

***Background Document on National Policies and Strategies on
Media and Information Literacy in Kosovo*¹***

2018

¹ *All references to Kosovo are made in the context of UN Security Council Resolution 1244

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION	5
2. DEVELOPMENT CONTEXT FOR MIL IN KOSOVO*	6
3. MEDIA AND INFORMATION LITERACY AND INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUE (MILID)	7
4. MIL AND FORMAL EDUCATION	8
4.1. Formal Education: Policies and Institutions	8
4.2. Formal Education Institutions: Ministry of Education	9
4.2.1. Formal Education: The Law on Pre-University Education in Kosovo*.	9
4.2.2. Formal Education: The Strategic Plan for Education in Kosovo* (2017-2021) (SPEK) and Pre-University Teaching	11
4.2.3. SPEK Strategic Objective 5: Teaching and learning.	11
4.3. Formal Education: The Kosovo* Curriculum Framework for Pre-University Levels	13
4.4. Expression and Communication Competency.	14
4.5. Formal Education: The Law on Higher Education in Kosovo* and SPEK	15
5. INFORMAL EDUCATION	16
5.1. The Civil Society	16
5.1.1. Research Institutes and Advocacy Centres	17
5.1.2. Media NGOs	17
5.1.3. Professional Associations	18
5.1.4. Grassroots organizations	18
5.2. Other Stakeholders	19
5.2.1. The Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sport (MCYS)	19
5.2.2. Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE)	21
5.2.3. UNICEF Innovation Labs Kosovo*	21
5.3. Regulatory Authorities	22
5.3.1. The IMC	22
5.3.2. The KPC	23
6. NATIONAL MIL STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK	24
7. ROADMAP FOR MIL IN KOSOVO*	31
8. ANNEXES	33
8.1. ANNEX I: EDUCATION LEVELS IN Kosovo*	33
8.2. ANNEX II: EDUCATION LEVELS IN Kosovo*	34

1. Introduction

This policy document represents the start of introducing Media and Information Literacy (MIL) concept into Kosovo^{*2}'s public policy. Its foremost purpose is to sketch out the current policy infrastructure when it comes to formal and informal education on media and information and pave the way for an intervention through which a comprehensive strategic framework for MIL can be introduced. As such, the document shall serve as the initial meeting point between existing policy in Kosovo^{*3}, UNESCO's MIL Policy and Strategy Guidelines as well as key stakeholders' who can carry on the process of intervention.

In its current form, the document is based on thorough research as well as initial consultations media and information stakeholders. Following further consultations, as well as a series of structured and public debates, this document shall serve as the basis for a fully-fledged policy paper. The final draft of the paper shall lay out the largest common denominator of the positions of all relevant stakeholders when it comes to MIL in Kosovo^{*4}. As such, it shall contain strategic recommendations from multiple stakeholders on how MIL framework should be understood, developed and promoted in Kosovo^{*5}.

Broadly speaking, in the context of this paper, MIL should be understood as per UNESCO's conceptualization of the functions of the media and sources of information in liberal democratic societies. MIL, in this sense, is a complex, multi-layered concept that covers knowledge, skills and attitudes of individual citizens, to make use of the media and the sources of information in a reasonable and ethical way, not as merely in terms of the function, but rather as a lifelong learning competence. It has to do with the level of literacy of the citizens towards information, technology and the media, to be able to comprehend the sources of information as well as process, interpret and properly and ethically use such information. As such, MIL is closely related to education policy, media and the freedom of information, as well as policies of access to information.

It should be put forward here that MIL, in such a conceptual understanding, is not present in Kosovo's^{*6} public policy. There are, however, policies that promote certain aspects of MIL implicitly as per UNESCO's description, which will be laid out herein. Such provisions fall within the education aspects of MIL, **as well as media policy, and policies of information and technical intermediaries, such as libraries, archives, museums, IT sector, and others. Thus the focus of this document is on these areas.**

The implicit presence of MIL concepts in both the educational and media-related regulation and policy can be clearly observed in policies. Owing mainly to the influence of the international community, particularly that of the European Union, Kosovo^{*7} has a solid constitutional and

²**ibid as 1*

³**ibid as 1*

⁴**ibid as 1*

⁵**ibid as 1*

⁶**ibid as 1*

⁷**ibid as 1*

legal framework that guarantees the freedom of the media and the freedom of expression, has advanced its legislative framework on the work of the media and especially protection of journalist sources.

This document provides a review of the current policy mechanisms and the policies in place, in order to identify key points through which MIL can be introduced in Kosovo^{*8}. It reviews, in particular, the structure and the policy of the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, which we identify as the key institution responsible for all policy aspects for MIL. Further, the document also maps and assesses other relevant policies and stakeholders, aiming to construct the initial overview regarding a MIL framework. For this specific purpose, the document, in its current form, is focused mainly on mapping the institutional and policy setting for formal, non-formal and informal education, as well as information and technology policy.

2. Development Context for MIL in Kosovo^{*9}

Kosovo's^{*10} path of development has differed substantially from other countries in the South-East Europe. With substantial international post-war presence, Kosovo^{*11} benefited from a forward thinking approach to policy building. The benefits of these experiences are reflected in the policies and documents that now underline the building blocks of Kosovo^{*12}. This developmental context and spirit continues to be witnessed across the board in policy making influenced by the European Union integration process and Kosovo's^{*13} effort to adhere to international best practices in multiple fields.

This approach has also been reflected in the design of independent, but intrinsically interlinked policies and strategies concerning education, media and information and knowledge societies. As such, at the formal education level, curricula have been developed with the goal of educating a globally aware, culturally sensitive, knowledge society. This work has been concluded at the governmental level, with the Ministry for Education, Science and Technology (MEST) at the lead, followed by the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sport (MCYS). The efforts of the governmental bodies involved in pursuing development goals that are implicitly related to MIL has also been inclusive of other groups in society.

Additionally, the media-related development context in Kosovo^{*14} has taken the approach of a laissez-faire economy, believing that regulation of free speech that does not respect international standards is in itself an impediment of free speech. This great source of freedom, as far as information creators and providers are concerned, also now comes with an increased realization of the necessity to develop an understanding among the citizens of how to critically consume the

⁸**ibid as 1*

⁹**ibid as 1*

¹⁰ *ibid as 1*

¹¹**ibid as 1*

¹²**ibid as 1*

¹³**ibid as 1*

¹⁴**ibid as 1*

information available to them. This is all the more important seeing as Kosovo has high internet penetration, with 84.8% of households in the country having access to internet.¹⁵ As such, the development of a MIL approach in Kosovo^{*16} takes into consideration that the best alternative solution to growing concerns of the misuse of information and media is an educated citizen. This development context greatly aids in at least the willingness of all actors and stakeholders to participate in a concerted, mutually agreed set of strategies, policies and specific actions to take on the issue.

In informal education, numerous initiatives by both international and local organizations have been taken and are planned in the future to further an MIL approach to formal, nonformal and informal education. With international organizations, such as the OSCE, UN, GIZ and other placing attention on training school educational staff, other grassroots initiatives focus on the development of critical reading and interpretation skills. Numerous organizations work with developing ICT skills in youth, with increased focus on access to ICT education in safe environment for women as well as cultural, religious and other sub-national groups.

These individual initiatives indicate an intrinsic understanding among multiple stakeholders of the necessity to pursue a development strategy, both educational and policy wise, that takes into account media and information literacy. As such, stakeholders also understand that this MIL approach has to be harmonized, and agreed upon by all, in order to be efficiently developed and delivered successfully to all recipients. These stakeholders also understand that the MIL approach in Kosovo^{*17} has to have an increased focus on intercultural dialogue, using the unorthodox interpretation of intercultural as a broad term to also include sub-cultures that cross cut across religious, national, ethnic and other groupations.

3. Media and Information Literacy and Intercultural Dialogue (MILID)

Kosovo^{*18} is a multi-cultural society. The Constitution of Kosovo^{*19} recognizes five culturally distinct communities, with the number likely to increase as Kosovo^{*20} becomes more open to tourists, researchers and other communities. As such, healthy intercultural dialogue and inclusion becomes a key necessity to ensure the sustainable and equitable development of all citizens of Kosovo^{*21}.

