs should be reserved and dedicated exclusively to R&I. The issue of contractual obligations for academic staff to allocate a part of their workload to scientific research is tackled in question 15, and the question whether the assessment of the implementation of the strategies developed by HEIs should be included in their accreditation process for R&I is focused on in number 16. Questions 17, 18, and 19 address the performance of the HEIs staff and/or research entities in terms of publishing their scientific/academic work, while questions 20-23 deal with application challenges for research projects funded by public and European/international funds. The last three questions of the questionnaire address the cooperation of HEIs and/or research entities with international partners.

The sample of interviewees (researchers and innovators) for the survey was initially selected among researchers who have been most successful in publishing their work in renowned international journals. It was assumed that this category of respondents would be more informed and interested in contributing to the assessment of the R&I sector. Therefore, the questionnaire was sent to 60 researchers in this category. Additionally, the questionnaire was also sent to 25 representatives (professors or researchers) of HEIs and other research entities.

The questionnaire was completed by 26 respondents. A considerable number of other respondents have completed the questionnaire only partly and were therefore unable to successfully submit the online questionnaire. It can be said that approximately 50 % of those to whom the questionnaire was sent have shown interest in participating in the survey and research regarding the situation of the R&I sector in Kosovo.

For most of the questions, respondents had the possibility to choose between two or more optional answers. However, in these cases, they also had the opportunity to provide additional clarifications for their answers. The multiple answers were formulated taking into account assumptions or interpretations regarding the causes of the identified problems in the assessment reports of the R&I sector in Kosovo published so far.

The questions with multiple answers have allowed a categorisation of the perceptions and assessments of the respondents. This has also enabled a quantitative analysis of the responses. However, this has always been supplemented with a qualitative analysis, taking into account the additional explanations or clarifications by the respondents.

Other questions were open-ended, where answers or evaluations on specific topics could be provided with up to 80 or 100 words. In these cases, a qualitative analysis was carried out, specifically interpreting the respondents' answers.

The majority of respondents (20) are professors and/or researchers at HEIs; 17 are employed in the seven public universities of Kosovo, four in the two largest private colleges (UBT and AAB), four others are engaged in research institutes or entities, one is a representative of a company performing an innovative project, and another one is self-identified as an independent researcher. Nine out of 26 respondents answered as representatives of their institutions, while 17 others answered as individual researchers.

To complement the information regarding the field of R&I and the implementation of projects that may arise from it, the report also presents a brief case study.

The authors of this report take this opportunity to thank all the respondents for their cooperation. We also thank the other researchers who attempted to complete the electronic questionnaire but were unable to submit it as they did not answer all the questions.

## 3. Data analysis

### 3.1. Analysis of respondents' answers to structured questions

Research and innovation (R&I) play a crucial role in fostering economic development and societal progress. Although the sample size is not representative enough to fully capture the diversity of the R&I community, as it primarily includes authors who publish the most, the quantitative analysis of the data generated from interviews with structured and closed-ended questions provides valuable insights into the R&I sector in Kosovo. Even more so when based on the presented data, similar conclusions emerge in terms of percentages as in other analyses.

### 3.2. Situation of the R&I sector

Only two out of 26 respondents assess the situation in the R&I sector as good, while five (every fifth respondent) consider it as relatively good, taking into account the problems that Kosovo has faced. Three-quarters of the other survey respondents assess the situation as unsatisfactory or alarming. They highlight the lagging development of the R&I sector in Kosovo, not only in comparison to developed Western European countries but also relative to other economies in the region, emphasising the need for both immediate and long-term intervention by the Government and other responsible institutions in Kosovo (see Figure 1).



Figure 1: General assessments regarding the situation in the R&I sector. Source: Author's calculations based on survey data

These negative assessments of Kosovo's lagging behind in the R&I sector are supported by accurate and illustrative evidence from respondents' answers to questions related to the performance of academic staff at HEIs in publishing their research findings. For instance, researchers or academic staff of all the institutions whose representatives participated in the survey have published a total of 3,975 scientific or academic papers during the past five years. The number of authors of these published papers is 1,863. Since some respondents have only provided the number of their own papers and not the total number of papers published by the entire academic staff of their institutions as requested in the question, in the following data for some of the HEIs provided by respondents who have answered in the capacity of representatives of their institutions is analysed. Thus, professors from the UP have published 2,500 scientific or academic papers in the past five years, with a total of 1,024 authors. From the University "Isa Boletini" in Mitrovica (UIBM), we have 293 published papers by 85 authors, while at the University "Haxhi Zeka" (UHZIP) in Peja, there are 200 published articles by 250 authors. At the University "Kadri Zeka" in Gjilan (UKZGJ), there are 150 papers by 50 authors, and at the AAB College, there are 86 papers by 8 authors.<sup>6</sup>

The total number of scientific or academic papers published by professors of these five HEIs is 3,229. Considering that the total number of authors for these papers is 1,417, it can be concluded that these lecturers have published an average of 2.28 articles in the past five years. For the UP, the average number of papers per author in the last five years is 2.4.

These figures of the average only apply to the number of professors and/or researchers who have published papers in the past five years. If this average was calculated for the entire academic staff of these HEIs, then the average would have been lower.

Additional insights into the state of the R&I sector in Kosovo are provided by the data derived from respondents' answers to questions related to their own or their institutions' application for research and/or innovation project funding. Only 13 respondents (50 %) have answered positively to the question "Have you or your institution applied for any research and/or innovation project for support from public funds in the past five years?" (Figure 2).

<sup>6</sup> We have not verified this data. Its accuracy remains the responsibility of the respondents who have answered on behalf of their respective institutions.



