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ANNUAL REPORT ON DISABILITY

Inclusive Kosovo



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DUKAGJIN KELMENDI & REFIK JAJAGA
Contributions: HANDIKOS, KAD and KAB

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*“Promoting inclusiveness and outreach of the consultative processes
for governance and public administration reforms in the disability
sector at Local, National and Regional Level”*

*Implemented by HANDIKOS, in partnership with Disability Partnership Finland, Threshold, Kosovo
Association of the Deaf and Kosovo Association of the Blind*

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ACRONYMS

CRPD – Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

DPF – Disability Partnership Finland

EU – European Union

HANDIKOS – Association of Paraplegics and Paralysis of Children of Kosovo

KAB – Kosovo Association of the Blind

KAD – Kosovo Association of the Deaf

KDF – Kosovo Disability Forum

MESPI – Ministry of Environment, Spatial Planning and Infrastructure

MESTI – Ministry of Education, Science, Technology and Innovation

MFA – Ministry of Foreign Affairs

MFLT – Ministry of Finance, Labour and Transfers

NIPHK – National Institute of Public Health of Kosovo

OGG – Office for Good Governance

OPD – Organization of People with Disabilities

PwD – People with Disabilities

RCLC – Resource Centre for Learning and Counselling

UCCCK – University Clinical Centre of Kosovo

UN – United Nations

UNICEF – United Nations Children's Fund

WHO – World Health Organization

Introduction

The Annual Report on Disability has been prepared in the framework of the project supported by the European Union Office in Kosovo "Promoting inclusiveness and outreach of the consultative processes for governance and public administration reforms in the disability sector at Local, National and Regional Level", now on "Inclusive Kosovo", which is implemented by HANDIKOS, in partnership with Disability Partnership Finland, Threshold, the Kosovo Association of the Deaf and the Kosovo Association of the Blind.

In reference to the specific expectations and objectives of the project, an Annual Report on Disability will be prepared and published for each year of the project, always based on the findings of the research report related to the studying of current legislation in Kosovo. The research report "Where does Kosovo stand?" was developed during 2019 and published at the beginning of 2020, and can be found in Albanian, English and Serbian on HANDIKOS' website: <http://www.handi-kos.org/>.

The purpose of publishing the research report was and still is, for organizations of people with disabilities together with public institutions to use the findings in order to advance the disability agenda and to ensure acceptable standards in addition to the requirements of the legislation and European policies. In this context during 2021, OPDs have intensified their actions in order to advance issues related to the areas identified in this report. Based on the findings of the research report, organizations of people with disabilities recommend that central and local level government institutions ensure the implementation of the current legal framework and the adoption of additional legislation on the rights of people with disabilities in accordance with international standards and European legislation on disability.

The Research Report on International Standards on Disability Issues "Where does Kosovo stand?", has identified ten (10) key areas included in the international standards in the field of disability which are derived from the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, however, the information in this report for 2021, is focused on the activities and actions undertaken by organizations of people with disabilities in 5 areas such as: Accessibility, Education, Health, Employment and Social Care, and Public Participation .

The Annual Report on Disability 2021 will cover the activities, actions and results achieved in the areas that are considered most important to advance the position of people with disabilities and respect of their rights, and this also means issues that are included in the National Disability Strategy as well as in the European Disability Strategy.

The data on the issues reported in this document are generated from the reports that partner organizations of the "Inclusive Kosovo" project submit on a monthly basis, the monitoring carried out by the project staff, the websites of partner organizations as well as from the meetings with various stakeholders.

Executive Summary

The EU-supported project "Inclusive Kosovo" aims to have an impact on the issue of disability in Kosovo with the expected tendency to achieve an "Inclusive society in which people with disabilities realize their full potential and live life with dignity as equal citizens (National Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2013-2023)". To achieve this impact, one of the specific objectives of the project is for "Government and Public Administration Reforms to be inclusive". Therefore, in order to achieve this result, the aim of the project, among other things is to increase the availability of data on disability issues so that public institutions and OPD can use reliable data as tools for planning, monitoring and involvement of specific disability initiatives.

Due to COVID 19 pandemic and in accordance with the measures of the Government of Kosovo, the Project "Inclusive Kosovo" and partner organizations of people with disabilities had to adapt the plans for the implementation of programs during 2021. This has led to some planned activities not being implemented or being postponed, while others or most of them to be implemented by improvising the means of their implementation. In Kosovo, OPDs have reacted in the areas of health, accessibility, education and socio-economic well-being for people with disabilities in order for government measures against COVID 19 to be inclusive and address the needs of the disability community as well. It should be noted that due to the COVID 19 pandemic, OPDs have carried out many interventions to support their members facing the difficulties caused by the pandemic, to inform them about virus prevention and government measures against the pandemic, therefore COVID 19, will be included in this report even though it is not one of the areas of the research report.

In the 2021 report, the interventions of the OPDs will be presented, which have been focused in 5 of the 10 areas identified in the research report, including as well the interventions related to the pandemic COVID 19, or as follows: (1) COVID 19, (2) Accessibility, (3) Education, (4) Health, (5) Employment and Social Care, and (6) Public Participation.

Despite the difficulties that have emerged during 2021 as a result of the pandemic, it can be undoubtedly concluded that the cooperation of organizations of people with disabilities with representatives of public and governmental institutions has never been better, at least regarding the achieved results, starting from the establishment of the "Disability Council" in June 2021, the Approval of the "Disability Action Plan 2021-2023" in September 2021 and finally, in December 2021, the "Decision of the Government of Kosovo to declare 2022, the year of people with disabilities ". All these results have been achieved in full cooperation and interaction with the Office for Good Governance (OGG).

Regarding the latter, the cooperation and interaction with the Office for Good Governance (OGG) has resulted in the drafting of the "Calendar of activities for 2022", a document drafted with the contribution of organizations of people with disabilities (HandiKOS ; Kosovo Association of the Deaf; Kosovo Association of the Blind; Down Syndrome Kosovo; Autism; and Kosovo Disability Forum) and representatives of relevant Ministries (Ministry of Health; Ministry of Finance, Labor and Transfers; Ministry of Education, Science, Technology and Innovation; Ministry of Environment, Spatial Planning and Infrastructure;

Ministry of Local Government Administration; Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports; Ministry of Justice); and Kosovo Police. To draft the "Calendar of Activities for 2022" the EU-supported project "Inclusive Kosovo" and the Office for Good Governance (OGG) have organized seven (7) one-day workshops in which representatives of OPDs and the above mentioned Ministries participated.

"Calendar of activities for 2022" has been approved as an annex document of the Decision of the Government of Kosovo declaring 2022, the year of persons with disabilities. Moreover, in this decision the Government of Kosovo requests from all Ministries mentioned above to implement the activities planned and presented in this document.

