

Technical note

Active Labor Market Programs (ALMPs) in Kosovo

Mapping of Non-Public Providers¹

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Executive Summary

- ▶ **Kosovo has a significant number of non-public providers of Active Labor Market Programs (ALMPs),** i.e. programs actively facilitating people's transition to employment and higher incomes through relatively short-duration interventions (typically less than 6 months of beneficiary participation, up to 12 months).
- ▶ **Many non-public providers in Kosovo have experience serving disadvantaged groups,** such as youth, women, ethnic minorities or persons with disability. Given a strong policy focus on improving the integration of disadvantaged groups into the labor market, non-public providers can be an important partner in serving these groups.
- ▶ **The majority of non-publicly delivered programs are focused on entrepreneurship, followed by skills training.** Other types of interventions, such as subsidized employment, are less frequently implemented among non-public providers.
- ▶ **Programs delivered by non-public providers tend to be small scale and dependent on donor funding.** The median annual budget of the programs reviewed has been between 50,000-80,000 Euros, and most organizations serve fewer than 100 beneficiaries per year. NGOs, in particular, are vulnerable to fluctuating funding due to the strong dependency on donor funding.
- ▶ **Monitoring and Evaluation among non-public providers tends to be weak.** Information on beneficiary outcomes (e.g. in terms of employment and income) after their participation in programs is often not readily available and independent evaluations are only conducted by a minority of organizations. As a result, little is known about the effectiveness of existing initiatives.
- ▶ **In conclusion, there appears to be an opportunity for increased public-private collaboration in the funding and delivery of employment services and activation measures.** That said, increased public-private collaboration should go hand in hand with capacity strengthening of non-public providers to address existing weaknesses (e.g. in terms of targeting, evidence-based design and monitoring and evaluation).

I. BACKGROUND & OBJECTIVE

Public Employment Agencies need partners to provide labor market integration services. In Europe and beyond it is increasingly recognized that Public Employment Agencies are not in the position to deliver all required services for labor market integration on their own. As a result, partnerships are indispensable to increase the coverage, quality and efficiency of services.²

The Government of Kosovo has recognized the role of non-public providers in delivering employment support services. For instance, the law of the establishment of the Employment Agency of the Republic of Kosovo (EARK), the Sectoral Strategy for Labour and Social Welfare 2018-2022, as well as the Policy of the Employment Agency 2019-2021, mention that partnerships between EARK and non-public service providers are an expected part of the service delivery model.

Engaging in effective public-private partnerships requires a solid understanding of the market of non-public providers. Indeed, partnerships can only be successful if quality service providers exist.

Against this background, the objective of this mapping is to provide a better understanding of existing organizations that deliver Active Labor Market Programs (ALMPs) in Kosovo and the key characteristics of these interventions. In turn, the mapping seeks to inform government stakeholders and development partners about potential partner organizations in the design and delivery of employment services and activation measures.

² Hiebl, J. and K. Hempel (2019), Improving Public Employment Services Through Partnerships with Non-Public Providers. Synthesis of international experience and implications for Kosovo. World Bank.

II. METHODOLOGY³

Eligibility criteria: In order to be included in the present mapping, interventions had to meet the following criteria:

- **Legal status:** Non-public providers, i.e. non-governmental organizations or private companies.
- **Program objective:** Focused on actively facilitating people's transition to employment and higher incomes, through relatively short-duration interventions (typically less than 6 months of beneficiary participation, up to a max. of 12 months).
- **Period of analysis:** Interventions implemented between 2015-2017. Interventions completed before 2015 or initiated since 2018 are not included.

Sample of organizations: Based on the eligibility criteria, this mapping covers 38 organizations and 59 programs (see Annex 1 for a list of organizations included).

Data sources: The first step included a desk review (e.g. existing stocktakings of organisations, websites, program reports, etc.) in order to identify potential organizations and programs meeting the eligibility criteria. Then, a face-to-face interview was conducted using a standardized questionnaire to collect information about each relevant program. Based on the information provided in the interviews, a final check was conducted to verify that interventions met the criteria.