The Media Information Literacy and Intercultural Dialogue (MILID) focuses on the concept that with the proliferation of information, information sources and availability through ICT, healthy citizens engagement within information is crucial to intercultural dialogue. As such, MILID aims to use the empowering framework of MIL, and media and information sources themselves, to foster

¹⁵ Berisha, V., Ilazi, B., "Kosovo ICT Market Analysis", Kosovo Association of Information Technology (STIKK), November 2013, p.24. Accessible at http://stikk.org/fileadmin/user_upload/stikk_market_analysis_eng.pdf

¹⁶**ibid as 1*

¹⁷**ibid as 1*

¹⁸ *ibid as 1*

¹⁹**ibid as 1*

²⁰**ibid as 1*

²¹**ibid as 1*

healthy intercultural dialogue and contribute to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations.

The focus on intercultural dialogue, explicitly and implicitly, is a key approach to consider when formulating the MIL strategy and policy in Kosovo^{*22}. This focus must be placed in ensuring certain key requirements are met.

Primarily, development of MIL in Kosovo^{*23} must ensure the advancement of education for all. Equitable education must be offered to all cultures within Kosovo's^{*24} society, and all groups, with a particular focus on women and youth. Additionally, the new MIL policies and strategies must also be focused on ensuring the expansion of a knowledge society in Kosovo^{*25}, that is able to integrate all citizens and promote solidarity among cultures and the various sub-national groups.

To also adhere to the MILID framework of principles, the MIL approach in Kosovo^{*26} must ensure that it is targeted at fighting the digital and cognitive divide. This must be done through ensuring equal access and ability to participate in the local and global public sphere.

Additionally, a MILID approach must ensure the stimulation of international cooperation and participation, by creating a cultural digital bridge between Kosovo^{*27} citizens and their counterparts elsewhere, in a healthy fashion. Finally, keeping an intercultural dialogue perspective in mind, the MIL framework to be developed should also focus on ensuring that all new policies integrate communication and information principles both in terms of rights and of ethical responsibilities of the citizens.

4. MIL and Formal Education

4.1. Formal Education: Policies and Institutions

There are two main institutions in Kosovo^{*28} that have been identified to be in charge of regulating education policy aspects that broadly fall within the MIL framework: the Ministry of Education Science and Technology (MEST) and the Office for Good Governance at the Office of the Prime Minister of Kosovo^{*29}. However, it is only the MEST that has policy-making competences for formal education, thus the analysis of actors in Kosovo^{*30} involved in formal education will be focused entirely on this ministry. Additionally, after the initial national consultations, the MEST accepted to take the lead in developing the policy, legislative and

²²**ibid as 1*

²³**ibid as 1*

²⁴**ibid as 1*

²⁵**ibid as 1*

²⁶**ibid as 1*

²⁷**ibid as 1*

²⁸**ibid as 1*

²⁹**ibid as 1*

³⁰**ibid as 1*

execution of MIL strategies concerning formal education. The MEST will also be involved in developing informal and non-formal education concerning MIL. What follows in this section is a compact review of the institutional mechanisms as well as the policies that are already in place, through which options for introducing a comprehensive MIL formal education policy are explored.

4.2. Formal Education Institutions: Ministry of Education

The Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MEST) functions as the primary regulatory body on all educational initiatives. MEST is directly responsible for the creation of all education strategies and curricula. The education sector is divided on General Education, Continuous and Professional Education, and Higher Education levels. The General Education level includes all formal education from pre-school to middle high education – a key development stage for critical thinking and reading. Critical thinking and critical reading and core concepts employed in the development of a MIL framework and curriculum. Therefore, the analysis of the policies currently in effect has been largely focused on this education category.

On the General Education Level, the curriculum is established by the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology through the Kosovo^{*31} Agency for the Curriculum, Standards and Evaluation (KACSE). The latter is responsible for drafting the Kosovo^{*32} Curriculum Framework (KCF) and advising MEST on general conditions for the core curriculum, as a result of which all textbooks and teaching approaches are established.

4.2.1. Formal Education: The Law on Pre-University Education in Kosovo^{*33}.

The specific intended outcomes of this law are the basis upon which all related national strategies and curriculums are established and to which they are required to adhere to. These provisions are as follows:

Provision	How MIL can help
1. To develop the pupil's personality, talents and mental and physical abilities to their fullest potential;	MIL can help pupil's by providing a thorough development of critical thinking in 21 st Century and to correctly interpret information and understand how information influences how they think, act and form their identities.
2. to promote the formation of basic scientific knowledge, communication, observation and analytical skills, creativity, autonomy and	MIL is strongly associated with the concepts of learning to learn and making decisions through its emphasis on identifying needs and

³¹**ibid as 1*

³²**ibid as 1*

³³**ibid as 1*

related learning competences;	problems, relevant information and using it critically and responsibly/ethically. MIL enables and strengthen other social literacies such as science literacy, health literacy as well as social participation in sustainable development etc.
3. to develop among pupils the respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms and principles set out in the UN Charter and relevant Conventions, and the Constitution of Kosovo ^{*34}	MIL is a nexus of human rights ³⁵ . From UNESCO perspective it is geared at enhancing Article 19 and all other human rights in the sense that citizens are provided with competencies to search for and become aware of their rights and of the actions that they can take to deal with abuse. For example, MIL empowers citizens with competencies to advocate for freedom of expression and freedom of the press, and use this freedom in an ethical way.
4. to develop in the pupil respect for his or her parents and teachers, his or her own culture's identity, language and values of his or her community, and for the values of Kosovo ^{*36} , from which he or she may originate, and for respectability of diversity;	MIL promotes multiculturalism by affording citizenscompetencies to use media, libraries, Internet andother information providers for cultural expressionsand dialogue and to analyze and critically evaluatethe representation of various cultures and peoples by the media and other information providers. MIL enables dialogue.
5. to prepare the pupil for a responsible life in the spirit of good understanding, peace, tolerance, gender equality and friendship with members of all communities in Kosovo ^{*37} ;	Intercultural competencies and dialogue are learnt not acquired. People learn hate and intolerance and so they can unlearn and learn peace and forgiveness. This has to be taught. Yet people are increasing being socialized and learning the media and technological platforms and related learning environments. Intolerance online is increasing. MIL enables critical thinking and wise clicking ³⁸ in online spaces – understanding that ones thinking about the Other is not accidental and can be positively reinforced.
6. to develop in the pupil respect for the	MIL focuses on the development of critical

³⁴**ibid as 1*

³⁵Grizzle, A. and Singh, J. (2016). Five Laws of Media and Information Literacy as Harbingers of Human Rights A Legacy of Ranganathan's Five Laws of Library Science. In *Media and Information Literacy: Reinforcing Human Rights, Countering Radicalization and Extremism* (UNESCO, Paris). Edited by Jagtar Singh, Paulette Kerr and Esther Hamburger

³⁶ *ibid as 1*

³⁷**ibid as 1*

³⁸ *Ibid at 41*

environment.	information processing that helps pupils analyse information concerning the environment themselves, achieving environmentally aware citizens. It brings to the fore how the virtual environment is increasing integrated with the physical environment.
--------------	---

4.2.2. **Formal Education: The Strategic Plan for Education in Kosovo*³⁹ (2017-2021) (SPEK) and Pre-University Teaching**

SPEK is a comprehensive strategy document outlining the current challenges faced by the education sector in and the respective measures to adopt the challenges. While SPEK doesn't include any special provisions or planning for addressing MIL as per UNESCO description, several aspects of MIL are already foreseen within the strategy.