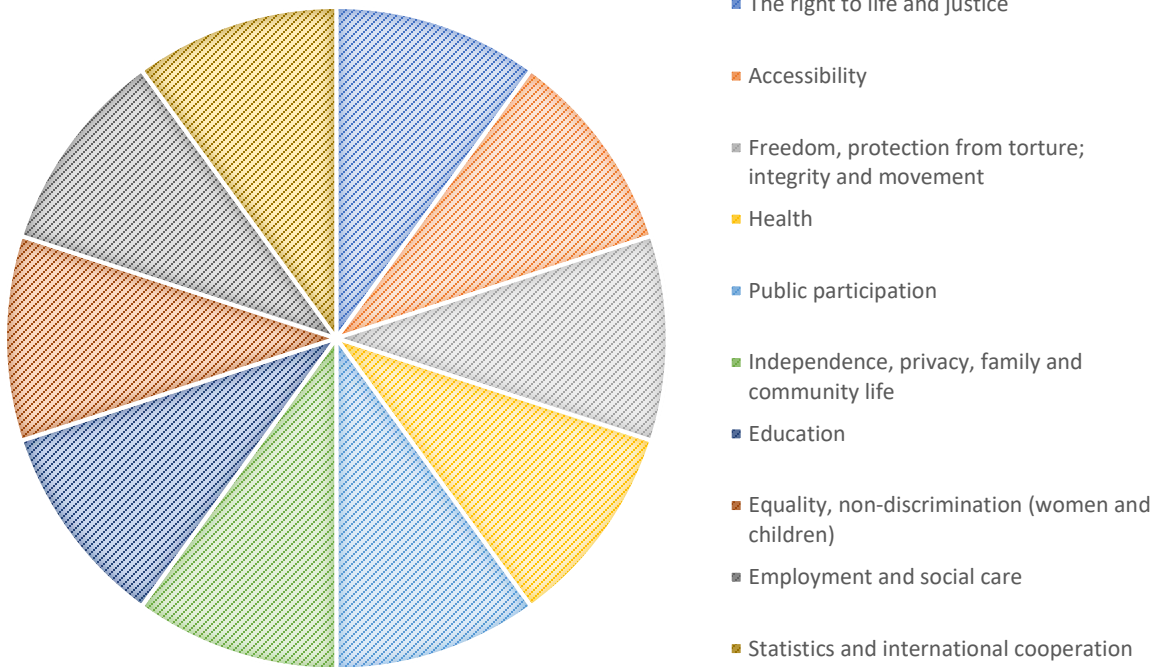
Another achievement during 2021 which is of great importance for the developments in the field of disability in Kosovo, and is also a result of the close cooperation of OPDs with OGG, is the **establishment of the Disability Council**. The decision of the Government of Kosovo for the establishment of this Council was brought on June 26, 2021 as an advisory and guiding body on setting priorities and policies in the field of Disability, a body which can initiate and take an active part in the design and development of new policies related to disability issues and to propose recommendations to the Government of the Republic of Kosovo. According to the decision of the Government, the Chair of the Council is the Deputy Prime Minister of Kosovo, Mrs. Emilija Rexhepi; Co-Chair is the President of the Kosovo Disability Forum, Mr. Bujar Kadriu; Deputy Chairman is the Director of the Office for Good Governance, Mr. Habit Hajredini; and members are Deputy Ministers (Ministry of Finance, Labor and Transfers; Ministry of Education, Science, Technology and Innovation; Ministry of Health; Ministry of Local Government Administration; and Ministry of Environment, Spatial Planning and Infrastructure) as well as heads of OPDs (HandiKOS; Handicap Kosovo, Kosovo Association of the Deaf; Kosovo Association of the Blind; Down Syndrome Kosovo and the Autism Association).

On September 22nd, 2021, although it had taken a lot of time due to procedures within the relevant bodies for the approval of strategies and work plans, the Government of Kosovo has taken a decision approving the "**Action Plan for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in the Republic of Kosovo 2021-2023**" in the framework of the National Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in the Republic of Kosovo 2013-2023. The same decision obliges all responsible institutions to implement the Action Plan and the Office for Good Governance to coordinate and monitor the implementation of the plan. This important document in the field of disability is also a product of joint work between OPDs and relevant Ministries and the entire drafting process was carried out by the Office for Good Governance with the support of the Project "Inclusive Kosovo" which is funded by EU.

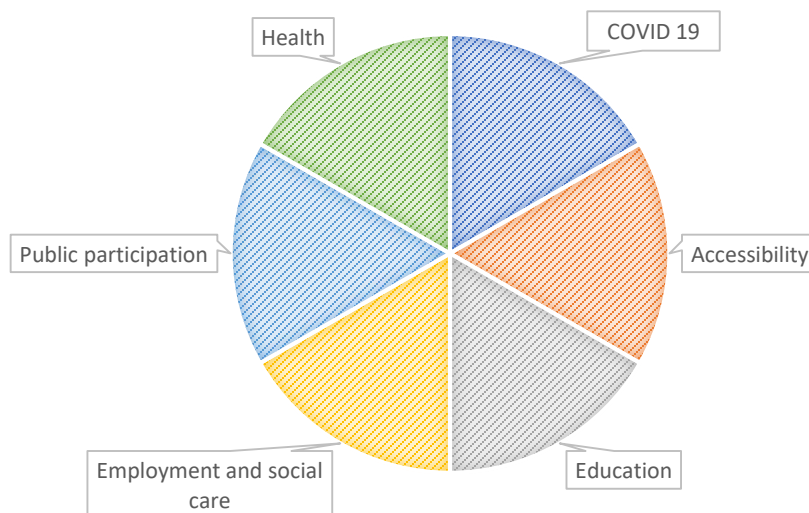
Although during 2021, all OPDs have participated in meetings and workshops with MFLT and have contributed to the final draft of "**Inclusive Law on Disability**", the same one hasn't been submitted yet to Assembly of Kosovo, mainly due to procedural reasons. Therefore, considering the importance, the areas that it is expected to regulate as well as the needs that this law will cover, its approval remains one of the key issues for which OPDs will advocate during 2022.

Research standards

RESEARCH AREAS



AREAS OF INTERVENTION-2021



Intervention Areas and Activities

The following data on this report are presented more as a description of the implemented activities or achieved results, thus they do not contain qualitative data of law enforcement in practice or detailed analysis regarding their impact on the lives of people with disabilities. A detailed report on the implementation of current legislation could provide us with qualitative data on the practical implementation of these standards and the impact they have on the lives of people with disabilities. Qualitative research in this context will be conducted in the upcoming years.

1. COVID 19

During 2021, the COVID-19 pandemic has further exacerbated social inequalities and created additional barriers for people with disabilities, especially when it comes to access in health care services, employment and in particular the regular attendance of the education program for children with disabilities.