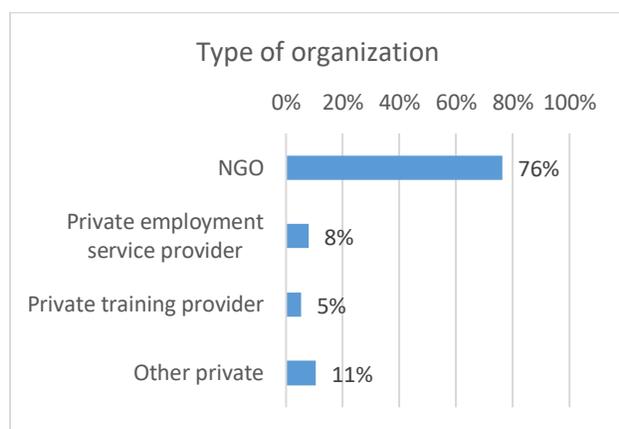
Limitations: The mapping does not claim to be exhaustive. Moreover, the mapping does not allow to judge the quality of organizations or programs. Hence, the mapping is merely a descriptive overview of existing providers of employment related interventions in Kosovo in recent years.

³ The methodology for the mapping was coordinated with GIZ Kosovo which conducted a complementary mapping of publicly provided ALMPs.

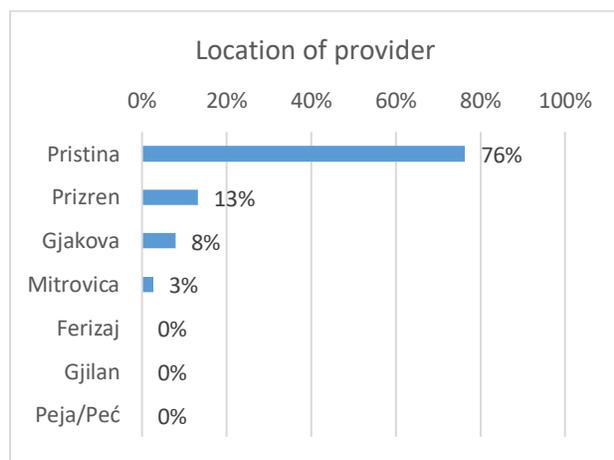
III. DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS

(a) Characteristics of the organizations

- **The vast majority of identified providers are Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs).** 76% of the providers identified are NGOs, while 24% are private companies.



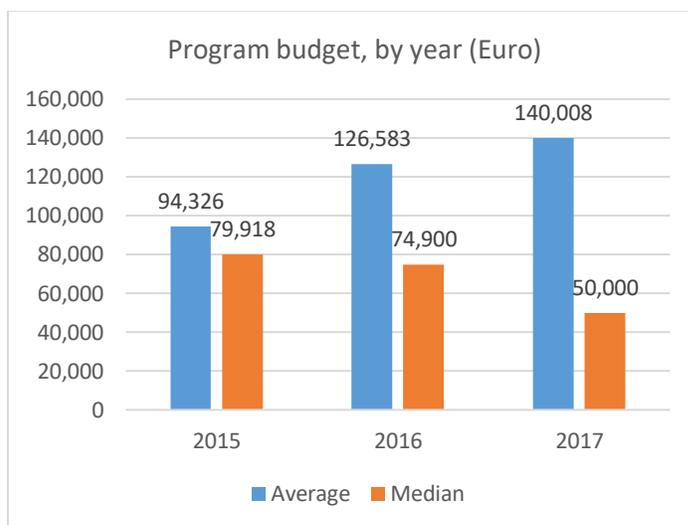
- **The organizations are primarily based in the Pristina region.** Three out of four identified providers are based in or around the capital city. The remaining providers are mainly based in Prizren or Gjakova.



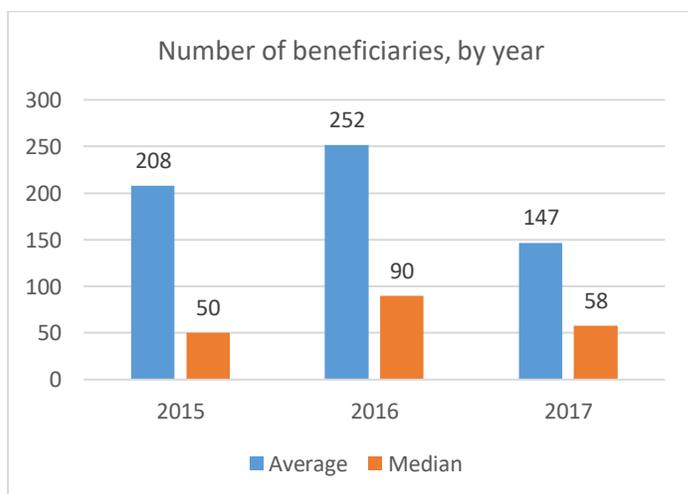
(b) Program size

- **Non-publicly provided programs have limited and unpredictable funding.** Based on the initiatives where funding information is available, the average annual program budget was between approximately 90-140,000 Euros per year; however, this is driven by a few fairly well funded programs at the Regional