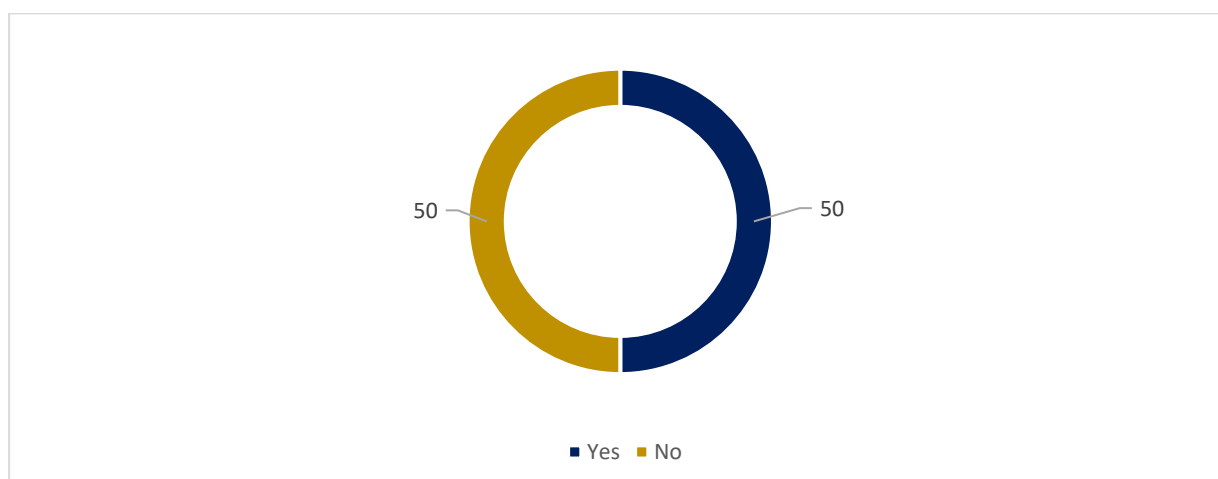


Figure 2: Application for project support from public funds. Source: Author's calculations based on survey data

The question, “Has your institution applied with any research and/or innovation project for support from European/international funds in the last five years?” was answered positively by 18 respondents (69.2 %) and negatively by eight, corresponding to 30.8 % (Figure 3).<sup>7</sup>

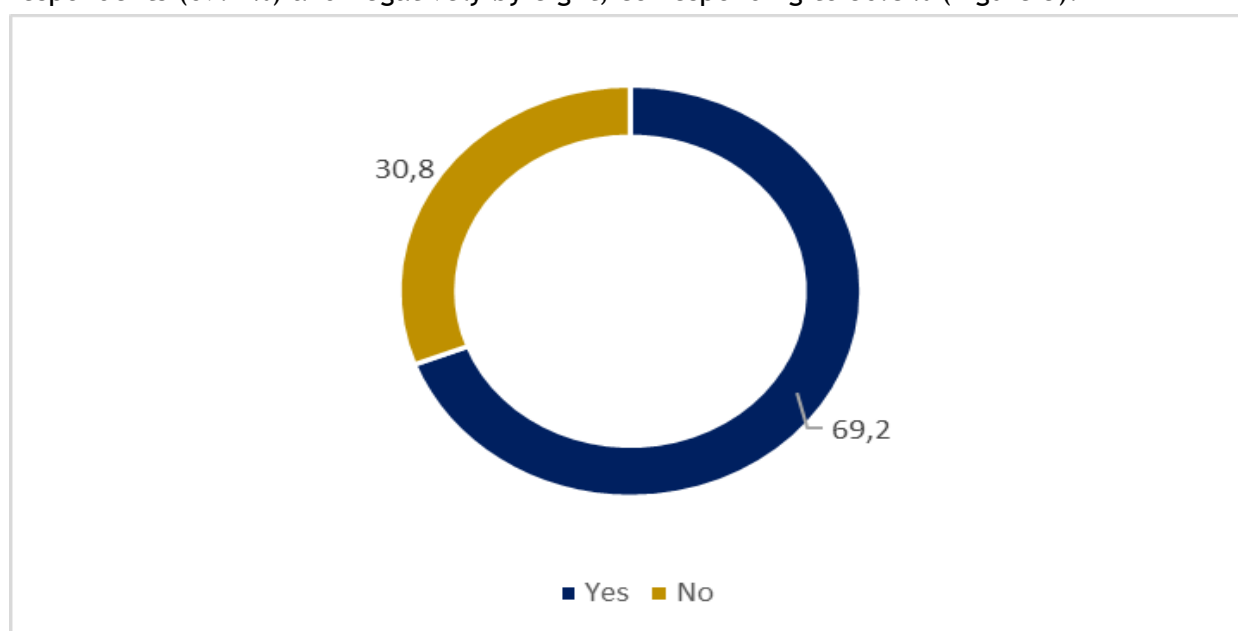


Figure 3: Application with projects for European/international funds. Source: Author's calculations based on survey data

In this regard, the data related to international cooperation of research institutions and HEIs in Kosovo with European or other international partners are also of interest. Specifically, in the question “Has your research institution and/or HEI established cooperation relations with any international partner based on a signed memorandum of understanding?”, 22 respondents (84.6 %) answered positively, one respondent answered negatively, two others stated that they have no information, and for one respondent the institution is in the process of establishing cooperation relations with an international partner (Figure 4).

<sup>7</sup> When interpreting these data, it is important to consider that we are dealing with the most active part of the research community in Kosovo. Therefore, the data should be analysed while taking this fact into consideration.

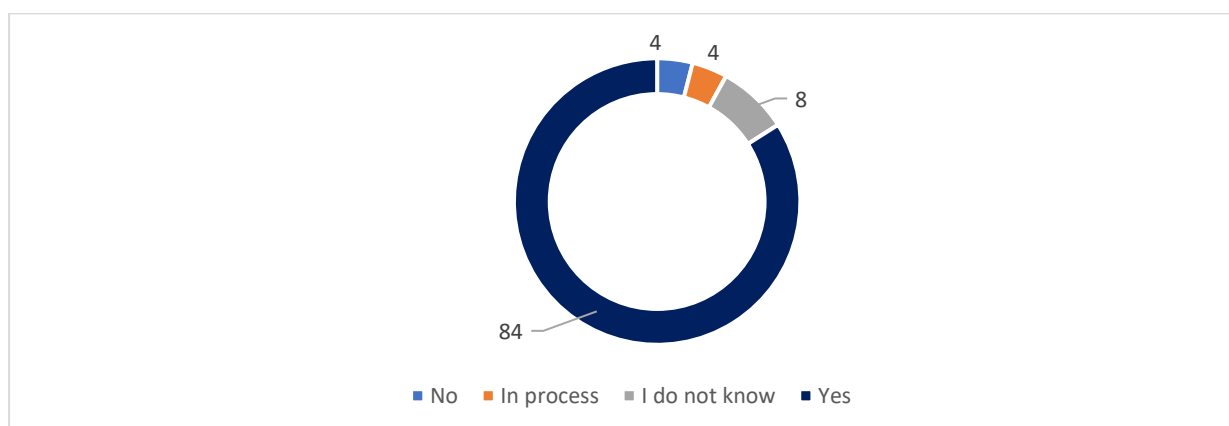


Figure 4: Establishing cooperation relations with any international partner based on a signed memorandum of understanding. Source: Author's calculations based on survey data

### 3.3. Causes or sources of problems

Some of the reasons for this situation can be seen in the respondents' answers to the question about the main problems and challenges faced by the R&I sector in Kosovo. The respondents had 13 optional answers to choose from, and they could select one or more options in this case.