Primarily, MEST realizes through the analysis of the challenges facing the education sector in SPEK that there is a discrepancy between internet penetration and availability of information and communication technology (ICT) in schools. The strategy document mentions that internet penetration in Kosovo*⁴⁰ is at 76.6% of the population while there is, on average, 1 computer for every 46 students.⁴¹ Additionally, the strategy also realizes that instructor (teacher) computer literacy is a secondary challenge, indicating that only 57% of the teachers are trained for the European Computer Driver's License.^{42,43} This is a good starting point for the understanding of the importance of the involvement of ICT in teaching, as a stepping stone towards the adoption of a comprehensive MIL approach. MEST is also working with donor organizations to further develop e-content for teaching, as well as maintaining ICT equipment in schools.⁴⁴

SPEK is organized according to a set of seven strategic objectives, each containing a set of expected results. All results are expected to be achieved through a series of activities that MEST plans to undertake. Below, the Document outlines the strategic objectives, expected results and some of activities potentially related to MIL at the pre-university levels.

4.2.3. **SPEK Strategic Objective 5: Teaching and learning.**

Through this strategic objective, the MEST intends to assist in the proper implementation of the new Kosovo*⁴⁵ Curriculum Framework (KCF). The KCF has shifted focus from teaching based on objectives and content towards a results and competency development framework.

³⁹**ibid as 1*

⁴⁰**ibid as 1*

⁴¹ Ministry of Education, Science and Technology in Kosovo*, "The Strategic Plan for Education in Kosovo 2017-2021," Prishtina, Kosovo*, 2016, page 17 [Albanian Version]. Accessible at http://masht.rks-gov.net/uploads/2017/02/20161006-psak-2017-2021_1.pdf

⁴² Same as above.

⁴³ ECDL is the European Computer Driving License. More information available at <http://ecd.org/>

⁴⁴ SPEK 2017-2021, page 32.

⁴⁵**ibid as 1*

Additionally, the KCF offers teachers considerable autonomy in the development of teaching methods and selection of teaching tools and materials.⁴⁶

Specifically, SPEK provides two particular expected results based on Objective 5. These expected results are:

1. Prepare texts and other teaching materials for all levels and subjects. [Expected Result]

1.1 Establish the process of the preparation of new school texts. [Activity]

1.2 Prepare school texts for all levels and subjects. [Activity]

A. Under this activity, concerted assistance could be offered to MEST to ensure that initial textbooks include key MIL concepts. This is a very time sensitive arrangement, seeing as all future textbooks will likely iterate from this initial version. Correct positioning of key MIL concepts in the first iteration will ensure that further updates and developments will be followed through in all future iterations.

1.3 Train teachers in the development and use of electronic materials. [Activity]

B. Specifically, under this activity, intervention in the form of the development of joint third party and MEST training materials addressing key MIL concepts, on top of the other electronic teaching materials could greatly impact MIL adoption.

2. All schools should be equipped with ICT equipment and other concrete learning tools in order to be able to fully execute the new curriculum. [Expected Result]

2.1 Securing appropriate broadband internet for the use in schools [Activity]

2.2 Supplying schools with ICT equipment [Activity]

2.3 Establish ICT equipment maintenance plans [Activity]

2.4 Promoting use of personal ICT equipment (smartphones, tablets, etc.) [Activity]

2.5 Subsidizing laptops for teachers [Activity]

C. Under this objective, targeted IT support could be conditioned with the implementation of specific MIL curriculum milestones, providing an incentive structure for the development, implementation and monitoring of the delivery of key MIL concepts at schools.

These expected results as part of the SPEK provide substantial intervention points for immediate MIL inclusion in the curriculum of pre-university classes. Additionally, they also provide an opening for the further development of MIL strategies at the national level in the short, medium

⁴⁶ SPEK 2017-2021, page 79.

and long term with gradual steps of action. Thorough review of SPEK could also yield a better understanding of the possible intervention and strategy development possibilities within SPEK and the plans of the ministry. A full tentative timeline of the implementation of all actions can be found in page 105 of SPEK.

4.3. Formal Education: The Kosovo*⁴⁷ Curriculum Framework for Pre-University Levels

Kosovo's* Curriculum Framework (KCF) is developed by the KACSE according to the Strategic Education Plan of Kosovo*⁴⁸ 2017-2021 and the legal provisions and requirements by the Law Nr. 04/L-032 on Pre-University Education in Kosovo*⁴⁹.

The structure of the curriculums is cascading, with the Kosovo*⁵⁰ Curriculum Framework. Each grade group also has a core curriculum plan assigned to it (L0, L1, L2& L3) which delves deeper into each subject.

The intervention structure for the medium and long term MIL framework needs to adhere to the existing structure of policy and planning goals and objectives. The current strategic plan and related curriculum are foreseen to achieve a set of goals by 2021, or until the existing strategy cycle ends. However, the strategy and related curricular frameworks are intrinsically intertwined with MIL objectives, although this relationship is implicit. Additionally, updated textbooks, teaching materials, ICT infrastructure and teacher training are still at the initial stages of update implementation. As a result, quick action will enable the inclusion of a substantive MIL focus.

The KCF outlines a number of key competencies and competency related objectives. The key competencies are a list of final skills that all students going through the pre-university system must possess at the end of their education. Current curriculum framework outlines the desired outcomes from pre-university teaching levels according to these key competencies:

1. Expression and Communication Competency
 - 1.1. Final Desired Result: Effective Communication.
2. Thinking Competency
 - 2.1. Final Desired Result: Creative and Critical Thinking
3. Learning Competency
 - 3.1. Final Desired Result: Successful Student
4. Living, Working and Environmental Competency
 - 4.1. Final Desired Result: Productive Contributor
5. Personal Competency
 - 5.1. Final Desired Result: Healthy Individual

⁴⁷**ibid as 1*

⁴⁸**ibid as 1*

⁴⁹**ibid as 1*

⁵⁰**ibid as 1*

6. Civic Competency.

6.1. Final Desired Result: Responsible Citizen

Overall, the KCF doesn't explicitly address the MIL approaches as per UNESCO description and outline in a unified strategic manner. Rather, MIL related objectives and activities foreseen under the KCF are implicit but do provide a substantial starting point for the development of a comprehensive MIL framework. This unified strategic manner implies a concerted effort to achieve the specific goals of the MIL framework as per UNESCO requirements. However, within the KCF there are numerous specific desired outcomes of the education system and related curriculum that closely relate to MIL. **These specific outcomes could be used as a starting point to stimulate the KACSE and MEST to draw a MIL strategy that harmonizes the specific outcomes into a coherent MIL strategy in collaboration with other national stakeholders.** The MEST, as part of the initial consultations, already committed to developing a special MIL class for primary schools with long term interventions to be developed. Following is an analysis of all MIL related outcomes included in the pre-university curriculum and their relation to MIL.

The first competency in the KCF provides an excellent case study for the potential intervention scenario in order to achieve immediate results and correctly position all future action.

4.4. Expression and Communication Competency.

Expression and Communication Competency focuses around communication and information processing abilities. The competency requires students to be able to effectively communicate in their respective native tongues, an additional language, as well as process information and use ICT effectively. Specifically, three results of this competency directly relate to MIL, providing for a justifiable base to require the inclusion of MIL modules into pre-university teaching. These results are:

1. Provide and exchange information in a constructive and creative manner
2. Use ICT during learning and studying at school.
3. Use ICT and the media effectively and responsibly as important information, communication and interaction tools in the digital epoch.

These three results inform the approach intended for the specific, grade-level detail programs related to the curriculum. Additionally, these results indicate that the overall approach is highly attuned and prescient toward the need for media and information literacy at the very basic stages of learning. Using adherence to the strategy and the curriculum as a starting point, advocacy for the implementation of a cross-cutting medium term MIL strategy focusing on the pre-university level will likely be highly successful, given that there is immediate intervention. Legislatively, and policy-wise, the framework of goals and objectives of the education sector in Kosovo^{*51} allows ample room for the development of textbooks, classes, teaching materials (both online and offline) and teacher training modules to implement MIL strategies.

⁵¹ **ibid as 1*

4.5. Formal Education: The Law on Higher Education in Kosovo^{*52} and SPEK

The Law on Higher Education (Nr. 04/L-037) outlines the general responsibilities and expectations of the MEST regarding higher education. Among others, the law outlines the responsibilities of the MEST regarding higher education institutions.⁵³

The overall high-level responsibilities of the MEST focus around the development of the strategy and goals of higher education institutions, the establishment of public higher education providers and the oversight of education quality testing for all higher education providers in Kosovo^{*54}. The MEST establishes the Kosovo^{*55} Accreditation Agency (KAA), which is responsible for the evaluation and promotion of the quality of higher education. As a result of its legal mandate, the KAA outlines its policies for the accreditation of private higher education providers, which is a key policy for MIL related interventions in higher education institutions in Kosovo^{*56}.