Development Agencies and selected NGOs. The median budget has been between 50,000-80,000 Euros per year, with a decreasing tendency. Only about 30-40% of all programs have an annual budget exceeding 100,000 Euros, suggesting that most programs are small-scale. Moreover, NGO-programs are typically 100% dependent on donor funding, mainly from the European Commission, bilateral donors, and international NGOs.

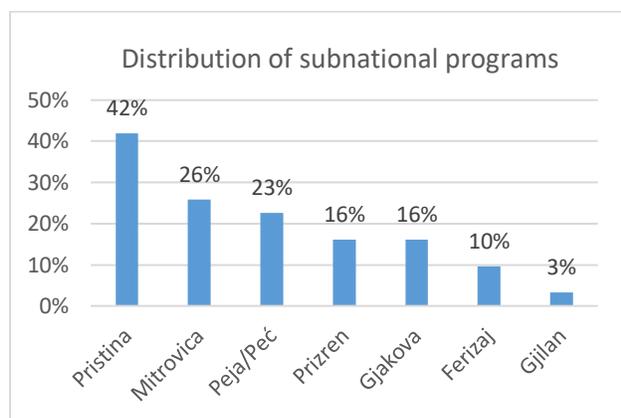


- **In line with the limited funding, the majority of programs have a relatively small number of beneficiaries per year.** Most programs serve less than 100 people (median 70-90 beneficiaries every year). A noticeable share (around 30%) of programs is very small, with less than 30 beneficiaries per year.



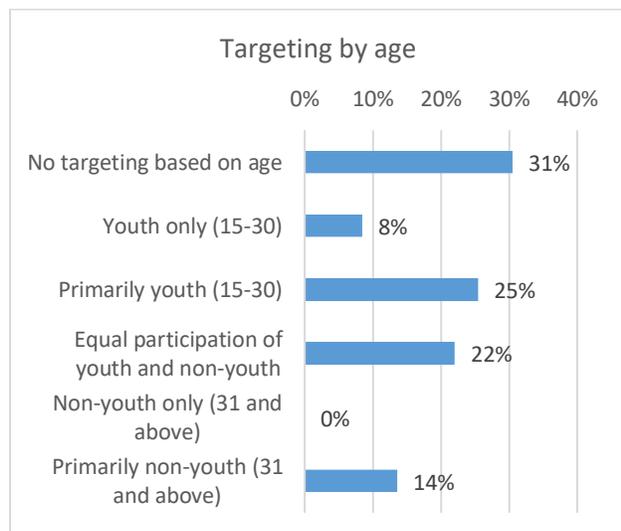
(c) Geographic coverage

- **Almost fifty percent of all programs report to have a national scope.** However, this does not necessarily mean that these programs are physically implemented in all regions, but rather that the eligibility of beneficiaries is open to participants from the entire country. Among the programs with subnational scope, the majority are implemented in Pristina, Mitrovica, and Peja, while Ferizaj and Gjilan have limited coverage. Within the different regions, services tend to be concentrated in the major municipalities.