The vast majority of respondents, namely three quarters of them, think that the government and other responsible institutions, as well as stakeholders and other actors in the R&I sector, still do not adequately consider and evaluate the crucial importance of this sector for the overall development of Kosovo. Insufficient funding is one of the main reasons for the unsatisfactory situation of the R&I sector, according to 16 respondents, or nearly two thirds of them. Meanwhile, 14 or over half of the respondents have estimated that the previous governments of Kosovo have not had adequate, well-thought-out, and long-term commitment based on well-informed vision for the accelerated development of the R&I sector in Kosovo.

Insufficient internationalisation, namely inadequate cooperation between R&I institutions and other entities in the R&I sector with international partners, is among the main reasons for the current unsatisfactory situation in the R&I sector, according to 13 respondents or 50 % of them. Likewise, the same number of respondents thinks that another important problem related to this is the lack of capacities or modest capacities of HEIs and other entities to engage in European and international initiatives and projects.

Inadequate legal and statutory solutions of HEIs, institutes and other entities in the R&I sector regarding funding issues, which do not promote R&I development, are among the main causes of stagnation in the R&I sector for ten respondents or about 38.5 % of researchers and innovators. Additionally, nine respondents see as a problem the insufficient regulatory-administrative infrastructure for implementing defined development objectives through legal solutions and strategic documents.

The quantitative analysis of respondents' perceptions or assessment regarding the impact of other factors on Kosovo's lagging behind in the R&I sector can be seen in the table below (see also Figure 5).



*Table 1: Challenges, problems and/or obstacles of the R&I sector in Kosovo (percentage of answers “Yes”). Source: Author’s calculations based on survey data*

**In your opinion, what are the challenges, problems, and/or obstacles that the R&I sector is facing in Kosovo?**

	Count	Percentage
Institutions in Kosovo and other stakeholders in the R&I sector still do not fully understand the vital importance of this sector as a necessary premise and decisive factor for the overall development of Kosovo.	19	13.3 %
Previous governments of Kosovo have lacked sufficient, well-thought-out, and long-term commitment based on a well-informed vision for the accelerated development of the R&I sector in Kosovo.	14	9.8 %
Inadequate and/or insufficient regulatory legal framework.	11	7.7 %
Insufficient funding for the needs of the R&I sector’s development.	16	11.2 %
Lack of transparency in the funding process.	6	4.2 %
Limited capacities of the research and innovation community to absorb the allocated budget by the government for the R&I sector.	9	6.3 %
Inadequate legal and statutory solutions of HEIs, institutes and other entities in the field of R&I for funding issues, which do not promote the development of R&I	10	7.0 %
Insufficient regulatory-administrative infrastructure for implementing development objectives defined through legal solutions and strategic documents.	9	6.3 %
Lack of adequate or sufficient infrastructure for monitoring the implementation of defined development objectives through legal solutions and strategic documents.	7	4.9 %
Lack of physical infrastructure and adequate or sufficient equipment of HEIs and other entities in the R&I sector for the development of their research activities	7	4.9 %
Insufficient internationalisation, namely insufficient cooperation of HEIs and other entities in the R&I sector with international partners	13	9.1 %
Lack of capacities or limited capacities of HEIs and other entities in the R&I sector to engage in European and international initiatives and projects.	13	9.1 %
Issues with accessing databases and scientific journals.	9	6.3 %
<b>Total</b>	<b>143</b>	<b>100 %</b>

The respondents’ answers to other questions addressing these issues and other aspects of the challenges in the R&I sector, which will be further analysed, provide more detailed comments and explanations for interpreting the assessments and perspectives of Kosovan researchers and innovators regarding the situation of the R&I sector. For example, more than two thirds or 17

respondents believe that the legal/regulatory framework poses an obstacle or limitation to the faster development of the R&I sector in Kosovo, compared to nine others or 34.6 % of respondents who do not support this reflection (Figure 6).

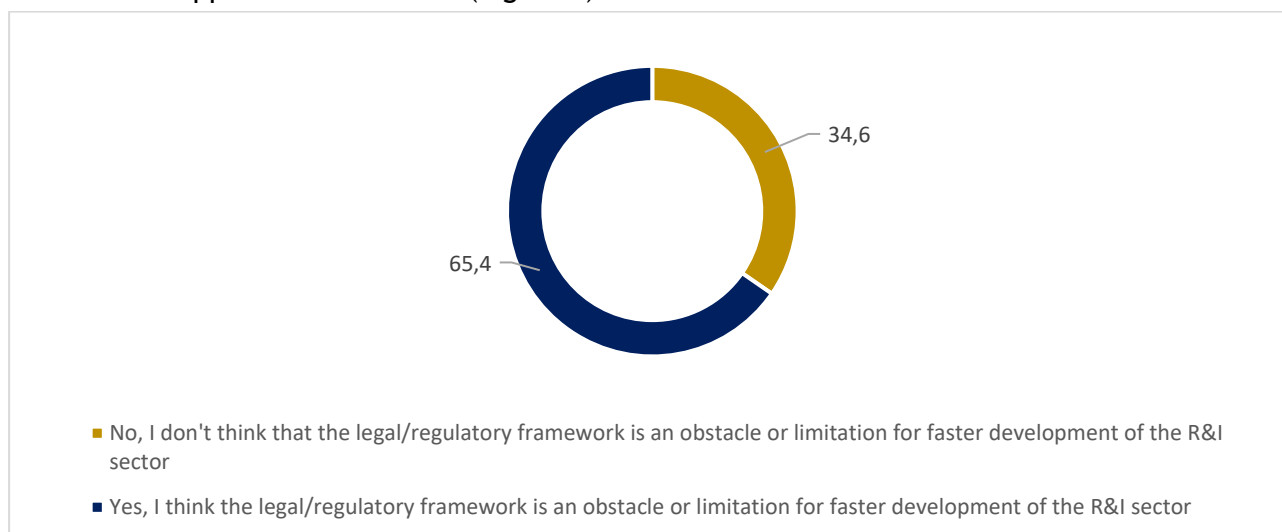


Figure 5: Assessments of the legal/regulatory framework for the R&I sector (in percent): Author's calculations based on survey data

Likewise, eleven (or 42.3 %) of the respondents think that the institutional structures or mechanisms for implementing the NSP are a bottleneck or an obstacle to a more efficient implementation of the defined development objectives through legal solutions and strategic documents, compared to 15 others or 57.7 % who do not have this reflection (Figure 6).