Unlike at the pre-university level, the higher education strategic plan has not yet been completed for the period from 2016 onwards. Currently, all strategic development planning for the Higher Education category of learning is based on SPEK, the Law on Higher Education and associated policies of the KAA and MEST. SPEK identifies the lack of completion of the legal framework for higher education as a challenge to the overall higher education system in Kosovo^{*57}.⁵⁸ However, this provides an ideal starting point for the inclusion of MIL in the approaches at the inception stage of the completion of the legislative frameworks.

The MEST and related institutional bodies also do not interfere with the overall curriculum of higher education institutions. However, the MEST and the KAA are responsible for the assessing the quality of the public education providers and distributing performance-based funding for the institutions. On the private education provider side, the KAA is also responsible for drawing the accreditation policies, quality assurance and testing policies as well as oversight of these institutions. As a result, intervention at the MEST and KAA level, in order to place MIL as a key requirement of higher level education outcomes, would prove beneficial. However, MIL interventions at the degree structure level (for Journalism, information and library science degrees for example), will have to focus on individual higher education providers. The MEST, as part of the first consultation meeting, justified the integration of a MIL comprehensive framework within all schools given its necessity. While estimating the actual space given to MIL in schools as not adequate, given that it is integrated merely as part of some subjects in only some education levels; MEST was committed on working further for introducing MIL as a

⁵²**ibid as 1*

⁵³Higher education is organized according to the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS). The first grade (Bachelor) requires the 180 to 240 credits (3 to 4 years) to graduate. The second level (Master) requires 60 to 120 credits (1 to 2 years) for graduation. Finally, the highest degree level are post-graduate studies that have no credit or time limits, as well as the life learning programs.

⁵⁴**ibid as 1*

⁵⁵**ibid as 1*

⁵⁶**ibid as 1*

⁵⁷**ibid as 1*

⁵⁸ SPEK, page 94.

selective course in schools as “pupils should have a critical approach to media and information”.⁵⁹

5. Informal Education

5.1. The Civil Society

The civil society organizations in Kosovo^{*60} are the most likely to be instrumental in pushing forward a comprehensive MIL framework. Influenced by the international community, the civil society has been championing in advocating structural and policy changes that would improve the media environment and information and communication technology in general. For the purpose of this document, we shall categorise the civil society organisations in four different categories: Research institutes and advocacy centres; media NGOs; professional associations; grassroots organisations.

Primarily, research institutes and advocacy centres have played a crucial role in advancing key social policies. These centres have served in the past as key policy initiators. Institutes will need to be involved in providing Kosovo^{*61} context aware conceptualizations of the MIL framework and assisting government and non-government actors in streamlining any new policies or strategies. These institutes will provide impact across a broad policy spectrum, including ICT, formal and non-formal education, media oversight, etc.

One specific section of the non-governmental organizations that also play a crucial role in non-formal education and related policy development are Media NGOs. Media NGOs for the purpose of this paper are defined as media outlets that have a non-profit structure and also focus on education, training and professional advancements of journalists. Media NGOs in Kosovo^{*62} maintain a high level of professionalism and impartiality while also providing academic and ethical training as well as serving as a benchmark for for-profit media.

Professional associations, especially teaching and journalism professional associations also play a crucial role in informal education. Providing a platform for professional groups, these associations have the potential to have a wide reach in two key target audiences: educators and practitioners. Currently, several professional associations operate, and harmonizing their efforts in developing and implementing a MIL effort will be crucial.

Grassroots organizations, especially ICT and youth-focused groups, are also crucial players in the market. Several grassroots organizations serve as platforms for informal education of youth specifically, but not exclusively. To date, these organizations have broad informal education

⁵⁹ Mr. Shyqyri Bytyqi. Minister of Education, Science and Technology. First consultation meeting. 24th April 2017.

⁶⁰ *ibid as 1*

⁶¹ *ibid as 1*

⁶² *ibid as 1*

teaching targets. Some of these organizations, as will be discussed below, focus on ICT skill development as well as broad educational objectives.

5.1.1. Research Institutes and Advocacy Centres

In the public sphere and especially in the policy-making cycle, think tanks maintain a special role. Often being labeled as *the* civil society, research institutes and advocacy groups have paved the way for a number of outstanding policy changes and were instrumental for Kosovo^{*63} to introduce new policies in line with highest international standards. In this regard, this cluster of civil society organisations is important not only due to their research-based policy solutions but also due to their interconnectedness in policy cycles which foster their advocacy capacities. Among others, and, in addition to the Institute for Development Policy (INDEP), we have identified the following to be the most important organisations in this cluster:

- a. Kosovo* Civil Society Foundation (KCSF) – The KCSF is a Kosovo based foundation which works with civil society organizations in Kosovo through grants and through in-house support research aimed at developing civil society. The KCSF supports civil society organizations in developing internal capacities as well as through stimulating democratic governance through their grants programme. The foundation plays a crucial role in the input that CSOs provide into the policy cycle in Kosovo through their support, and as such can play a substantial role in gathering CSO support for a national MIL strategy.
- b. Kosovo* Democratic Institute (KDI) – KDI is a longstanding organization who has extensively focused in democratization, accountable policy making and citizen advocacy in the country. The organization also focuses as a matter of mission in the issue of the involvement of women in policy and decision making. Through its in-house policy work as well as public sector support activities the organization has been a substantial contributor to both national and local legislative and policy improvements. As such, KDI's expertise, experience and network of monitoring would be crucial in the development process of a national MIL strategy.

5.1.2. Media NGOs

To date, many media in Kosovo^{*64} operate as non-profit organisations and are formally considered part of the narrow definition of civil society. Although there are more organisations that directly or indirectly work with the media, the following have been identified as important

⁶³ *ibid* as 1

⁶⁴ **ibid* as 1

for the purpose of MIL, be that because they already promote certain MIL aspects, or because they have the potential to do that:

- a. Balkan Investigative Reporting Network (BIRN) is a regional association of media organisations. BIRN is engaged in producing written and broadcast outlets, conducts trainings for journalists and serves as one of the key media-related policy input providers at the national level.
- b. Preportr – runs a centre for investigative journalism which focuses on more in-depth reporting on social and political issues, whilst also maintaining solid research capacity.
- c. Sbunker is leading progressive organisation that promotes critical thinking through blogs, debates, discussions and informal education programmes.
- d. Kosovo 2.0 is the leading liberal online publication that publishes in three languages: Albanian, Serbian and English. Kosovo 2.0 is also engaged in project-based work that focuses on inclusion, marginalized group representation, as well as capacity increase in grassroots media efforts.

5.1.3. Professional Associations

Although the operational state of most professional associations is still emerging, some associations can play an important role when it comes to MIL. Association of Kosovo^{*65} Journalists, is the largest association of journalists and media professionals. Although the Association's reputation has altered over the years, it remains the top organisation when it comes to any media policy or issues. This association in the past has also worked to provide training and professional advancement programs for journalists in Kosovo^{*66}. While an explicit MIL focus was not present in previous efforts, implicitly MIL related aspects were covered under these training programmes which focused on increasing journalist professionalism. As part of this framework, the revitalization of the Association of Journalists of Kosovo (**AJK**) to focus on MIL competencies in media studies, preferably through a private-sector supported effort.

The second in importance, is the Kosovo^{*67} ICT Association (STIKK) which represents 90% of the whole ICT market. So far, STIKK has been quite active in promoting the ICT sector and its development. STIKK runs an informal education programme, aimed at mobile software development and software engineering, with focus on producing qualified workers for the ICT industry. While not MIL related, as the association of the ICT sector business, STIKK does possess the capacities to quickly adopt a MIL component and disseminate it through its education platform.

5.1.4. Grassroots organizations

ICT related grassroots organizations that currently have informal educational activities are all youth focused and youth run.