According to the current laws of Kosovo on the rights of persons with disabilities, the latter persons with disabilities must have access to health care, education and employment, therefore these rights, guaranteed by current laws must be protected and adapted even during periods of emergencies such as the crisis caused by the pandemic related to the COVID 19. Restriction or denial of these rights is in direct conflict with the Anti-Discrimination Law contained within the Constitution of the Republic of Kosovo, which states that all persons have the right to equal rights, inter alia, for health care, education and employment. Restricting or denying these rights is also in direct conflict with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) as well as with EU legislation and standards to which Kosovo intends to accede.

All research shows that, even when the world is not experiencing a global pandemic, people with disabilities are in greater need of health care and are more likely to experience a deterioration of their health if there is a lack of health care services or they are not provided properly and in sufficient quantities. The same applies to the education of children with disabilities, where even in the circumstances when there were no protective measures related to the pandemic they faced various difficulties and obstacles to the regular attendance of the school curriculum. With the application of anti-COVID 19 measures, the difficulties were multiplied, starting from transportation to schools, communication and access to information, assistance during the teaching process, etc. The crisis situation created by the pandemic also had a negative effect on the employment of people with disabilities. The difficulties that the pandemic created for the country's economy resulted in the employment of people with disabilities being placed in the background, thus leading to non-implementation of the employment law and the employment quota of persons with disabilities arising from this law.

Organizations that represent people with disabilities in Kosovo during 2021 have advocated by appealing to public institutions for the needs of people with disabilities not to be ignored during the pandemic, while at the same time reminding them to consult and include OPDs in all plans and policies related to the current crisis caused by the pandemic, and this, not only in order to present the needs and difficulties faced by people with disabilities but also to offer their proposals for solving these difficulties and their support toward the realization of these proposals.

The activities of OPDs related to adequate information as well as awareness raising of their members i adequate and timely information aiming to raise the awareness of their members have continued throughout 2021, which initially were related to the protection against COVID 19 and then also to the instructions for the process of vaccination and their involvement in this process.

During 2021, organizations of persons with disabilities which also provide direct services for their members such as HandiKOS, the Kosovo Association of the Deaf and the Kosovo Association of the Blind, have worked on the development and implementation of plans for continuity of services, taking measures to reduce potential exposure of beneficiaries to COVID-19 while receiving those services and providing ongoing support to persons with disabilities and their families.

HANDIKOS, during certain periods of time when the Government measures against COVID 19 restricted free movement and physical contact, continued to support people with disabilities virtually through social media and other online platforms, while, when the measures were relaxed, HANDIKOS, by adapting working conditions and increasing protection measures, provided services with physical presence for people with disabilities especially services related to the physical and psycho-social rehabilitation of children with disabilities, considered more than necessary for their health. On the other hand, despite all the difficulties experienced during 2021, HANDIKOS has continuously addressed the needs of people with disabilities regarding various assistive devices. Furthermore, HANDIKOS has also supported public institutions with assistive devices, e.g. the University Clinical Centre of Kosovo (UCCK), which received a donation of 40 assistive devices from HANDIKOS, such as wheelchairs, walkers and crutches, which will serve the clinic to address the needs of citizens receiving services; as well as the vaccination centre in Prishtina which received 3 wheelchairs as a donation from HANDIKOS.

The Kosovo Association of the Deaf during 2021 took numerous actions to ensure that its members are well informed by providing access to the latest information through sign language. With the support of the Government of Kosovo, the interpretation of sign language was provided at press conferences organized by the Ministry of Health as well as on public television news. KAD with the support of the Kosovo Disability Forum (KDF) organized numerous information sessions related to COVID 19 as well as activities with deaf children through the online platform. Another result and success of the work of the KAD during 2021 is the finalization of the "Electronic Dictionary of Sign Language" which can now be found on the website www.gishk.org.

The Kosovo Association of the Blind, also in an effort to convey the necessary information to its members, developed and used the approach of informing bling people through social media about all measures related to the pandemic. Also, KAB constantly gave their support so that the educational process for blind children would not be interrupted.

The Kosovo Disability Forum together with the DPOs have organized numerous meetings with MEST, UNICEF and other international organizations to support the educational process for children with disabilities.

During this year, when it comes to the protection and rights of people with disabilities and the commitment of OPDs to promote, protect and ensure the full and equal respect of the human rights for people with disabilities, regardless of the crisis caused by the pandemic, significant results have been achieved, starting with the establishment of the "Disability Council" in July 2021, the Approval of the "Disability Action Plan 2021- 2023 "in September 2021 and finally, in December 2021, the decision of the

Government of Kosovo to declare 2022, as “The year of people with disabilities”. Regarding the latter, for several months in a row, OPDs in cooperation with the Office for Good Governance / Office of the Prime Minister have worked with representatives of relevant Ministries in drafting a calendar of activities that are expected to take place during the year 2022, considered as very important for advancing the position of people with disabilities in Kosovo. The calendar of activities for 2022, finalized by all stakeholders was approved as an annex to the decision of the Government of Kosovo to declare 2022 - the year of people with disabilities.

2. Accessibility

The research¹, report has found that the accessibility is among the most important categories and standards, which is included only 6.77% in the legislation of Kosovo, whereas it is partially addressed 79.67%, and 13.55% of the standards are missing or not included at all in the legislation of Kosovo.

Accessibility is a precondition for creating a society that aims to provide equal opportunities for all. According to research conducted by organizations of people with disabilities, there are numerous barriers in our country that prevent people with disabilities to enjoy equal opportunities as other citizens; therefore in order to facilitate communication, access to information, physical environment, and transport, OPDs during 2021 have been committed toward advancing the position of their community regarding the required standards for free accessibility without obstacles, through advocacy, lobbying, meetings and cooperation with public and private institutions.

These commitments include the meeting of the Head of HandiKOS with the Deputy Minister of Environment, Spatial Planning and Infrastructure, Mr. Hysen Durmishi, during which the implementation of Administrative Instruction 33/2007 on the technical conditions of construction facilities for access of persons with disabilities was discussed and requested, while the meeting was closed with the commitment of Deputy Minister for sending a letter to all municipalities of Kosovo requesting the implementation of this Instruction.

To enable the free movement and independence of people with disabilities, HANDIKOS during 2021 has continued to distribute wheelchairs, walkers, crutches and other assistive devices. With the same purpose, HandiKOS during this year has supported public institutions, e.g. the donation of 40 assistive devices to UCCK, as well as the donation of 3 wheelchairs for the vaccination centre in Prishtina.