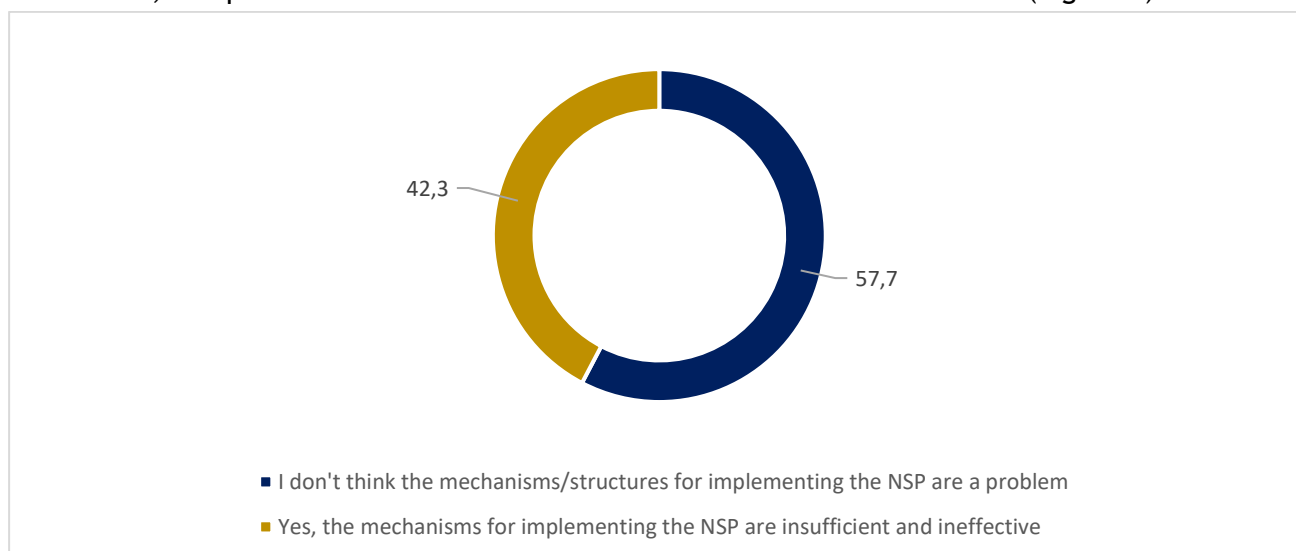


Figure 6: Assessments of institutional structures for implementing the NSP (in percent). Author's calculations based on survey data

### 3.4. Challenges and possible solutions

In the following, we will analyse respondents' answers to questions about possible ways for addressing challenges, specifically the solutions to identified problems, starting from questions that address strategic approaches related to the overall development of the R&I sector, up to those that touch upon aspects of specific issues.

Firstly, we focus on the following question: “Should the current legal and institutional solutions be retained, where the scientific research and innovation sectors are treated separately by laws, strategies, and different ministries, or should a more integrative and inclusive approach be adopted towards these two sectors to create legislative, institutional, and budgetary synergies, taking into account the organic connection between the abovementioned sectors?”. This question addresses the challenges and dilemmas already identified by the published evaluation reports regarding the most productive strategic approach of the Government and other responsible institutions as well as stakeholders for the development of the R&I sector.

All the respondents have stated that a more integrative and inclusive approach should be adopted towards the R&I sector to create legislative, institutional, and budgetary synergies, considering the organic connection between them.

In line with this, most of the researchers and/or innovators who participated in this survey are generally not satisfied with the institutional and administrative structures that manage the R&I sector. Specifically, 21 respondents (over 80 %) have responded positively to the question of whether changes should be made in the institutional structure that manages the distribution of funding in the R&I sector, while five respondents (approximately one-fifth) believe that the existing structures should be retained and strengthened.

Again, 21 respondents (over 80 %) think that this issue should be resolved through the establishment of an independent fund or agency for the financing of the R&I sector, while five respondents (approximately one fifth) think that the existing funding model should be preserved and strengthened.

Regarding the issue of monitoring the implementation of R&I development policies, 17 respondents (over two thirds) believe that this problem should be resolved by establishing an independent agency to monitor the implementation of the NSP and assess the situation of the R&I sector. Five respondents (approximately one fifth) think that the NSC should be given a greater role and be more engaged in monitoring the implementation of the NSP. Meanwhile, four respondents (over 15 %) prefer strengthening the existing structures of the MESTI responsible for this sector.

### 3.5. Funding

In almost all the documents or evaluation reports regarding the situation of R&I sector in Kosovo published so far, the funding system has been identified as one of the most complex problems in this sector, characterised by deficiencies and/or limitations in legislation, regulations, administrative guidelines and implementation structures. Therefore, the opinions of the respondents on these issues expressed in their responses to questions 14, 15, and 16 of the survey that address these problems are of great interest.

Firstly, it should be emphasised that all respondents have responded positively to the question whether a part of the budget of universities/HEIs should be conditioned, namely allocated to the development of scientific R&I.

In this line, the vast majority of respondents (24, which equals over 90 %) agree that the academic staff’s tasks should include obligations for scientific research, so that the workload consists of both teaching and research, and that this should be linked to their salary. Only two respondents are neutral or have no opinion on this issue.

Likewise, 24 respondents (over 90 %) have responded affirmatively to the question whether the assessment of the implementation of their R&I strategies should be included in the academic accreditation process of universities/HEIs, while only two disagree with this reflection.

## 4. Reflections of comments and explanations from respondents regarding their evaluations

Regarding a series of questions and issues, the interviewees were asked to comment or briefly justify their perceptions and attitudes. The most characteristic findings are presented below, organised according to specific fields included in the questionnaire.