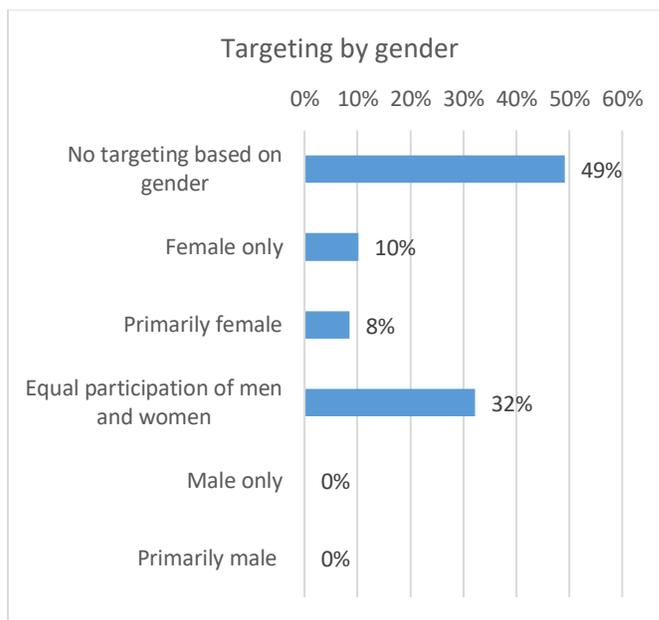


(d) Targeting

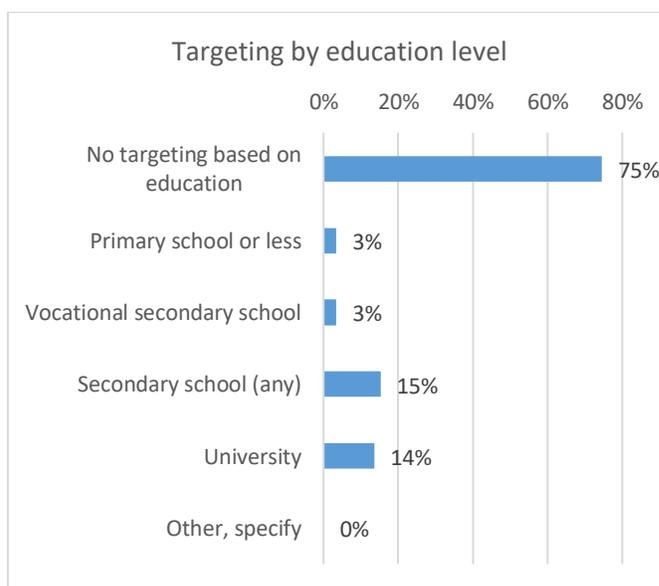
- **Approximately one third of programs are specifically targeted at young people** (i.e. youth only or primarily youth beneficiaries). Another third of programs adopt no age targeting at all.



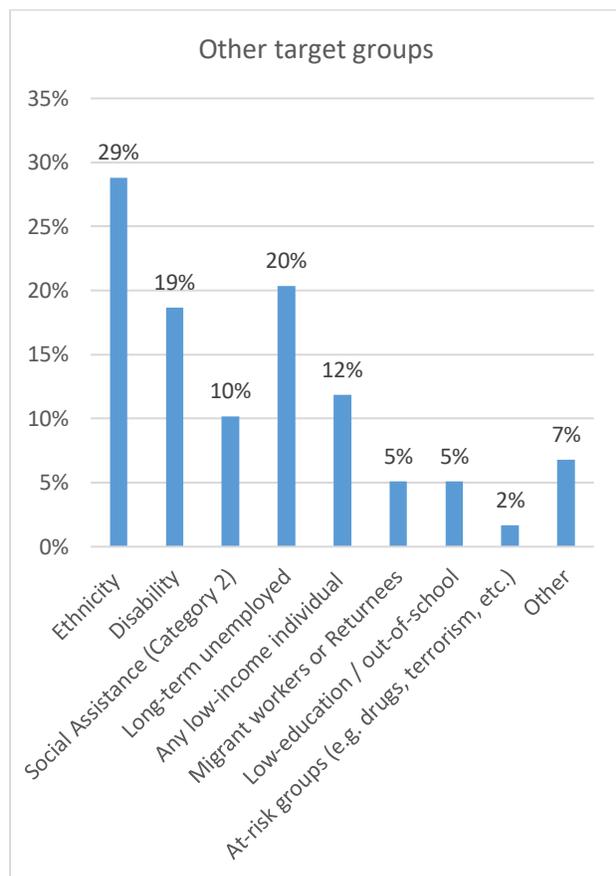
- **Only a minority of programs has specific gender targeting.** Less than 20% of programs are targeted at women only or primarily at women. Around 50% of programs have no gender targeting, while 35% of programs seek equal participation between men and women.



- **Programs typically have no education-related targeting.** 75% of programs did not target based on education, while around 15% of initiatives targeted secondary school and university graduates respectively.