Meetings with the main topic of accessibility were also conducted by KAD, which were held with various institutions where the needs of the deaf community for equal access to information through sign language were discussed. As a result of these meetings, all conferences of the Government of Kosovo now on have a sign language interpreter which will enable the proper information for the deaf community. In addition, during 2021, the Kosovar Association of the Deaf has achieved a great success by finalizing the "Electronic Dictionary of Sign Language" which is published on the website www.gishk.org. This dictionary enables deaf people to learn certain signs that are used by their community but at the same time enables other citizens to learn the signs in order to establish communication with deaf people.

During 2021, the main focus of KAB was creating a vocal synthesis in the Albanian language, and on this issue meetings with the Minister of Education of Kosovo were held who committed that in cooperation

¹Rozafa Basha and Hajrulla Çeku/ National Standards on Disability Issues “Where does Kosovo stand?” Prishtina, March 2020

with the Minister of Education of Albania will find means of fulfilling this request, which by the community of the blind is considered as a tool which would greatly help their access to information and communication. The creation of the Vocal Synthesis in the Albanian language would enable the blind persons of the Albanian speaking community to communicate, would give them access to information, various systems, internet and would also create mitigations in the system of education and employment of the blind persons. The latest information from the Kosovo Association of the Blind tells us that as a result of the meetings with affiliated organizations, the possibilities of creating an Albanian vocal synthesis in accordance with relevant institutions from North Macedonia, have been increased.

In order to eliminate barriers and create opportunities for free access, organizations of people with disabilities in cooperation with the Office for Good Governance and with the support of the EU-supported project "Inclusive Kosovo", during 2021 within actions for drafting the "Calendar of Activities for 2022" have organized workshops with representatives from the Ministry of Environment, Spatial Planning and Infrastructure in which were discussed and then planned concrete actions which this Ministry will take during 2022 to enable free access to physical facilities, transport, information and communication, including information and communication technologies and systems. In addition, it is worth mentioning the request of the OPDs for AI 33/2007 to be transformed into a law which would regulate the access of people with disabilities. (Other details regarding the planned actions of this Ministry can be found in Annex 1 of this document Table of "Calendar of Activities for 2022").

For the purpose of this report, the following obligations were included:

Research areas	Area of intervention during 2021	Activities/Type of intervention
Equal access to physical environment, transport, ICT and other facilities and services.	Applied	Meetings with Minister of MESPI, Minister of MESTI as well as the workshop with representatives of OPDs and MESPI.
Minimal standards and accessibility instructions.	Applied	The request for implementation of Administrative Instruction 33/2007. Interpretation in sign language in conferences organized by the Government.
Private companies remove barriers and do not impose new ones.	N/A	
Accessibility training for relevant stakeholders.	N/A	Planned within the "Inclusive Kosovo" project- activity of 2022.
Ways of facilitating communication through Braille and other guidelines (sign language interpreters).	Applied	Meetings regarding the publication of official documents in Braille. Publication of the electronic sign language dictionary.
Access to information, systems, internet.	Applied	Meetings regarding the finalization of the draft agreement for the creation of the vocal synthesis in the Albanian language between the two ministries,

		Kosovo and Albania. Interpretation services for public institutions.
Accessibility requirements are an integral part of construction projects from the design stage.	Applied	The meeting with the minister of MESPI, where in which he committed to send the request for implementation of Administrative Instruction 33/2007 to all municipalities.
Organizations of persons with disabilities are consulted on standards and norms of accessibility.	Applied	Workshop with MESPI representatives in which actions for accessibility are planned.
Media services are accessible to people with disabilities	Applied	Only RTK provides information on sign language (dictionary).

3. Education

According to the findings from the research report "Where does Kosovo stand?", education is among the categories with moderate results. About 42% of standards for disability are included in Kosovo legislation, 50% of standards are partially addressed, and only 8.33% of standards are missing or not addressed at all.

Aiming the realization of the right for inclusive education; individual support for pupils/students with disabilities; improving students' access to schools; training of teachers and other professionals as well as professional training of teachers, organizations of people with disabilities during interventions of 2021, have organized continuous meetings with the Ministry of Education, Science, Technology and Innovation, numerous workshops with educational staff as well as trainings with school teachers who work with students with disabilities.

In this regard, the Kosovo Association of the Blind, within the project "Inclusion of blind children in preschool education in Kosovo", supported by the "Swiss Cooperation" office in Kosovo, has organized a number of workshops with school staff and directors of preschool institutions in Kosovo Municipalities. Also, KAB has organized workshops on the topic "Raising the awareness and knowledge about the inclusion of children in education", with professional education staff and parents of blind children.

Despite the successes achieved in the field of education and the usage of sign language, the Kosovo Association of the Deaf even during 2021 were committed with all their potential to improve the quality of education for deaf students. In this regard, there are still challenges which in cooperation with MESTI are intended to be addressed in the future. As immediate requests remain the increase of the number of assistants employed in schools where students with disabilities attend classes and the employment of sign language assistants in the Resource Center "Mother Teresa" in Prizren, to support children with hearing impairments during the educational process. The publication of the first electronic dictionary of the kosovar sign language, which is mentioned above in this report as a great achievement of KAD, will provide a great contribution towards improving the quality of education for deaf children. In improving education and the use of sign language, the Kosovo Association of the Deaf has remarkable and ongoing support from the Finland Association of the Deaf (FAD) and from experts of this association.

Aiming inclusion in education and creation of conditions for children with disabilities in order to be included in the education system without obstacles and thus receive quality education, organizations of

people with disabilities in cooperation with the Office for Good Governance and support from the EU-supported project "Inclusive Kosovo", during 2021 within the actions for drafting "Calendar of Activities for 2022" have organized workshops with representatives from MESPI in which concrete actions that the Ministry will undertake during 2022 were discussed and then also planned. In this regard, some of the main commitments of MESTI, should be mentioned, such as: (1) In 10 primary and lower secondary schools in 10 municipalities and 5 upper secondary schools in 5 municipalities, which do not have physical access for children/students with disabilities access ramps will be built, (2) Capacity building for Braille teaching and "Orientation & Mobility" for blind children in schools, (3) The process for the creation of Vocal Synthesis in the albanian language will be initiated, (4) The number of assistants in schools will be increased (100 employed assistants) as well as three three sign language assistants will be employed in the Resource Center "Mother Teresa" in Prizren, (5) The accreditation of the qualification (level 5) for Sign Language Interpreter will be done, as well as many other commitments which are presented in detail in the "Calendar of activities for 2022" and which will surely have a positive impact in the inclusion of children with disabilities in education (See Annex 1).