### 4.1. Insufficient institutional support and lack of dedication from academic staff in research activities

The respondents were asked to explain their assessment regarding the current situation in the R&I sector. Almost all the interviewees link the current state of R&I in Kosovo to inadequate institutional support, weak funding, low research capacities of researchers, and lack of commitment from scholars in conducting research. Additionally, university staff with necessary research capabilities are not encouraged through incentives to involve master and doctoral students in research. Moreover, the low number of publications in HEIs is attributed to the fact that research institutions lack the necessary research capacities, as they are not specialised in this field, including their academic staff. In line with this, one of the interviewees emphasised that *“the current funding formula for academic institutions does not incentivise HEI to focus on R&I.”* Similarly, a researcher assesses that *“the lack of long-term vision and institutional commitment to R&I are the main challenges faced by HEI.”* This includes research priorities that align with the main challenges and issues in society. As a result, there is an environment characterised by a lack of incentives, and academic staff are not encouraged to develop their personal research skills. Therefore, all the interviewees affirm that increased funding, improved institutional research capacities by encouraging staff and providing training, and changing the mindset of academic staff through incentives, including financial ones, are crucial for changing the current situation.

### 4.2. Low level of internationalisation and limited capacities for fundraising/acquiring funds

The assessments indicate that HEIs and other relevant stakeholders are still not fully aware of the crucial importance of R&I for the sustainable development of Kosovo and for the competitive capacities of businesses and the Kosovar economy to compete in regional, EU, and other markets. This is also related to the level and effectiveness of government institutions' efforts to change the situation and advance R&I. Other challenges related to government institutions include the lack of a comprehensive and consistently adequate legal framework for laws and regulations and the lack of proper infrastructure to monitor or implement the development agenda through laws and strategic documents. The interviewees particularly mention challenges such as *“limited research community capacity to raise funds”*, the lack of *“internationalisation of HEIs, especially cooperation aiming at enhancing research capacities”* and *“the lack of capacities of HEI to engage in European or international incentives and projects”*.

### 4.3. The need to contribute towards evidence-based policies

The interviewees emphasise that *“the government and other relevant institutions should increase incentives in various forms and encourage researchers, especially young researchers.”* This can be achieved by *“increasing funding for research institutions and individuals with academic credentials”*. However, the impact of funds may be limited if institutions do not focus on enhancing the research capacities of their staff. Similarly, as mentioned earlier, the lack of a research-oriented mindset among academic staff is highlighted as important. Additionally, it is worth noting the *“missing link between academia and their research studies, which would involve*

*academic personnel directly and indirectly in formulating and implementing development strategies at the national level.”* These initiatives to integrate academic institutions would enhance the involvement of researchers in providing evidence-based policy recommendations, including improving existing resources. According to the interviewees, the involvement of academic staff in policy formulation is low due to the fact that *“institutions do not see research as an integral part of their decision-making process to address various challenges at the national level, and the lack of promoting policies in research and evidence-based research.”* In this regard, the lack of collaboration between academic staff and international actors in joint research projects remains challenging. According to the interviewees, *“the majority of academic staff and HEIs lack the necessary capacities to write projects, particularly EU projects”*.

#### **4.4. Advancement and completion of the legal framework and regulations for effective utilisation of public funds dedicated to R&I**

According to the interviewees, the current legal framework and other regulations present obstacles to the rapid development of HEIs in the field of R&I. There is a need to change the current legal framework, including “university statutes, academic staff contracts, public finance and public procurement laws, as well as administrative procedures to facilitate the implementation of research projects”. Therefore, the amendment of laws and regulations, especially university statutes, “would lead to greater independence and decentralisation regarding the competencies and administration of R&I in public academic institutions and academic units”, including “harmonising laws” and regulations with central-level institutions. Furthermore, the legal framework needs to be advanced to allow for “the integration of academic staff with research within the university, as well as the involvement of private institutions and NGOs in applying for public funds for R&I in accordance with EU practices.” According to the interviewees, an issue in regard to the legal framework is financing. All interviewees consider that a percentage of HEI funding should be decentralised and “allocated directly for research within the institution, as well as direct funding of academic units”. The new legal framework should also “allow for a more flexible and motivating approach for researchers and innovators in developing their capacities”. In this way, each HEI and academic unit would have the ability to enhance research within specific fields.

#### **4.5. Implementation of EU/international standards for policies and procedures**

The need to advance policies and procedures for the utilisation of dedicated public funds for research, in order to avoid bureaucratic practices and allow researchers access to funds based on merit, is highly important according to the respondents. These procedures need to be changed to allow more researchers to apply for public funds, and funding schemes should be based on scientific criteria and professional assessment to ensure transparency. There is also a need to develop transparent procedures in line with EU standards.

Streamlining bureaucratic procedures and ensuring clear selection criteria would “increase efficiency and professionalism, as well as incentivise researchers to apply for these funds”. Despite the existing research funding being very limited, in some cases, these funds have not been fully utilised due to absorptive capacity limitations and the aforementioned challenges, which have created a perception among researchers that it is not worthwhile “... given the lack of transparency in any of the selection criteria or lengthy bureaucratic procedures”.

#### **4.6. The need for decentralisation of research administration and management in public universities**

The funding of HEIs has been challenging, and as mentioned above, the source of this challenge is related to low financial incentives, lengthy bureaucratic procedures, and laws and regulations. The interviewees assert that MESTI should increase funding for scientific research, stating that “EUR 10,000 for serious scientific work is low”. They argue that in order to make the way these funds are spent more transparent “they should be allocated to institutional accounts and managed by the university, not the personal accounts of the academic staff.” As part of this change, it is important to allocate funds within the academic institution and to have an impact by involving “international experts from specific fields in the project evaluation commission”.

#### **4.7. Involvement of international experts in project evaluations**

The interviewees argue that “the strategy of funding scientific small grants has made it impossible to supply laboratories with instruments according to European standards”. A possible way to strengthen monitoring, implementation, and achievement of objectives, according to the interviewees, would be “funding instrument procurement for a designated laboratory every three years, ensuring that the laboratories are updated with technology comparable not only to the region but also to EU standards”. All interviewees argue that the establishment of an independent agency for monitoring and evaluation in combination with involvement of international experts would increase transparency and avoid any potential conflict of interest. Through this independent agency and international professional experts, monitoring and evaluation would be more objective, including the anticipated measures. However, some interviewees claim that the establishment of a new independent agency “would further complicate the issue,” thus recommending that this be done through the NSC as an independent institutional mechanism.