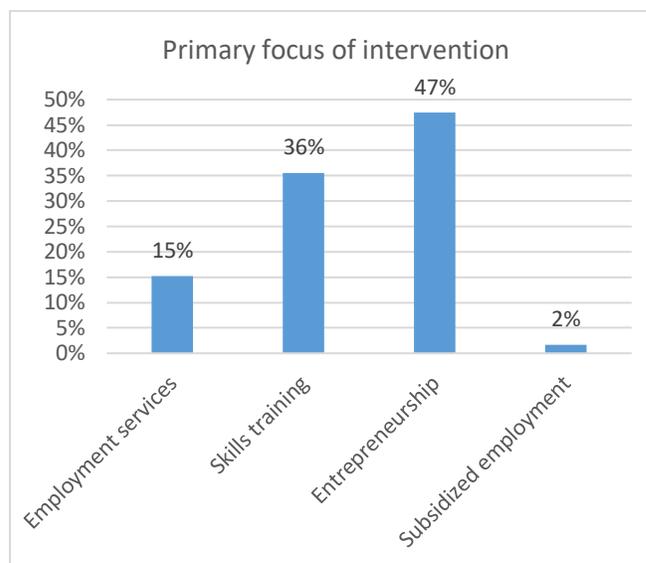
- **Other common targeting criteria include ethnicity, disability status and long-term unemployment.** Indeed, 17 programs (29%) targeted minority ethnic groups, while 12 programs (20%) targeted the long-term unemployed and 11 programs (19%) targeted persons with disability.



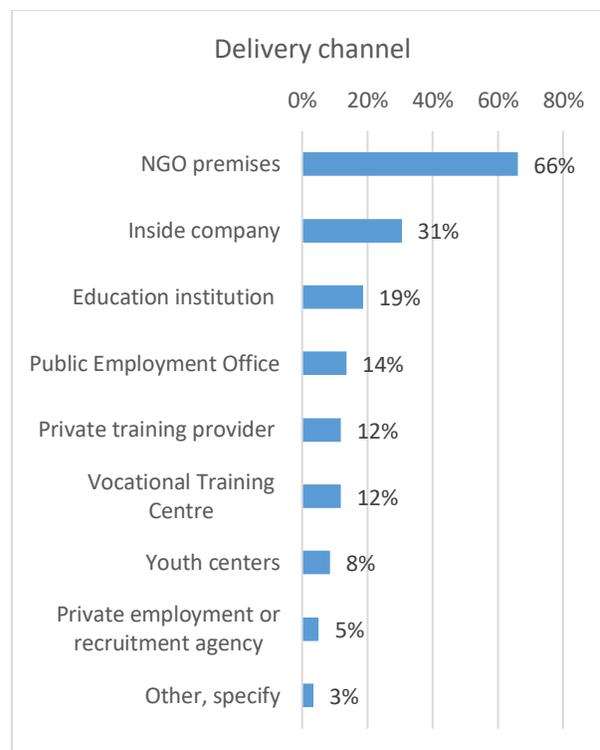
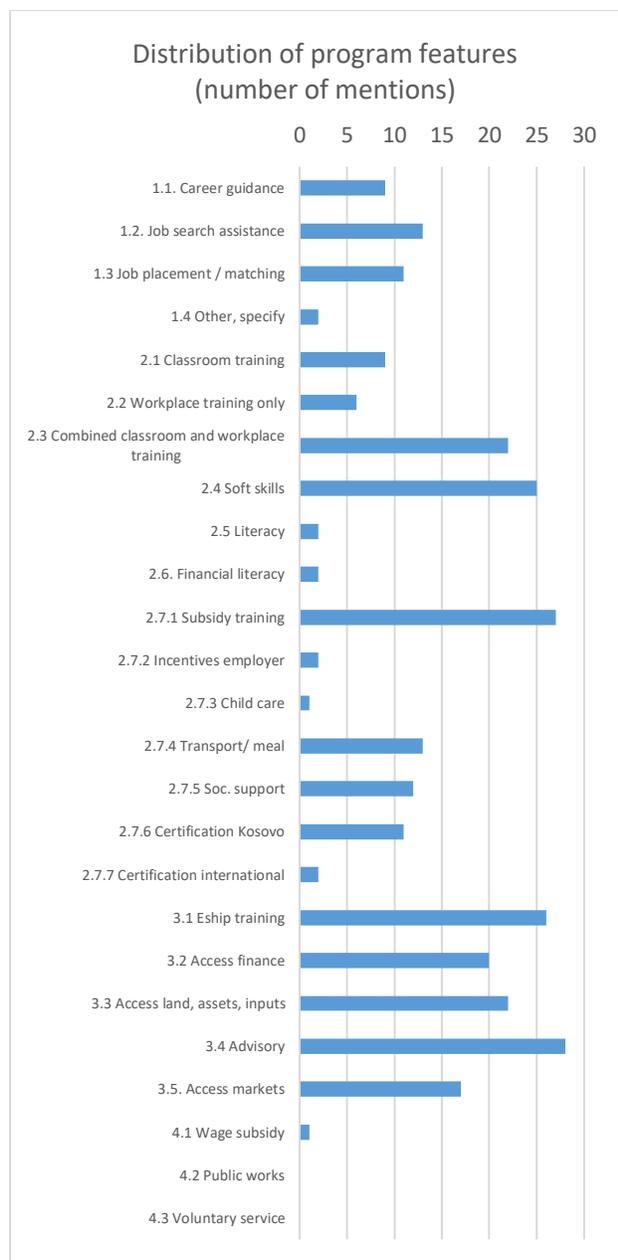
(e) Focus of intervention