For the purpose of this report, the following obligations were included:

Research areas	Area of intervention during 2021	Activities/Type of intervention
The right for inclusive education	Applied	Current legislation as well as ongoing meetings, workshops and trainings with MESTI and educational professionals which aim the implementation of current laws.
Prevention of the denial of the right to education on the basis of ability	Applied	Awareness raising regarding the implementation of current legislation on inclusive education.
Pupils with disabilities attend regular classes in school	Applied	Meetings with MESTI aiming to create the conditions for children with disabilities to attend regular classes in school.
Obligations of schools to improve accessibility for pupils with disabilities	Applied	Meetings and the workshop of OPDs with MESTI.
Prevention of discrimination of girls with disabilities in access to education.	N/A	
Individual support for pupils and students	Applied	Publication of the Electronic Sign Language Dictionary. Initiation of the creation of vocal synthesis in the albanian language.
Hiring teachers (including those with disabilities) who are fluent in sign language and Braille.	Applied	MESTI's commitment to hiring assistants who are fluent in sign language. * The employment of assistants is in process.
Training of teachers and other professionals for inclusive education	Applied	Continuous trainings by OPDs for the educational staff during which the

		capacities of the professional staff of MESTI have been increased.
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4. Health

Health is among the categories with the largest number of international obligations (standards) included in the legislation of Kosovo (two thirds, 66.66%):

According to the current legislation in Kosovo, every person has the right to equal health treatment, and this means not only the treatment by health personnel but also the facilitation of access to health services. Such services should include medical and nursing services in hospital, outpatient or community-based care, and specialized occupational health care.

In the absence provision of community services for people with disabilities, organizations such as HandiKOS provide primary physical rehabilitation and psycho-social rehabilitation services. At the same time, also due to the lack of provision of services by state institutions, HandiKOS covers the needs of persons with disabilities with assistive devices (wheelchairs, walkers, crutches, etc.). In order to enable the addressing of the needs of people with disabilities for assistive devices and rehabilitation, the director of HandiKOS has contributed to the drafting of the Administrative Instruction, a sub-legal act which aims to regulate in an institutional way the addressing of the needs for assistive devices and rehabilitation for people with disabilities. The instruction has been finalized and submitted to the Government of Kosovo for approval.

Although physical access to health facilities exists, OPDs have identified other obstacles which are related to the provision of quality health services, e.g. examination beds are not suitable for the examination of women with disabilities and the lack of information in sign language when providing health services.

In order to improve health services for people with disabilities, OPDs in cooperation with the OGG and supported by the EU project "Inclusive Kosovo", during 2021 have organized workshops with representatives of the Ministry of Health to draft the Calendar of Activities for 2022 in which concrete actions that will be implemented by this ministry were planned. The actions that this ministry is committed to carry out are related to the early identification of disability, quality services to minimize and prevent the deterioration of disability, information in sign language, and many others which in detail can be found in Annex 1., of this document- the table of "Calendar of activities for 2022".

For the purpose of this report, the following obligations were included:

Research areas	Area of intervention during 2021	Activities/Type of intervention
Functional health facilities and services with appropriate programs and services for the treatment of persons with disabilities.	Applied	The creation of a "Spinal Unit" has been requested - included in the action plan and calendar of activities.
Accessible and non-discriminatory health facilities and services for disadvantaged groups.	Applied	Health facilities and services in public sector are accessible.

Standards related to all the principles of Article 25 (provision of adequate and accessible health services for people with disabilities).	Applied	Information on sign language on health facilities has been requested.
Health services for people with disabilities are affordable.	Applied	PWDs are exempt from paying for health services.
Health services for people with disabilities are provided on ethical principles and with full respect for the culture of the individual, nations and communities, gender and others.	N/A	Regulations exist but OPDs have not done any research on whether they are implemented by medical professionals.
Health services for people with disabilities are provided with adequate scientific and medical quality, as well as in appropriate quantities.	N/A	
Developing rehabilitation programs for all disability groups.	Applied	In the process of approval of the AI for providing rehabilitation for people with disabilities as well as of the Comprehensive Law.
All people with disabilities in need for should have access to rehabilitation services.	Applied	AI on providing rehabilitation for people with disabilities and the Comprehensive Law.
People with disabilities and their families participate in the development and organization of rehabilitation programs and services.	Applied	OPDs which provide services/ Services of HandiKOS related to primary physical rehabilitation.
Rehabilitation services are provided in the local community where the person with disabilities lives.	Applied	OPDs which provide services/ Services of HandiKOS related to primary physical rehabilitation.
Development and evaluation of rehabilitation programs takes into account the expertise provided by organizations of persons with disabilities.	N/a	N/a

5. Employment and social care

Employment and social care was evaluated through obligations (standards) where slightly more than a third (38.88%) of them are included in Kosovo legislation, 44.45% are partially addressed while 16.66% are missing or not addressed at all.

Implementation of the Law and Bylaws on Vocational Training, Re-training and Employment of people with disabilities has been the main focus for advocacy by OPs during 2021. OPDs have continuously requested from local institutions, through meetings, media and social networks, law enforcement and the implementation of guarantees provided by law. During their work, the organizations of people with disabilities have realized that apart from the lack of implementation of the law by the private sector, the same one isn't being implemented to a large extent and over the years also by public institutions which should serve as example in respecting the law. On the other hand, as a good example in terms of compliance with the Law on Employment by state institutions is the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Minister Mrs. Donika Gërvalla, who on her own initiative has requested a meeting with the representatives of OPDs to review the possibilities of cooperation in order for this Ministry to realize its legal obligation regarding the fulfilment of the employment quota for people with disabilities in the ministry led by her. Representatives of OPDs at the request of the MFA have sent the list of related occupations or positions in which people with disabilities could be employed. According to information from OPDs, after the completion of internal procedures for job structuring, the MFA will announce a public vacancy for the purpose of employing people with disabilities.

At the same time, work has been done on finding secondary alternatives for the employment of people with disabilities, e.g. HANDIKOS during 2021 has implemented the project funded by "Swiss Cooperation" office in Kosovo which through the production of textile tote-bags aims to replace the use of plastic bags, thus promoting environmental protection but at the same time, all employees were people with disabilities who through this project managed to generate their income.

From the data received from the organizations of people with disabilities which are partners of the Project "Inclusive Kosovo", as non-confirmed data officially, it results that the largest number of people with disabilities who are employed belong to the community of the deaf, while the employment of the blind and those with physical disabilities remains a challenge.

Regarding Social Care, during 2021 MFLT and OPDs have worked on bylaws to support various categories of disability, therefore during 2022 is expected (1) The approval and implementation of the Administrative Instruction which regulates residential housing of adults with intellectual disabilities, and (2) drafting of Administrative Instruction on rules and procedures to cover the costs of education and health for children with disabilities. This instruction will be drafted according to Law 06 / L -084 on Child Protection.