#### **4.8. Increasing incentives for researchers**

The interviewees mostly consider the conditions for conducting research to be inadequate: “There is a willingness to conduct research, but there is a need for more investment in modern equipment and laboratories.” To address this, investment in equipment and laboratories, as well as creating an environment that enhances incentives for researchers, is crucial. Furthermore, in creating such an environment, the interviewees propose that the best way is “raising the criteria for publication in top journals and qualifying professors based on the number of publications by setting a minimum number of publications”. Similarly, public institutions have a specific budget allocated by the ministry, which according to the interviewees is not suitable as it does not rely on performance criteria. Therefore, allocating the budget for HEIs “based on their performance, where the salaries of academic staff are based on their performance in publication, changing it to the number of their scientific output/number of publications would create a better environment in HEIs”. The distinction is important because scientific output/number of publications can lead to quantity-over-quality issues, where researchers prioritise producing more papers regardless of their impact. These incentives would increase the dynamism of HEIs in terms of publications; competition among HEIs would be based on the quality of their products in terms of publications and projects; they would also encourage researchers to prepare more proposals and project applications and integrate them with their publications. By doing so, the interviewees emphasise the need to “reduce the teaching hours of professors who focus on scientific research, as their pay is based solely on teaching and not on research”, or increase salaries based on research results and projects.

#### **4.9. Integration of research into the workload of academic staff**

To maximise the experience of HEIs in projects with international partners, it is crucial to increase the capacities of HEIs and academic staff. By doing so, the interviewees believe that “the



government should invest more in HEIs to make them more competitive while cooperating with international partners and win more international projects”. In this regard, HEIs should increase “the workload of academic staff related to projects, which would give meaning to the collaboration with international partners”. This includes funding, which, according to the interviewees, would increase incentives for the involvement of academic staff for collaboration with international partners. As a result, collaboration with international partners would contribute to the development of capacities in HEIs in Kosovo, and the academic staff would become more integrated and competitive compared to their counterparts in the EU and other developed countries. Therefore, there seems to be a consensus that a salary reform for academic staff is necessary, which would include incentives for research work, and where the salary, as well as the budget for universities and academic units, would include both the teaching component and the research component.



## 5. Annex

### Appendix 1

#### INNOVATIVE PROJECT IN THE MAZES OF BUREAUCRACY!

Excerpts from an interview with the representative of the GoBeyond project, which illustrates the obstacles encountered by innovative projects in Kosovo.

*Could you please give us a brief presentation of your project?*

We started with an agricultural innovation for Kosovo, built and trained a local team, established local and international research partnerships, invested more than EUR 50,000 and finally decided to stop the project.

*Why did you stop? What happened?*

My wife and I moved to Kosovo just before the pandemic started, to live here and to make this country our home. It was clear that we want to engage in an economic activity that benefits Kosovo and its people. GoBeyond was founded and we decided to innovate in the field of agriculture: Turning organic side- and waste-streams into human food, animal feed and natural fertiliser using insects. Protein from insects already in many countries is a solid and proven approach to the pending food crisis [1] and at the same time has a substantial positive impact on climate change [2]. With this project we were the first in the WB with a large scale plan. Our goal was to develop and build an impact driven and research based social enterprise giving opportunities to youth and women with focus on agricultural innovation in Kosovo.

Soon at its beginning it became evident that we did not fit in the patterns of funding organisations. Hence, we bootstrapped with the help of friends and family, built a laboratory farm, got accepted by the Innovation Centre of Kosovo (ICK) as a startup, went through different subsequent incubation and acceleration programmes at economy, regional and international level and won several prizes [3]. Beyond that, we received good media coverage. Investors from Kosovo and from Europe started to contact us for collaboration. Pristina Mall approached us using our innovation to be part of their upcycling programme for organic waste, a similar offer exists for two local supermarket chains.

Even though insects are culturally not easy to be accepted here, the feedback we got however was more than encouraging.

Eventually, a German foundation offered decent support for hiring scientific staff for research. We found three young part-time farming researchers who grew to become the first professional, visionary and fully determined insect pioneers in the WB, passionate to contribute to the development of Kosovo. Other funding opportunities did not work, e.g. for the fact that we aimed to produce for Kosovo and not for export. Applying at Kosovo Investment and Enterprise Support Agency (KIESA) did not work simply for the fact that my residency ID could technically not be verified [4] and nobody was to be found who could fix it during the time it was needed.

To strengthen research, we collaborate with the UP, Faculty of Veterinary and Agriculture (concluding a MoU), with the University of Gießen (Germany) and the Fraunhofer Institute (IME). The University of Tirana approached us and offered collaboration. Via Erasmus we hosted several German students for internships, we accompanied a doctoral student focusing his work on insect protein in Kosovo, hosted two students of UP for their Bachelor thesis, applied together with UP for a grant for Applied Research in Kosovo at Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), and the University of Gießen is currently initiating a HORIZON Europe application for a large-scale research project to root the production of insect protein in Kosovo - a unique approach for the whole area of the WB.

After we had prototypes and knew how we can produce, we started to reach out for a license to produce and sell. A labyrinth-journey started.





We began our journey at an agency, were sent to one of the ministries, from there to another ministry, and yet again to another ministry, went to the local municipality and back to the agency. We addressed the heads of different ministries, had meetings with advisors, and submitted dozens of documents explaining what we do. We realised, no-one seemed to feel responsible for our case. Some of the outcomes of this long process was, that discussions with investors could not proceed, to get going with developing a partnership with Pristina Mall was not feasible and to the offer to upcycle organic waste from local supermarkets we could not respond.

However, after nine months of trying to find our way, finally the long-awaited inspection came! This period of walking the labyrinth had consumed all our financial resources and this milestone was our hope to move closer towards generating revenues. Result: Having our farm in an industrial space, we did not have direct access to outside [5]. The measures requested we could not afford to do, also a transition time was not granted to us.

Financially not feasible anymore, we had to close down the laboratory farm and to lay-off our well-trained team. Two years of investment, work, research and development came to an end.

One of the local donor-organisations suggested moving our business to North Macedonia, since their conditions for innovation were better. Indeed, through the different regional programmes we took part in, I understood the environment for innovation and entrepreneurship around us like the before mentioned or for example Bosnia and Herzegovina, seem to be worth looking at.