- **Entrepreneurship promotion is the most common type of intervention, followed by skills training.** Almost 50% of programs focused on creating or strengthening small businesses (entrepreneurship & self-employment), while 36% focused on skills training to facilitate the entry into wage employment. 15% of initiatives focused on employment/intermediation services. Interventions focusing on subsidized employment are quasi-inexistent among non-public providers. When not the primary focus, employment services and skills training are commonly included as a secondary objective

(by around 20% of all programs respectively). In total, 25 out of 59 programs (42%) focus on two intervention areas, suggesting a more comprehensive nature of these programs.



- **In line with the priority types of interventions, the most commonly offered program features are related to entrepreneurship and training.** Specifically, entrepreneurship training, advisory services and access to capital and assets are commonly provided, typically in some combination. In terms of skills training, combined training in the classroom and workplace is the very common, and so is soft-skills training. Skills training is typically subsidized. Job search assistance and job placement services are provided by around one in four programs.

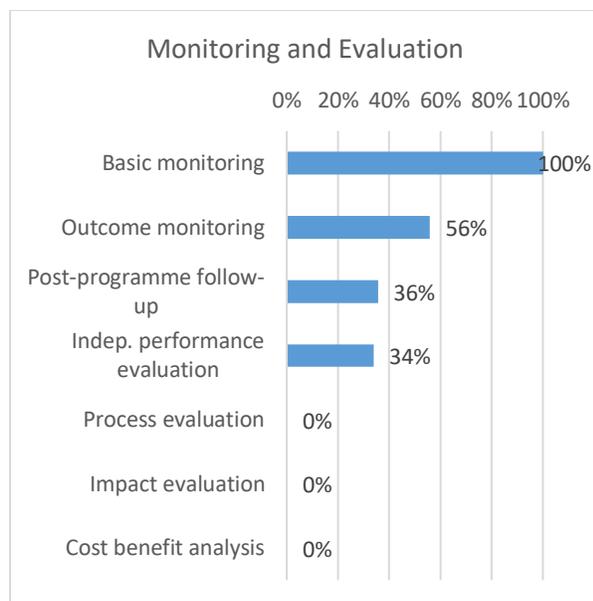


(f) Monitoring and Evaluation

- **Most programs are delivered at NGO premises or inside a company.** Two thirds of all programs are provided directly at NGO premises, and around 30% of programs within a company (typically as part of on-the-job training). Program delivery through public institutions (e.g. employment office, VTCs) is less common among non-public providers.

- **Almost half of all programs only have very basic reporting systems in place, without systematic monitoring of program achievements.** On the other hand, slightly over 50% of programs reported that they monitor outcomes (e.g. in terms of employment, income, etc.). However, even then results on beneficiary outcomes are often not readily available. Tracking of beneficiaries beyond program completion is done by only around one third (36%) of identified programs.

- **Only one in three programs (34%) conduct independent performance evaluations, while other types of evaluations are inexistent.** Indeed, no program reported the use of process evaluations, impact evaluations or cost-benefit analysis.