⁶⁵**ibid as 1*

⁶⁶**ibid as 1*

⁶⁷**ibid as 1*

- a. Girls Coding Kosova* - Girls Coding Kosova* is a Kosovo-based^{*68} NGO whose aim is to empower and train women and girls in coding and programming. Since 2015, Girls Coding Kosova* has increased its member base to over 500 women and counting. This organization directly works with the ICT competency of MIL, specifically focusing on gender-aware policies.
- b. PrishtinaHackerspace – The Hackerspace is Free Libre Open Source Software Kosova (FLOSSK) established, independently run and funded grassroots organization operating in the capital, Prishtina. The hackerspace focuses on skill development in the ICT sector for all interested parties. The group’s activities include open-end seminars on a wide variety of information technology related topics, some of which have been focused on informal media outlets such as blogs.FLOSSK has also ran Wikipedia editathonswhich engage youth in the critical evaluation of media sources to reference their encyclopedicarticles.
- c. Termokiss – Termokiss is a youth volunteer run space foreducational and artistic activities. The organization was established by a grassroots group how aimed to convert a previous industrial public space in an informal education and idea exchange place. Termokiss volunteers offer the space and the infrastructure for a wide variety of educational activities. This grassroots organization has held several seminars, discussion groups and other informal education sessions on a number of issues, including new media.
- d. BoneVet – Bonevet is a Kosovo^{*69} based makerspace. The NGO focuses on delivering an informal learning avenue for children to learn skills in programming, engineering, languages, etc. through hands-on learning and building. This informal education and learning platform format has been very successful globally particularly in the engineering and software development aspects. This platform currently has no media related components to day, however, its ICT focus is substantial.

5.2.Other Stakeholders

Aside from the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, which is the main institution in charge of developing a MIL framework, there are other actors whose role in advancing MIL would be instrumental. For the purpose of this document, we shall categorise them into regulatory authorities, civil society actors as well as actors from the private sector.

5.2.1. The Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sport (MCYS)

The Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sport is the ministry responsible for a range of cultural development activities, including the oversight of public libraries and youth informal education. The Ministry’s development goals for the scope of the activities foreseen to be fulfilled by the

⁶⁸**ibid as 1*

⁶⁹**ibid as 1*

law are drawn out in a strategic document. The Ministry's Strategy for the Youth as well as related action plans expired in 2017, with a new strategy and action plan as yet currently unavailable. However, the previous strategy of the MCYS doesn't include implicit or explicit mentions of MIL concepts. Nonetheless, considering the expiration of the previous strategy, the MCYS will have to adopt a new strategy and explicit inclusion of a MIL framework can be considered for the next five year strategic plan.

The MCYS also has an active policy of developing non-governmental youth organizations as well as youth centers which are locally run by municipalities. Youth NGO support is primarily focused on the development of informal education mechanisms, with the primary support method being grants and project-based sponsorship. However, a curriculum of these informal education channels are currently unavailable. Nonetheless, provision of government support for youth informal training does provide an already established pipeline through which to channel any concerted MIL efforts.

Previous calls for grants by the MCYS also foresaw the development of the curriculum for informal education sessions by the recipient of the grant. This indicates that the MCYS is open to informal education curricula, opening the way for the potential inclusion of explicit MIL training topics. According to previous calls, these sessions could be seminars, traditional training programs, debates, seminars or workshops. Therefore, MCYS could adopt a MIL framework and implementation strategy relatively easy through existing frameworks.

Libraries, archives, museums and other information intermediaries

The MCYS also oversees the management of national libraries, galleries, museums and archives. Currently, no national libraries have organized informal education mechanisms. The Law on Libraries of Kosovo^{*70} foresees autonomy for all library levels in organizing activities. However, national libraries have had few independent informal education activities at all levels except private libraries – information on the latter is unavailable. Therefore, the development of a MIL-centric list of informal educational or outreach activities by national libraries is within the space of activities allowed by existing policies. However, no existing policies are currently available. Libraries provide a natural platform for promoting MIL given their mandate. The observed gap thus presents huge opportunities to stimulate libraries and their engagement with local communities through MIL. Examples can be found in Sweden through partnerships with the Swedish Media Council and hundreds of libraries to promote MIL across the country. Related examples can be found within Documentations Centres in France.

The same issue applies to museums, galleries and archives. Despite the fact that the legal background allows museums substantial autonomy in running activities within their institutions such activities are fairly limited. This is primarily due to the fact that museums are severely underfunded and depend on volunteering for running part of their operations. Due to this, engagement of museums in the MIL process would be a costly process as it would require

⁷⁰**ibid as 1*

actualizing the institutions themselves primarily. These problems also apply to national archives which currently are largely not functional.

Finally, national galleries are active in the promotion of mainly visual artists. A brief survey of the public-facing outlets for these institutions (social media and websites) indicates an almost entirely visual art focused activity agenda. While like the libraries and museums they are largely autonomous in decision making, no implicit or explicit MIL approach seems to be currently present as a matter of concerted policy by these institutions. However, seeing as galleries are the most active of the public information intermediaries in Kosovo^{*71}, potential MIL related policies could be adopted in these institutions more readily than other information intermediaries.

International Development Organisation

5.2.2. Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE)

The OSCE Mission in Kosovo^{*72} runs several media-related activities across a broad spectrum of media-related topics. The mission is mainly focused on the promotion of media and journalistic freedom. However, the mission has recently also expanded its activities to include direct Media and Information Literacy trainings.

In October 2017, the OSCE organized a two day-training session for 14 teachers from different municipalities in collaboration with the MEST. The training focused on the introduction of MIL in schools and the dissemination of the knowledge to their peers. The training was conducted as part of the framework of teacher autonomy in choosing teaching methods and materials foreseen by the KCF. This initiative is in line with the MIL curriculum, and the multiplication of support for teachers as part of a broader policy can prove to be a successful MIL delivery vehicle.

5.2.3. UNICEF Innovation Labs Kosovo^{*73}

UNICEF's Innovation Labs operates through a series of activities focused around the development of solutions for UNICEF's own needs and youth empowerment. Tech interconnects all approaches. One of the Innovation Lab's key focuses in their Youth Empowerment Programme is critical media literacy.

The most prominent of critical media literacy efforts by UNICEF Innovation Labs Kosovo^{*74} is their Ponder platform. The Ponder platform is a three-day workshop aimed at developing critical media literacy skills in young people. Additionally, the platform offers an internship to one of the participants based on a merit system. To date, UNICEF has held three Ponder workshops focused on critical media literacy skills.

⁷¹**ibid as 1*

⁷²**ibid as 1*

⁷³**ibid as 1*

⁷⁴**ibid as 1*

UNICEF's Innovation Labs also runs a number of other MIL related programs that teach youth to use technology for implementing advocacy and participation platforms, social entrepreneurship efforts and empowering marginalized group youths.

5.3.Regulatory Authorities

Media are regulated by two bodies. The Independent Media Commission (IMC) is a institution established through constitutional provisions with the purpose of regulating and monitoring the broadcast systems. The Kosovo* Press Council (KPC), on the other hand, is a self-regulatory body of all the print media and some online publications too.

5.3.1. The IMC

The IMC is an independent agency that only reports to the Kosovo*⁷⁵ Assembly. Its own income is generated from licensing fees that it issues for any digital transmission in Kosovo*⁷⁶. As such, the IMC is of crucial importance for introducing a comprehensive MIL framework as it is the primary institution that is mandated to enforce the ethical aspects of the media and the only one providing general codes of conducts for media and journalists. Furthermore, the IMC plays a key role when it comes to developing media policies in Kosovo*⁷⁷.

When it comes to the functional aspects of MIL framework, the IMC should be considered as the primary institution, as the agency is solely in charge of enacting bylaws regarding the media. This institution is neither limited nor discouraged to extend its regulative framework by promulgating new bylaws. Currently, the IMC has, among others, regulations on broadcasting services, ethical code for broadcast media, regulation for commercial content of the media, up to rules and procedures as to how the media operators can apply for licenses with the IMC.