Innovation as a part of Kosovo's economic development, an institutional approach with support structures and clear responsibilities is needed to ensure that innovation is done and grows stronger in Kosovo and gets rooted in Kosovo.

Concluding from a personal perspective: As a foreign citizen with limited financial resources to find help, support and the way through public institutions with an innovation - it is the nature of innovation that it is new and that structures and process might not be set-up yet - feels to be like squaring the circle or a journey through a labyrinth almost impossible to wander through successfully. If we had come to Kosovo only for establishing a business, with the experience we gained during the last two years, we surely would have left already.

However, we love living in Kosovo and have high respect for its people, Kosovo is our home. We stay and we try again or do something else. The potential of this priceless economy and its young population is vast and worth not giving up.

---

[1] Protein will be in a deficit of 60 million tons per year and will leave 25 % of humanity without proper nutrition. Food is another global crisis. The search for alternative protein sources is a high priority on the agenda of many governments including the EU.

[2] Insect farming is a Zero-Waste concept and functions within a framework of Circular Economy. Compared to cattle, insects reduce GHG emissions by up to 90 %, similarly water consumption, land use and feed are drastically lowered. Insect farming directly serves six of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the UN.

[3] e.g. Climate-Launchpad on economy and European level, Balkan Green Ideas, Climate Bridges, Tech-Boost Stars, Waste Wise Challenge, Regional Butterfly Innovation Award 2022 of Regional Cooperation Council, Boost x Kosovo Programme of UNDP

[4] because of technical reasons of data transfer from the office of immigration to eKosova

[5] We shared the space with other companies

## Appendix 2

### QUESTIONNAIRE

#### CURRENT SITUATION, PROBLEMS, AND CHALLENGES OF THE SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH AND INNOVATION (R&I) SECTOR IN KOSOVO

The Riinvest Institute, within a broad consortium with research organisations from Austria, Germany, Italy, Croatia, and the six Western Balkan economies, has started implementing the project “R&I POLICY making, implementation ANd Support in the WEsteRn BalkanS” (POLICY ANSWERS). This is a four-year project led by ZSI (Centre for Social Innovation) from Vienna. An additional contribution to all the work packages of the project, Riinvest leads the work package “Support for Capacity Building and Project Implementation in Kosovo.” The project is funded by HORIZON Europe funds (WIDERA-2021-ACCESS-06-01).

The main objective of the project is to monitor and support the coordination of policies to strengthen cooperation between the European Union (EU) and the Western Balkans (WB), as well as to support the enhancement of WB potential for successful participation in regional and multilateral R&I activities. The project aims at promoting regional cooperation in R&I, support networking and access to information, and enhance excellence.

For this purpose, this survey aims at assessing the current situation of the R&I sector in Kosovo from the perspective of the research and innovators’ community.

Therefore, we kindly invite you, as a representative of your research and/or higher education institution (HEI), or as an individual researcher, to take some time to provide us with your answers to the questions of this survey. Your input will help us together to identify the main problems and challenges of the development of the R&I sector in Kosovo.

We believe that there is no need to emphasise the vital importance that the R&I sector holds for the overall development of Kosovo. It is widely acknowledged that this sector is a necessary prerequisite and a decisive factor for the economic and social development of any country.

1. How do you assess the current situation in the scientific research and innovation (R&I) sector in Kosovo?

The current situation in the R&I sector is:

- a) Very good
- b) Good
- c) Relatively good, considering the challenges Kosovo has faced
- d) Satisfactory
- e) Unsatisfactory
- f) Highly unsatisfactory and with significant problems
- g) Kosovo is lagging behind in the R&I sector, not only compared to EU countries but also to the region, is alarming and requires immediate intervention and strong long-term commitment from the Government and other relevant institutions, so that Kosovo can catch up with regional neighbours and, ultimately, with the countries of the EU.

Please circle the letter corresponding to your chosen answer; explain/justify your selected option with a few sentences (up to 80 words):

2. In your opinion, what are the challenges, problems, and/or obstacles that the R&I sector in Kosovo is facing?

(You can choose one, several, or all of the following options.)



- a) Kosovo's institutions and other stakeholders in the R&I sector still do not fully understand the vital importance of this sector as a necessary prerequisite and a decisive factor for the overall development of Kosovo;
- b) Previous governments of Kosovo have lacked well-thought-out and long-term commitment based on an informed vision for the accelerated development of the R&I sector in Kosovo;
- c) Inadequate and/or insufficient legal/regulatory framework;
- d) Insufficient funding for the needs of R&I sector development;
- e) Non-transparent funding processes;
- f) Limited capacities of the research and innovators community to absorb the budget allocated by the government for the R&I sector;
- g) Inadequate legal and statutory solutions for HEIs, institutes, and other entities in terms of funding issues, which do not promote R&I development;
- h) Insufficient regulatory/administrative infrastructure for implementing defined development objectives through legal solutions and strategic documents;
- i) Lack of adequate or sufficient infrastructure for monitoring the implementation of defined development objectives through legal solutions and strategic documents;
- j) Lack of adequate or sufficient physical infrastructure and equipment of HEIs and other entities in the R&I sector to support their research activities;
- k) Insufficient internationalisation, namely inadequate cooperation of HEIs and other entities in the R&I sector with international partners;
- l) Lack of capacity or modest capacity of HEIs and other entities in the R&I sector to participate in European and international initiatives and projects;
- m) Issues related to accessing databases and scientific journals.

3. If you have selected several or all of the answer options in the previous question, please choose 1-3 of the most important issues listed in those options, and if you wish, explain your selection in a few sentences (up to 80 words):

4. Should the current legal and institutional solutions, where the scientific R&I sectors are treated separately by different laws, strategies, and ministries, be retained? Or should a more integrative and inclusive approach be adopted to create legislative, institutional, and budgetary synergy, considering the organic connection between the two abovementioned sectors?

- a) The current legal and institutional solutions should be retained.
- b) A more integrative and inclusive approach to create legislative, institutional, and budgetary synergy, considering the organic connection between the two abovementioned sectors should be adopted.

5. Does the legal/regulatory framework present an obstacle or limitation to the rapid development of the R&I sector?

- a) Yes, I believe the legal/regulatory framework is an obstacle or limitation to the rapid development of the R&I sector.
- b) No, I don't think the legal/regulatory framework is an obstacle or limitation to the rapid development of the R&I sector.