In the workshop related to the drafting of the calendar of activities for 2022, with representatives of MFLT and organizations of people with disabilities in cooperation with the Office for Good Governance and supported by the EU-supported project "Inclusive Kosovo", this ministry informed that in their short-term plans is the construction of two community-based houses, where one will be a shelter for adults with intellectual disabilities and the other for abandoned children with disabilities. In the same workshop, the MFLT committed to continue with public calls for financial support to licensed NGOs that provide social services to people with disabilities. (Details of activities and other actions that MFPT is committed to carry out are presented in Table 1 Annex "Calendar of Activities for 2022").

For the purpose of this report, the following obligations were included:

Research areas	Area of intervention during 2021	Activities/Type of intervention
The right to earn a living from a job that provides access to people with disabilities.	Applied	Advocacy for the Implementation of the Law on Vocational Training, Re-training and Employment of People with Disabilities.
Preventing the discrimination in employment on the basis of disability.	Applied	Advocacy for the Implementation of the Law on Vocational Training, Re-training and Employment of People with Disabilities.
Equal opportunities in working conditions, payment, career and protection from harassment.	Applied	Advocacy for the Implementation of the Law on Vocational Training, Re-training and Employment of People with Disabilities.
Effective access of people with disabilities to vocational education programs, employment opportunities and career development.	Applied	Proposals sent by OPDs regarding the modifications of VTC programs for the training of people with disabilities for work.
Employment of people with disabilities in the public and private sector.	Applied	Advocacy for the Implementation of the Law on Vocational Training, Re-training and Employment of People with Disabilities.
Protection of people with disabilities from forced labor.	N/A	
Ensuring an adequate standard of living for people with disabilities and their families (food, clothing, housing).	N/A	
Equal access for people with disabilities to drinking water services.	N/A	
Equal access of people with disabilities, especially women, girls and the elderly with disabilities, to social care and poverty alleviation programs.	N/A	
Financial support and other services for people with disabilities and poor families.	Applied	Work on Comprehensive Law and advocacy for services for the blind.
Access of people with disabilities to social shelter programs.	Applied	Drafting of Administrative Instruction by MFLT and OPDs regarding the housing/shelter of people with intellectual disabilities.
Equal access of people with disabilities to pension programs and benefits.	Applied	Meetings with MFPT regarding pensions of people with disabilities, especially during the pandemic.

6. Public participation

Public participation remains among the most challenging categories of disability standards, with only 20% of the following obligations included in Kosovo legislation, 20% of standards partially addressed, and 60% of standards missing or not addressed at all.

Organizations of people with disabilities have consistently advocated for participation in political and public life on an equal basis with others and for full and non-discriminatory participation in public affairs. With reference to this right, in the local elections which were held during 2021, 11 people with disabilities were candidates for Municipal Assemblies. This number makes us believe that even better conditions will be created for participation in public and political life and as a result the number of people with disabilities in the next elections will increase.

OPDs, during 2021, have organized various events to mark the International White Cane Week and the Week of the Deaf, followed by conferences and meetings with representatives of institutions. Through awareness raising activities, on 1st of March 2021, the International Day of Wheelchair Users was marked, whereas on 3rd of December 2021 in cooperation with the Office for Good Governance (OGG) a conference was organized in which the decision of the Government of Kosovo to declare 2022 the year of people with disabilities was presented. Also, other activities were organized by OPDs in order to mark 10th of December- International Human Rights Day. Through these organizations, messages on the advancement of the rights of people with disabilities, law enforcement, accessibility and inclusiveness were conveyed. All these events have been broadcast in public by visual, electronic and social media.

For the purpose of this report, the following obligations were included:

Research areas	Area of intervention during 2021	Activities/Type of intervention
People with disabilities are part of political and public life on an equal basis with others (the right to vote and to stand for election)	Applied	Participation of 11 people with disabilities in the local elections of 2021.
People with disabilities enjoy a supportive environment for full and non-discriminatory participation in public affairs.	Applied	Advocacy for the removal of physical barriers to participation in public life.
Access of people with disabilities to cultural material.	Applied	Included in the Calendar of activities for year 2022.
Access of people with disabilities to television programs, movies, theater and other cultural activities.	Applied	TV presence, informative shows, sports activities. Interpretation of news in sign language.
Access of people with disabilities to cultural heritage institutions and monuments.	Applied	Included in the Calendar of activities for year 2022.

Finalization of interventions and the realization of rights from these areas, as well as advocacy and intervention for other areas will be addressed during the upcoming years.

7. Other developments

During April 2021, HandiKOS organized the "say no to plastic bags" campaign, aiming to promote the use of reusable, environmentally friendly bags, manufactured by people with disabilities, by reducing the use of disposable plastic bags and plastic waste. This campaign was organized by HandiKOS in cooperation with the NGO "Balkan Forum" and was broadcast on all public television stations as well as on electronic and social media.

During August 2021 a workshop regarding the development of the first draft of the Calendar of Activities for 2022 was held with OPDs, then, during September and October 2021 in cooperation with the OGG 6 workshops with DPOs and relevant Ministries were organized in order to finalize the second draft of the calendar of activities for 2022.

During October and November 2021, the recording of the video which promotes the rights of people with disabilities was finalized. The video was published on 3rd of December, 2021 and within it messages of support for disability were given by the President of Kosovo- Mrs. Vjosa Osmani, Chairman of the Assembly of Kosovo- Mr. Glauk Konjufca, Prime Minister of Kosovo- Mr. Albin Kurti and the EU Ambassador to Kosovo- Mr. Thomas Szunyog. The video was broadcast by all TV stations with National and Local frequencies as well as by the social network of HandiKOS.

Recommendations for 2022

1. Central and local level institutions should involve OPDs in all stages of the process of planning, designing, implementing and monitoring actions for overall recovery from the crisis created by COVID 19, including the provision of essential services to people with disabilities.
2. OPDs and the Office for Good Governance (OGG) to cooperate in the process of incorporating the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities into the Constitution of Kosovo.
3. Advocate for public institutions to implement the law on employment of people with disabilities, including compliance with the quota for the number of employees with disabilities (50 = 1).
4. Ministries, central and local institutions to ensure full implementation of current legislation in Kosovo regarding access, including bylaws such as Administrative Instruction 33/2007.
 - 4.1 Monitoring the observance of the fulfillment of criteria for access to all contracts related to public procurement. Relevant municipal directorates to monitor the implementation of the criteria of Administrative Instruction 33/2007, for physical access when issuing construction permits to construction companies.
 - 4.2 Central and local institutions to ensure the full implementation of Regulation NRC no. 15/2014 on the Provision of Services in Sign Language in the Republic of Kosovo, which was approved at the 197th meeting of the Government of Kosovo, in order for deaf persons to have full access to information and services.
 - 4.3 MESTI to ensure the development and implementation of vocal synthesis in the albanian language for the blind so that this community has access to information, education and services.
5. Educational Institutions to provide adequate programs and access for the inclusion of all children with disabilities in the regular educational process at all levels.