Another window of opportunity for a comprehensive MIL policy is provided precisely by the IMC's persistence to maintains their bylaws up to date. Only during 2017, the IMC has promulgated and/or amended the following bylaws:

1. Regulation for the Annual License Fees for Media Operators
2. Regulation for Multiplex Operator
3. Regulation for Audio and Audiovisual Media Service Providers
4. Regulation for Mandatory Carriage of the Audiovisual Media Services Providers in the Multiples Operator
5. Regulation for logical ordering of broadcast channels
6. Regulation on Commercial Audiovisual Communication

As part of this development cycle the IMC has also been working on a new strategy. According to NaileKrasniqi, Chief Executive of IMC, the new strategy will include a media education component. The strategy aims to identify ways and channels through which the IMC can

⁷⁵**ibid as 1*

⁷⁶**ibid as 1*

⁷⁷**ibid as 1*

increase media literacy. The new strategy is currently still being developed, however, Ms. Krasniqi specified that the IMC is aware of MIL and are developing this section of the strategy in congruence with MIL concepts.

A specific policy initiative of the IMC will be the inclusion of a Media Education (MIL) section in their upcoming redesigned website. This section will contain information and online training sessions on Media literacy. Details on this section are still being developed, providing for an existing platform base upon which to supplement a MIL framework.

5.3.2. **The KPC**

Established in 2005, The KosovoPress Council (PCK) functions as a self-regulatory body for the print and online media with the mandate to ensure respect for the press code of Kosovo^{*78}. This Press Council currently counts 28 members from daily newspapers, news portals, blogs, and news agencies in 2018, and this number has been continuously increasing.

Member of the Alliance of Independent Press Councils in Europe, this press council is receiving a growing number of complaints (67 complaints in 2017) from citizens most of them dealing with Chapter II of the code of ethics (Reporting of truth) and chapter IV (right of reply). One of the main challenge for this self-regulatory mechanism remains its financial situation and its reliance on external donor funding, a problem shared with most press councils in South East Europe.

⁷⁸**ibid as 1*

6. National MIL Strategy Development Framework

Following the initial national consultations regarding MIL, a broadly accepted conclusion amongs MIL stakeholders was that MIL is necessary in Kosovo. The secondary conclusions stemming from the national consultations is the immediate need to formulate a framework strategy for the harmonization of all MIL efforts and channeling support to specific areas of focus. As a result, a set of strategic framework goals, along with initially responsible stakeholders was established.

This approach is justified by the need to involve a national scale programme that is both sustainable and cohesive in approach. Such a cohesiveness can be best ensured by a state actor with reliable institutional memory and the ability to drive a multi-generational strategy. This serves to combat a contextual problem in Kosovo due to problems that might arise with the lack of continuity of non-governmental actor involvement in a strategy. As such, governmental actors maintain primary responsibility and also focus in delivering a coherent effort. Moreover so, ownership ensures involvement in other chains of national MIL policy implementation.

To fully address the challenge ahead in implementing a comprehensive media and information literacy strategy nationally, a set of common shared understandings about MIL as a composite concept and MIL in Kosovo were identified.

Common Shared Understanding 1: Media and Information Literacy strategies in Kosovo needs to be particularly designed to address critical thinking. Developing the ability to critically evaluate information, processes, biases and beliefs is crucial to ensure internalization of MIL as a composite concept.

Common Shared Understanding 2: Media and Information Literacy should foster open, respectful and fact – based dialogue. Without discrimination on topic, an inclusive and successful dialogue needs to be fully participatory – actively seek to include marginalized groups – and informed – actively encourage critical informed citizens who participate in dialogue.

Common Shared Understanding 3: MIL adoption requires involvement from all. Incentive based involvement can only partially help in uptake of MIL. Stakeholders involvement needs to be self-fuelled, for the benefit of all.

Common Shared Understanding 4: Involvement in MIL efforts is a benefit to the participating party. Involvement in the MIL efforts should provide a benefit to the parties covering their share of work in any MIL efforts in Kosovo. Design of these efforts needs to ensure that benefits to the participatory stakeholders are also taken into account.

These three common shared understandings informed the approach toward the establishment of the strategic objectives and the specific objectives.

Strategic Objective 1: Governmental Policy Development

To ensure sustainability of MIL efforts, MIL has to be communicated at all levels of mandatory and elective education systems. Additionally, MIL has to be reinforced throughout secondary public information and education systems, including libraries, galleries and integrated into other outreach efforts. This is particularly more important seeing as journalism professionals share the belief that critical reading of the media is a skill that should be taught at these levels above all other reasons.⁷⁹ These professionals also believed that the lack of education of the public, and journalists and media editors themselves, concerning media and information, is the primary challenge with MIL in Kosovo. Therefore, harmonized and inclusive governmental policy development concerning education on MIL is a key strategic objective.

Specific Objective 1: Harmonize current education curriculum framework with critical thinking focus. The current curriculum framework needs to be thoroughly reviewed. This review should produce recommendations for the inclusion of an MIL and critical information literacy theme throughout the curriculum, in conjunction with MIL Strategy and Guidelines.

Specific Objective 2: Develop a framework of the inclusion of MIL throughout the curriculum. Class and class support material (subject matters, class design, books) should include critical information literacy sections contextualized to subject matter issues. Such an approach would be the inclusion of discussions of information literacy related discussions on topics, i.e: geography, math, etc.

Specific Objective 3: Identify and implement incentive structures and compulsory mechanisms for MIL inclusion in higher education. Higher education involvement of MIL teaching should focus broadly on the provision of elective classes or as a core requirement as part of the coursework necessary to receive a diploma. Secondarily, academic programs for educators (teachers) should ensure the thorough inclusion of MIL training curricula and its applications in non-media related environments.

Specific Objective 4: Revitalize libraries, galleries and other information centres and establish them as MIL dissemination channels. Analyze current needs of school-based libraries and other public (government funded) information intermediaries for full functionalization. Develop a plan for the concurrent development of information centres along with the development of MIL content and curricula for these centres.

Specific Objective 5: Develop ICT capacities in school environments. The expansion of ICT learning should include easy access to supervised online information learning (social media, critical source selection and information source evaluation). The ICT capacity expansion

⁷⁹ INDEP national online consultation with media professionals and media researchers. 31 respondents to multiple answer question "Who do you believe would have the highest impact in educating the public on media and information?". Highest frequency answer is "Elementary and Middle schools" (67.7% of respondents) followed by Universities (58.1% of respondents). Answer options: 1) Parents and families, 2) Elementary, middle and high schools, 3) Universities, 4) Media, 5) Journalists and media professionals, 6) Civil Society and informal groups, 7) Informal and non-formal education, 8) MEST, 9) IMC, 10) Public Institution Public Relations Offices, 11) Journalist associations in Kosovo, 12) No education necessary.

in line with MIL should also focus on encouraging women and minorities in expanding their ICT skills, possibly by preferential access.

Actors: The Ministry of Education, Science and Technology maintains the primary responsibility for establishing working groups to develop the curriculum and other policy intervention forms. This can be done in collaboration with the Office for Good Governance, which can serve as a liaison for cross-governmental bodies. Civil Society Organizations, especially professionally focused organization who work in education and media, should be involved in the development of policies. Academics and researchers also should be involved in providing input on the drafting process.

Strategic Objective 2: Media Policy Harmonization and Development of Kosovo Media MIL Capacities

Recognizing the need to maintain a non interference policy with media, while simultaneously ensuring the uptake of MIL concepts within said media, the goals of this strategic objective is to develop incentive structures that foster adherence of journalists and media to MIL concepts.

Based on the national consultations, multiple expert groups agree on the fact that in Kosovo, traditional media still maintain a considerable level of viewership and online readership. As such, they play a key role in the information of citizens and are active creators of opinions. This is both a benefit and and a challenge. The beneficial aspect of this contextual reality in Kosovo is that it provides an address through which to target MIL concept to the public through media themselves. The challenge stems from the semi-traditional, non transparent media sources that define part of the media spectrum in Kosovo, and an intrinsic inability to influence, or even identify decision makers, within these media.