IV. CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

Overall, Kosovo has a critical mass of non-public providers of Active Labor Market Programs complementing programs by the public sector.

Given that government programs in Kosovo are currently only reaching a fraction of the unemployment and inactive, the presence of non-public providers presents an opportunity to increase the reach of employment services and active measures.

Non-public providers have expertise with different target groups. Many of the programs by non-public providers focus on disadvantaged groups, including youth, women, persons with disabilities, or minorities. Since the Government of Kosovo seeks to increase participation of these groups in the services offered by the Public Employment Agency of Kosovo, cooperation with non-public providers that bring special expertise working with these groups can be useful. That said, the review also shows that targeting is usually relatively open. For instance, only around one in three programs targets youth and only around one in five programs has specific gender targeting.

Entrepreneurship promotion is the most commonly found intervention strategy, followed by skills training. Given the increasing interest of

the Government in the promotion of self-employment and contracting out of vocational training, there appears to be scope for knowledge exchange and potentially cooperation with non-public providers in these areas.

However, non-publicly provided programs tend to be relatively small and very dependent on donor funding. Contrary to other countries, there is very limited cooperation between public and non-public providers of ALMPs which would allow for more sustainable funding of non-public providers, especially NGOs. Moreover, given the small scale of most programs so far, most providers would likely need to build capacity to serve a larger scale of beneficiaries over time.

Monitoring and Evaluation capacities of non-public providers tend to be weak. As a result, little is known about the effectiveness of existing initiatives. Providing funding to non-public providers in the future (by donors or public agencies) should be accompanied by strengthening M&E capacities.

Increased public-private collaboration on Active Labor Market Programs should go hand in hand with capacity development of non-public providers. While there appears to be significant scope for the Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare and the Employment Agency of Kosovo to increase cooperation with non-public providers, a parallel strengthening of non-public providers is needed to improve coverage, targeting, evidence-based program design, M&E, etc. and thereby maximize program success. Hence, a comprehensive approach fostering the demand for services (through public-private collaboration) as well as the supply of services (capacity development of the provider market) seems warranted.

Annex 1: List of organizations covered in the mapping

1. Islamic Relief Kosovo
2. Business Kosovo Center- BKC
3. Center for Empowerment and Executive Development- CEED
4. Forum for Civic Initiatives - FCI
5. Portal Pune (Job Portal)
6. Down Syndrome Kosova
7. Center for promotion of Women's Rights
8. APPK
9. Jakova Innovation Center- JIC
10. People in Need
11. ICK
12. Human Power
13. Students Help Life
14. Kosova Jobs
15. Cactus Education
16. Women 4 Women Kosovo
17. Management and Development Associates
18. European Center for Minority Issues in Kosovo -ECMIK
19. Kosovo Agency of Advocacy Development - KAAD
20. Kosovo Apparel Marketing Association - KAMA
21. Kosovo Foundation for Open Society-KFOS
22. Peer Education Network -PEN
23. Caritas Switzerland Kosovo
24. Regional Development Agencies– North
25. Regional Development Agencies– South
26. Prishtina Regional Enterprise Agency
27. UNDP
28. Kosovo Center for Business Support
29. Open Data Kosovo
30. Help-Hilfe zur Selbsthilfe Mission in Kosovo
31. PREDA Plus
32. Kosova Education Center (KEC)
33. D&D Business Support Center
34. Kosovo Association of Information and Communication Technology (STIKK)
35. Kosova Woman Initiative
36. Handikos
37. Center for Economic and Social Development (CESD)
38. Institute for Training and Economic Development (ITED)

Additional providers identified but not included in the analysis

Reasons for not including these initiatives include:

- program outside period of analysis,
- program not falling under definition of “Active Labor Market Program”,
- organization not reachable.

1. Kosovo Manufacturing Club
2. Mentoring our Future
3. Bauacademy
4. Girls Coding Kosova
5. Institute for Development and Integration (IZHI)
6. Lens
7. Business Consultants Council-BCC
8. Ep & partners consultancy (EPPC) Kosovo
9. Llogaritari
10. Careplacement GmbH Kosovo Branch
11. Institute for Management and Development
12. Innovative Community Development Center
13. Heimerer College
14. Balkanspring
15. Women's Business Association ShE-ERA
16. Women in Business
17. Wominnovation