- 5.1 MESTI to provide teachers/assistants for all types of disability.
- 6. MFLT to ensure the establishment of mechanisms for the implementation of the Law on Vocational Training, Re-training and Employment of People with Disabilities.
 - 6.1 MFLT to ensure the inclusion of the Comprehensive Law in the legislative program for 2022.
- 7. To establish cooperation agreements with public media broadcasters to reserve time with a focus on disability.
 - 7.1 To increase the capacities and knowledge of journalists on disability issues.
- 8. Kosovo institutions to provide financial and logistical support for the membership and participation of OPDs in the networks of international disability organizations.
- 9. The Office for Good Governance to organize scheduled and timely meetings of the Disability Council.
 - 9.1. The Office for Good Governance in cooperation with OPDs to monitor and support the full implementation of the National Action Plan for People with Disabilities 2021-2023.
 - 9.2. The Office for Good Governance in cooperation with DPOs to monitor and support the full implementation of the Calendar of Activities for 2022.

Annex 1. Table of "Calendar of Activities for the year 2021".

ACTIVITIES 2022			
A/A	Period	Activity	Responsibility
Component 1 – HEALTH			
1.1.	January - December 2022	Update the list of essential medicines with the needs proposed by the Disabled People Organizations (DPO's).	Ministry of Health and DPO's
1.2.	January - December 2022	At the entrances (receptions) of health institutions (MFMC - Main Centers of Family Medicine and Emergencies in regional hospitals and UCCK are placed monitors who provide information in sign language	Ministry of Health and Kosovo Association of Deaf.
1.2.1	January - December 2022	For the deaf and provide phone number which through "tablet phones "offers" online sign language interpretation services in cases where deaf people attend the health institutions.	Ministry of Health and Kosovo Association of Deaf.
1.3.	January - December 2022	Neonatology/Gynaecology wards at UCCK and all Regional Hospitals are equipped with devices that enable early identification of hearing impairments/hearing loss.	Ministry of Health
1.4.	January - December 2022	Gynaecology wards at UCCK and regional hospitals are equipped with hydraulic beds for Gynaecological and Obstetric examinations of women with disabilities.	Ministry of Health
1.5.	January - December 2022	Establish a working group, consisting of line ministries (respectively MoH, MEST and MFLT), representatives of PWD associations and other interest groups to create a formula that would enable the financing and extension of ongoing services for people with disabilities.	Ministry of Health
Component – EDUCATION			
2.1	3 rd December 2022	In order to raise awareness of the rights of persons with disabilities, the first school hour on 3 December (International Day of Persons with Disabilities), students in primary and lower secondary education will be informed about disability and the situation of persons with disabilities in Kosovo.	MEST, MDE, Schools
2.2	January - December 2022	Building access in 10 primary and lower secondary schools and 5 higher secondary schools in 15.	MEST, MDE,
2.3	January - December 2022	Employment of two teachers for Braille writing and Orientation & Mobility in the schools.	MEST
2.4	January - December 2022	Initiates the process for the creation of Vocal Synthesis in the Albanian Language	MEST

2.5.	January - December 2022	Accreditation of the Braille program and provision of training for teachers	MEST, KAD, KAA, Resource Center 'Mother Theresa'
2.6.	January - December 2022	Employment of 100 assistants in the schools for children with disabilities. Hiring of 3 (three) sign language assistants at the "Mother Teresa" Resource Center in Prizren, to support children with hearing impairments.	MEST, MDE, Resource Centers
2.7.	June – August 2022	Development of a plan for the provision of non-formal education in Resource Centers for children and young people with disabilities.	MEST, Resource Centers, DPO's.
2.8.	January - December 2022	Functionalization and capacity building of Pedagogical Assessment Teams in municipalities.	MEST, Resource Centers, DPO's, Council of Europe.
2.9..	January - December 2022	Develop instruments for identifying and assessing learning difficulties by school psychologists.	MEST, Faculty of Pedagogy (UP) MDE, DPO's, Council of Europe.
2.10.	January - December 2022	Accreditation of sign language as a second mother tongue.	MEST, KAD, Resource Center "Mother Theresa" Council of Europe
2.11.	January - December 2022	Accreditation of the qualification (level 5) for the Sign Language Interpreters,	MEST, Council of Europe
2.12.	January - December 2022	Training of principals and teachers of higher secondary schools on the access and education of students with disabilities.	MEST, MDE, Schools, Council of Europe
2.13.	January - December 2022	Teacher training of 25 schools for access and education of students with disabilities.	MEST, MDE, Schools, Council of Europe
Component 3 – EMPLOYMENT			
3.1.	January - December 2022	Decision of the Prime Minister which based on the law on Training, Rehabilitation and Employment of Persons with Disabilities obliges institutions that during 2022 to meet the quota for employment of people with disabilities.	Prime-minister's Office
3.2.	January - December 2022	The labour inspectorate is obliged to inspect the implementation of the law by the institutions for employment of PWDs.	Ministry of Finances, Labour and Transfers
Component 4 – ACCESSIBILITY			
4.1.1	January - December 2022	To regulate the physical access to the facilities / centers for driver's license (buildings where exams are organized to be issued for the driver's license);	MESPI
4.1.2	January - December 2022	Within the driving schools, there should be an accessible vehicle (with auxiliary equipment for driving) for people with disabilities in all municipalities of the Republic of Kosovo;	Working group for drafting the AO for licensing driving-schools.