However, the adoption of MIL education and outreach activities by the main traditional media outlets in the country has benefits for the media themselves. Primarily, the media that adopt such policies would stand to benefit from increased viewer/reader loyalty and increased credibility – which still are considerable drivers of revenue streams in Kosovo. Secondly, with the simultaneous development of continuing education programs for journalists – through online means – the media themselves would benefit from an increase in the professional capacities of its production staff.

As such, aligning voluntary incentive structures for uptake of public MIL education efforts by traditional media with ready-made training and education materials should ensure a successful outreach effort.

Specific Objective 1: Ideate a mechanism of action through which media would be active delivery vehicles for MIL education. State and non-state actors included in the MIL development process in Kosovo should form an active working group, inclusive of media, to create a sustainable and non-intrusive mechanism for media to deliver MIL education to citizens. This effort can be built on top of, and together with, current efforts by international organizations to do the same.

Specific Objective 2: Develop voluntary training curriculums in online format for MIL concepts for journalists and citizens. Using ICT as the best information dissemination tool, and as an intrinsic concept to MIL, training materials for journalists concerning MIL should be developed. These training materials should be available at all times, maintained and updated as necessary. Incentive structures for the completion of the training material should be provided to media and new and experienced journalism professionals alike.

Specific Objective 3: Create and sustain an active, informal, outreach mechanism to advocate to media for the inclusion of MIL concepts in their reporting and editorial policies. The outreach mechanism should be overseen by a media regulatory body and be voluntary in nature, composed of non-governmental organizations and other experts. The mechanism would develop its own outreach materials and utilize existing links between regulators, NGOs and media to further uptake of MIL concepts by media.

Specific Objective 4: Develop a mechanism to enable media and journalists to serve as MIL educators in formal, non-formal and informal education channels. MIL educated journalists can play a crucial role in bridging the capacity gap between current and future teacher uptake of MIL concepts. As such, professional journalists, as part of their voluntary work, can lead non-formal and informal outreach activities at school and adult learning centres to inform them on specific media focused MIL concepts. Ideally, the journalists can be provided with ready materials to alleviate the burden of commitment and ensure harmonized learning goal deployment with other national MIL strategies.

Actors: The Independent Media Commission (IMC) should maintain coordination and information activities actively throughout the process. The material and activity outreach will be conducted jointly by civil society organizations (CSOs) and voluntarily participating media bodies. The Office of Good Governance should be informed of all activities and be actively involved when opportunities arise.

Strategic Objective 3: Harmonize individual organization efforts to maximize impact.

Several MIL efforts in Kosovo are already under way by a number of local and international organizations. These efforts range from formal and informal education and training mechanisms, to activities related to MIL goals (such as providing ICT education to women). One common factor that runs throughout these efforts is coordination – at most, coordination is multilateral but not inclusive. As such, the need for a coordinated effort was identified.

The need for a coordinated approach serves to primarily best utilize the unique professional capacities of each organization as well as avoiding doubling efforts throughout the system. This coordination also would aid in the establishment of an input channel into other coordinated efforts.

Specific Objective 1: Establish a formal network of MIL oriented non-governmental organizations. The formal network would serve to streamline non-governmental organization efforts towards MIL implementation, provide official input into government run efforts, and overall streamline the process.

Specific Objective 2: Utilize formal network to provide input across all other strategic objectives. The formal network should serve as a single focus point concerning MIL concerning civil society organizations and their involvement in national MIL policies and strategies.

Specific Objective 3: Involve informal academic and researcher organizations into the formal network. The involvement of independent and informal academic and researchers, ensures that all activities undertaken take the broadest perspective in consideration during design phase and aids in broader adoption.

Specific Objective 4: Design and implement research development agenda for MIL in Kosovo. The formal group should design and assign policy and other research into MIL in Kosovo to the constituents of the network. The research should be primarily pre-emptive, in order to supplement MIL efforts across the implementing stakeholders spectrum and also exploratory – to further the understanding of MIL within the Kosovar context.

Actors: Civil Society Organizations will lead the formal network establishment process, as well as set out and outline its rules and schedules. Academic, researchers and other informal stakeholder groups will be involved in any capacity. The Office of Good Governance should be involved throughout the process in order to ensure bridging with other initiatives.

Strategic Objective 4: Secure comprehensive inclusion of marginalized groups throughout the MIL national strategy.

Inclusion is a key concept of MIL and as such any planning, design and implementation activities need to be filtered through a proactive inclusion lens. This lens needs to be applied by all actors at all stages of development and implementation.

Stakeholders involved in national consultations agreed on principle that securing adherence to an inclusive agenda in MIL in Kosovo requires specific focus. This focus has been set out as a strategic objective in its own to both outline its importance, and also force self-compliance by all MIL participatory stakeholders.

Specific Objective 1: Actively include marginalized group representatives (women, youth and ethnic, sexual and other marginalized minorities) with veto power throughout the policy and harmonization initiatives and stakeholder groups. These representatives will be equal contributors to the policy formulation and harmonization activities and all organizing bodies will commit, by statute, to respect their veto power on final formulations and documents.

Specific Objective 2: Actively engage marginalized group issue experts in policy formulation, independent of voluntary participation of marginalized group representatives. This specific objective requires the involvement of academic and other professionals with high level specialization in marginalized group issues throughout all policy design and implementation activities. This second specific objective serves to ensure a pro-active approach to ensuring that the needs of marginalized groups who lack a cohesive concerted voice – irrespective of reasons for lack of voice - are also represented in the formulation process.

Specific Objective 3: Funding should reflect intention when designing marginalized group aware policies. A comprehensive funding review process should be conducted prior to policy adoption that focuses on evaluating whether funding reflects intention when designing MIL strategies and policies with marginalized groups in mind. This objective works to bridge a perceived gap between intention and actual funding when dealing with marginalized groups.

Actors: All stakeholder groups, formal and informal, with particular focus on the formal actors with decision making power throughout the MIL policy formulation and implementation stage.

Strategic Objective 5: Communicate, Measure, Analyze and Communicate again.

The most important aspect of a national MIL effort is communication – namely informing citizens throughout Kosovo about the initiatives, policies and efforts being made in the MIL sphere. The secondary aspect of this communication is measurement – ensuring that baselines are established and improvements to the strategies are done using evidence-based analysis.

Specific Objective 1: Executive a continuous and comprehensive public awareness campaign to solicit input on national level strategies. This input should serve to draw the public’s attention to the efforts that will be starting in Kosovo as well as correctly frame the MIL education campaign to improve uptake by the citizens.

Specific Objective 2: Ensure that all new policies and strategies include the generation of SMART goals, with a focus on measurements pre and post intervention. The development of a data focused mindset on the implementation of MIL ensures that all future decision making is evidence based.

Actors: All actors responsible for a set of activities should focus on the second specific objective. The comprehensive information campaign should be led by the Office of Good Governance with assistance from CSOs and other partner organizations.

General Recommendations and Next Steps

The general recommendations below stem from the initial consultations with the main stakeholders. These recommendations and next steps are an indicative to do list, outlined by the participants, with the lead from the MEST and the Office of Good Governance of the Republic of Kosovo.

The recommendations also foresee that the next steps throughout which a national MIL strategy in the country will be developed will be fully transparent and inherently comprehensive in approach.

Full transparency foresees the inclusion of media representatives, for reporting purposes as well as policy input, throughout all steps of the processes. This also includes the provision of recorded and written transcripts of the discussions through public means.

The comprehensive approach foresees the simultaneous development of all necessary policies and strategies related to MIL if these efforts can be carried out independently of any

prerequisites. It also foresees the oversight of the process by a single centralized body, the Office of Good Governance, in order to serve as a contact point for all efforts.

1. The Office of Good Governance of Kosovo, as a result of the expressed commitment during the initial consultations, should take the lead, in collaboration with key civil society organizations, in deciding the organizational structure of an initial working group. The initial working group will also be responsible for voluntarily assigning a representative stakeholder for each identified stakeholder group – from individual minority representatives, topic experts, industry representatives, etc.