6. If yes, what changes should be made to the legal/regulatory framework to promote faster development of the R&I sector?

Please describe your proposed changes (up to 100 words):

7. Are the institutional structures or mechanisms for implementing the National Science Programme (NSP) a bottleneck or obstacle for a more effective implementation of the defined developmental objectives through legal solutions and strategic documents?

- a) Yes, the mechanisms for implementing the NSP are insufficient and ineffective;
- b) No, I don't think the institutional structures/mechanisms for implementing the NSP pose a problem.

8. If yes, what changes should be made in the institutional/administrative framework for a more effective implementation of the defined developmental objectives through legal solutions and strategic documents?

Please describe and justify your proposed changes (up to 100 words):

9. Should changes be made to the institutional structure that manages the distribution of funding in the R&I sector?

- a) There is no need for changes;
- b) Yes, changes are needed in this structure.

10. If yes, what changes should be made to the institutional structure that manages the distribution of funding in the R&I sector?

Please describe and justify your proposed changes (up to 100 words):

11. Should an independent funding agency for R&I sector be established or should the current solution be retained?

- a) The existing funding model should be retained and strengthened;
- b) An independent funding agency or fund for the R&I sector should be established.

12. How can the monitoring of the implementation of the defined developmental objectives through legal solutions and strategic documents be strengthened?

- a) By strengthening the existing responsible structures within the Ministry of Education, Science, Technology and Innovation (MESTI);
- b) To grant the National Science Council (NSC) a greater mandate and increased involvement in monitoring the implementation of the NSP;
- c) By establishing an independent agency to monitor the implementation of the NSP and assess the situation of the R&I sector.

Please explain your answer/proposal (up to 80 words):

13. How can a greater and better organised engagement of universities/HEIs in scientific R&I be encouraged?

Please provide an answer (up to 80 words):

14. Should part of the budget of universities/HEIs be conditioned - namely reserved - for the development of scientific R&I?

- a) Yes



b) No

15. The job of the academic staff should include obligations for scientific research, with the workload comprising both teaching and research, and this being linked to salary.

- a) Strongly disagree
- b) Disagree
- c) Neutral
- d) Agree
- e) Strongly agree
- f) No opinion

16. Should the assessment of the implementation of their strategies for scientific R&I be included in the academic accreditation process of universities/HEIs?

- a) Yes
- b) No

17. How many scientific and/or academic papers has the academic staff of your institution published in peer-reviewed journals in the past five years?

18. What is the total number of authors of these papers?

19. How many of the abovementioned papers have been published in prestigious international journals?

Please list the names of these journals:

20. Have you or your institution applied for any research and/or innovation projects for support from public funds in the past five years?

- a) Yes
- b) No

21. If yes, for how many projects have you received support and what has been the amount of financial support for each project?

Please explain your answer/proposal (up to 80 words):

22. Has your institution applied for any research and/or innovation project for support from European/international funds in the past five years?

- a) Yes
- b) No

23. If yes, for how many projects and from which institutions have you received support, and what has been the amount of financial support for each project?

Please explain your answer/proposal (up to 80 words):

24. Has your research institution and/or HEI established cooperation relations with any international partner based on a signed Memorandum of Understanding?
25. If yes, which institution/partner and for what kind of collaboration?  
Please explain your answer/proposal (up to 80 words):
26. In your opinion, what needs to be done to promote the internationalisation of the R&I sector in Kosovo? (up to 100 words):

### Appendix 3

#### List of Interviewees

- |     |                      |                        |
|-----|----------------------|------------------------|
| 1.  | Ajtene Avdullahi     | UIBM                   |
| 2.  | Anton Berishaj       | ASAK                   |
| 3.  | Arben Mehmeti        | UP                     |
| 4.  | Artan Mustafa        | UBT                    |
| 5.  | Artan Nimani         | UFAGJ                  |
| 6.  | Avni Hajdari         | UP                     |
| 7.  | Bedri Millaku        | UHZP                   |
| 8.  | Besnik Krasniqi      | UP                     |
| 9.  | Emin Neziraj         | UHZP                   |
| 10. | Enver Hamiti         | UP                     |
| 11. | Faton Merovci        | UIBM                   |
| 12. | Festim Tafolli       | UUHP                   |
| 13. | Florin Aliu          | UBT                    |
| 14. | Gëzim Jusufi         | AAB                    |
| 15. | Islam Qerimi         | UIBM                   |
| 16. | Jusuf Qarkaxhija     | AAB                    |
| 17. | Kaltrina Kelmendi    | UP                     |
| 18. | Karsten Klapp        | GoBeyond Project       |
| 19. | Liridon Kryeziu      | UBT                    |
| 20. | Lul Raka             | UP                     |
| 21. | Rrahim Sejdiu        | UASF                   |
| 22. | Sevdije Govori       | UP                     |
| 23. | Shkelzen Cakaj       | Independent researcher |
| 24. | Xhevdet Thaqi        | UKZGJ                  |
| 25. | Anonymous researcher |                        |
| 26. | Anonymous researcher |                        |



## ABOUT POLICY ANSWERS

POLICY ANSWERS (R&I POLICY making, implementation AND Support in the WEsteRn BalkanS) supports policy coordination in the Western Balkans and with the EC and the EU. 14 partner organisations, representing network nodes in the region and EU expert organisations, support policy dialogue through formal meetings (such as ministerial and steering platform and ad-hoc policy meetings), monitoring and agenda setting, capacity building and implementation of the EU's Western Balkan Agenda, as well as the alignment of thematic priorities. The project implements regional pilot activities and offers an information hub based on the [westernbalkans-fohub.eu](http://westernbalkans-fohub.eu) online information platform. The partners provide analytical evidence via monitoring and mapping activities of the stakeholder ecosystem, of the implementation of the Western Balkans Agenda and of the Western Balkans' integration into the European Research Area as well as via strategic foresight. POLICY ANSWERS also allows for tailored and targeted capacity building activities in the Western Balkans as well as regional alignment of priorities in relation to the digital transformation, the green agenda and towards healthy societies. Pilot activities provide learning opportunities on policy and programme level and reach out to final beneficiaries related to improved academia-industry cooperation, researcher mobility, inclusion of youth in policy processes, promotion of research infrastructures and increased innovation skills in all areas.