4.2.1	January - December 2022	To supply Prishtina Airport with standard wheelchairs used inside the aircraft for accommodation and relocation of persons with disabilities.	Civil Aviation Department
4.2.2	January - December 2022	The passenger information office should be equipped with a tablet (I-Pad) for communication with the sign language interpreter	Civil Aviation Department
4.3.	January - December 2022	Inter-urban traffic, buses, provide accessibility (adapt buses with ramps / slopes, audio information) for Persons with Disabilities;	MESPI
4.4.	January - December 2022	In the licensing process to include the criteria for taxi operators to possess at least one accessible vehicle (with ramp/slope) which enables the transport of persons with disabilities;	MESPI
4.5.	January - December 2022	In 5 Municipalities of Kosovo will be identified obstacles/barriers and assess the accessibility of an open road/environment or square, with design and cost;	MESPI
4.6.	January - December 2022	Development of visual and auditory information signals in order to guide the person with intellectual disabilities and autism.	MESPI
Component 5 – SOCIAL WELFARE			
5.1.	January - December 2022	The Law on Customs and Excise Code of Kosovo, to include care-givers of children and adults with disabilities who do not have the opportunity to drive a car and to enable you to be exempt from imports and excise for cars for personal needs;	Ministry of Finances, Labour and Transfers
5.2.	January - December 2022	Exemption from customs and excise also for vehicles of associations of persons with disabilities which are accessible and adapted for the provision of services;	Ministry of Finances, Labour and Transfers
5.3.	January - December 2022	The draft law on Assessment, Recognition of Status, Benefits and Services for Persons with Disabilities, to be approved and start implementing;	Ministry of Finances, Labour and Transfers
5.4.	January - December 2022	Re - format and increase the capacity of Evaluation Commissions	Ministry of Finances, Labour and Transfers
Component 6 – CULTURE AND SPORT			
6.1.1	January - December 2022	Supporting sports programs for children with disabilities and including sports in the education of children with disabilities.	MCYS – Department of sport
6.1.2	January - December 2022	Training of sports instructors for Persons with Disabilities	MCYS – Department of sport
6.1.3	January - December 2022	Providing sports equipment for sports for people with disabilities, through the drafting of a project proposal	MCYS – Department of sport
6.1.4	January - December 2022	Initiation of the establishment of the wheelchair basketball competition (With MCYS and the Basketball Federation).	MCYS – Department of sport

6.1.5	January December 2022	Support the organization of a regional wheelchair basketball tournament (one team from Albania, Northern Macedonia, Montenegro and Kosovo).	MCYS – Department of sport
6.1.6	January December 2022	Participation of Persons with Disabilities in the Paralympic Games by supporting training programs for athletes.	MCYS – Department of sport
6.2.1	January December 2022	Supporting the organization of a theatre performance in Sign language;	MCYS – Department of culture
6.2.2	January December 2022	Inclusion of the topic of disability in the program of the National Theatre of Kosovo, through the announcement of a competition for theatrical script with the theme of raising awareness of equal opportunities for all.	MCYS – Department of culture
6.3.1	January December 2022	Facilitate access for people with disabilities to cultural institutions (museums, galleries, theatres, cinemas, concert halls, etc.) and follow their programs through the use of the achievements of modern technology;	MCYS – Department of culture
6.3.2	January December 2022	Providing access and equipping museums (National Museum of Kosovo) with information monitors in sign language, by the Ministry of Culture	MCYS – Department of culture
6.3.3	January December 2022	Completion and reprinting of the Catalogue of the National Museum of Kosovo in Braille alphabet with tactile images.	MCYS – Department of culture
6.3.4	January December 2022	Equipping the National Museum with a monitor that informs about sign language. Monitors are proposed to be placed in the LSHP Complex (Prizren League) and in the Archaeological Museum in Prizren.	MCYS – Department of culture
6.4.	January December 2022	Training and capacity building for design, implementation and project management of organizations and individuals with special needs for application in public funds.	MCYS – Department of culture
6.5	January December 2022	Functionalization and support of the library for the blind.	MCYS – Department of culture
6.6.1	January December 2022	Organizing a film week for Persons with Disabilities (with the theme of disability);	MCYS – Department of culture
6.6.2	January December 2022	Announcement of the competition for the script of the documentary film or short film with the theme of "Disability".	MCYS – Department of culture
6.6.3	January December 2022	The Ministry of Culture, as a supporter of "Dokufest", will recommend to the directors of this festival the inclusion of documentaries on the topic of disability.	MCYS – Department of culture
6.7.1	January December 2022	Organizing a youth camp in which the culture of the deaf and sign language will be introduced (with inclusive participation);	MCYS – Department of Youth
6.7.2	January December 2022	Supporting sports activities between the young people with and without disabilities	MCYS – Department of Youth

6.7.3	January - December 2022	Supporting the “Knowledge Quiz” for young people with disabilities;	MCYS – Department of Youth
6.7.4	January - December 2022	Supporting projects for creative-craft industries;	MCYS – Department of Youth
6.7.5	January - December 2022	Support training programs for young people with disabilities; (Through entrepreneurship and soft-skills training programs).	MCYS – Department of Youth
6.7.6	January - December 2022	Supporting young people with disabilities for self-employment	MCYS – Department of Youth
6.8.	January - December 2022	Establishment of a working group to draft an Action Plan for Culture, Youth and Sports for people with disabilities. During 2022, a working group is established consisting of representatives of the MCYS and Organizations of Persons with Disabilities to draft the five-year action plan for the CYS 2023-2027.	MCYS and DPO's
Component 7 – JUSTICE AND SAFETY			
7.1.	January - December 2022	Drafting an informative guide on the rights of persons with disabilities in the justice system.	Ministry of Justice
7.2.	January - December 2022	Training of staff in Probation and Correctional Services	Ministry of Justice
7.3.	January - December 2022	Legal protection of Persons with Disabilities - Courts, Prosecutors, (Academy of Justice includes the inclusion of a Module for the rights of persons with disabilities in their training program).	Ministry of Justice
7.4.	January - December 2022	The Ministry of Justice in cooperation with the Organizations of Persons with Disabilities organizes a workshop regarding the actions that should be taken in cases when the law is not implemented by public/state institutions.	Ministry of Justice
7.4.1	January - December 2022	Recognition of the right of persons with disabilities to exercise their legal rights on an equal basis with others.	Ministry of Justice
7.4.2	January - December 2022	Information of deaf persons on their legal rights.	Ministry of Justice
7.4.3	January - December 2022	Notary services related to the authorization of a deaf person (PWD)	Ministry of Justice
7.4.4	January - December 2022	Regulating the use of sign language at the Notary	Ministry of Justice
7.5.	January - December 2022	Taking measures to provide PWDs with access to the support they need to exercise their legal rights.	Ministry of Justice
Kosovo Police			
7.6	January - December 2022	Establishment of a working group between the Kosovo Association of the Deaf and the Kosovo Police (IT	Kosovo Police and DPO's

		experts) to find the modalities of contacting the Police and other emergency numbers by deaf people.	
7.7	January - December 2022	Organize a working meeting (workshop) between the representatives of the Police and the Kosovo Association of the Deaf for the drafting and publication of the information brochure for the deaf - regarding the information on traffic fines!	Kosovo Police and DPO's
7.8	January - December 2022	Working meeting with the training division within the Police to update the rights of Persons with Disabilities in the police training program.	Kosovo Police and DPO's
7.9	January - December 2022	Police Conferences for national level media to provide information in sign language!	Kosovo Police and DPO's
7.10	January - December 2022	Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for cases where the perpetrators are persons with disabilities.	Kosovo Police and DPO's
7.11	January - December 2022	Capacity building of the Kosovo Police through Training of police officers for the protection and assistance of victims with disabilities and the specifics of Persons with Disabilities.	Kosovo Police and DPO's
	3 rd December 2022	Annual Conference	OGG and DPO's