2. The initial working group will be tasked with expanding on the strategic and specific objectives developed above, as well as drawing an initial list of torch bearers and contributors in each chain of objectives. The initial working group should also ensure that prior to the initiation of any working sessions, all potential contributors to a strategic objectives have been contacted and will participate in the process.

2. The initial working group, under the supervision of the Office of Good Governance, in collaboration with strategic objective working groups, will also develop tracking mechanisms for the strategy, policy and implementation process itself. These tracking mechanisms will serve to ensure that the process continues forward as well as tracking progress.

3. After the strategic objective working groups have been established, and strategic objective working group leadership roles have been assigned, these groups will develop detailed work plans, including the development of baselines studies thereof for the achievement of their respective objectives.

4. The aforementioned process should be inclusive of all key stakeholders. In the case of unrepresented marginalized groups, an exhaustive effort should be made to find marginalized group representatives or experts should voluntary representation prove hard to secure. It is critical that inclusion be ensured to be able to address the needs of the most vulnerable throughout this process.

5. An extensive awareness campaign should be conducted prior to the start of strategy work by the strategic objective working groups. The awareness campaign should educate the public at large about the initial concepts of MIL, the purpose of the initial working group and the strategic working groups as well as provide options for inclusion of feedback on the process for all citizens.

6. Detailed strategic, legislative, and implementation plans will be developed by all groups after the conclusion of the initial working sessions that will supplement and / or replace this document as an initial position paper on MIL in Kosovo.

7. Roadmap for MIL in Kosovo*⁸⁰

Below is a tentative action plan for the comprehensive development of MIL policies and strategies in harmonization between different actors. All processes foresee the inclusion of all potential stakeholders in order to ensure a harmonized approach with no overlaps.



⁸⁰**ibid as 1*

8. ANNEXES

8.1.ANNEX I: EDUCATION LEVELS IN Kosovo^{*81}

Currently, Kosovo's^{*82} education system is organized according to these categories:

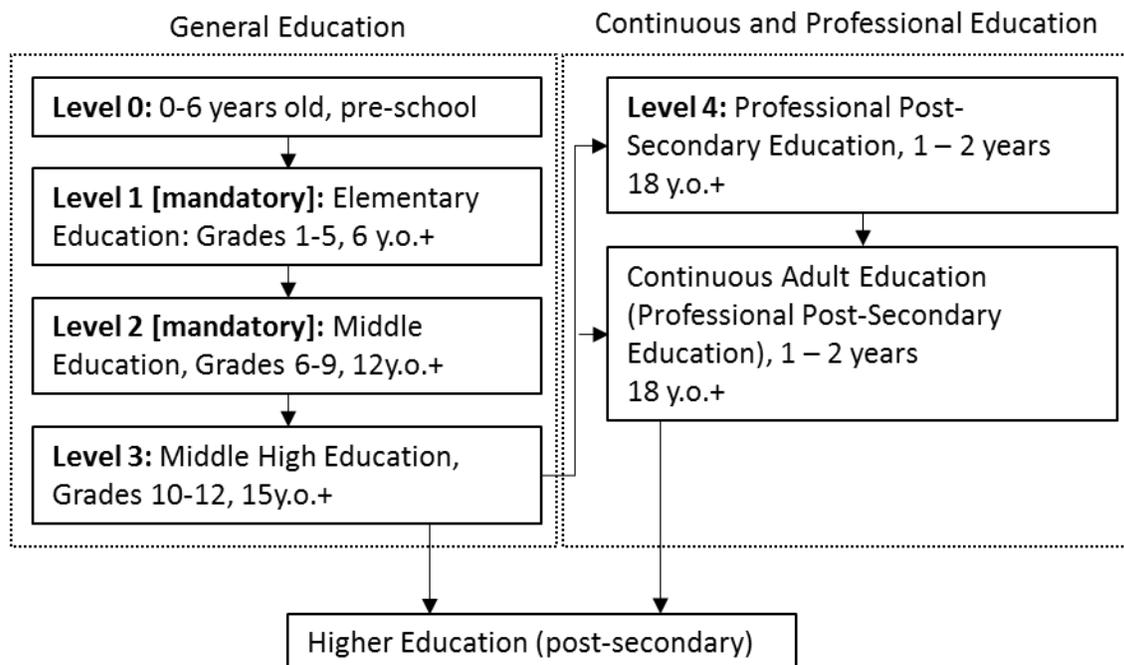


Figure 1: Kosovo^{*83} Education Level Organization. Source: Law Nr. 04/L-032 on Pre-University Education in Kosovo^{*84}

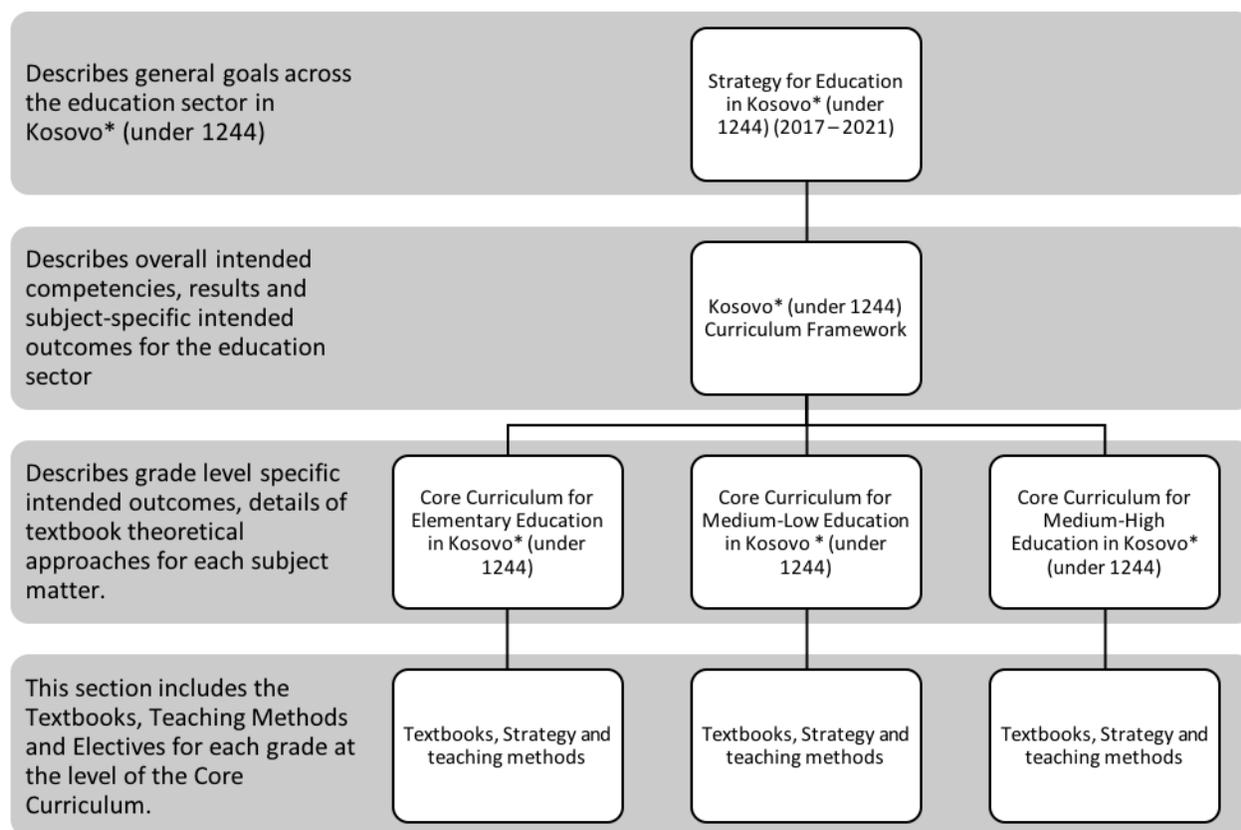
⁸¹**ibid as 1*

⁸²**ibid as 1*

⁸³**ibid as 1*

⁸⁴**ibid as 1*

8.2.ANEX II: EDUCATION LEVELS IN Kosovo*⁸⁵



Flow of policy documents outlining education approach and content at the pre-university level. Source: MEST and INDEP.

⁸⁵**ibid as 1*