



ALE NK

Adult Learning and Education
Network in Kosovo

ADVOCACY STRATEGY

Adult Learning and Education Network in
Kosovo (ALE NK)

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Acronyms

AVETAE	Agency for Vocational Education and Training and Adult Education
VET	Vocational Education and Training
NFE	Non-Formal Education
NQA	National Qualifications Authority
ALE NK	Adult Learning and Education Network in Kosovo
EARK	Employment Agency of the Republic of Kosovo
ALE	Adult Learning and Education
BSFK	Balkan Sunflowers
DVV International	Institute for International Cooperation of the Deutscher Volkshochschul-Verband e.V. (DVV)
ECK	European College of Kosovo
KEC	Kosova Education Center
KEK	Kosovo Energy Corporation
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
MESTI	Ministry of Education, Science, Technology and Innovation
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
VTC	Vocational Training Center
CC	Competence Center
NDS	National Development Strategy
ICT	Information and Communications Technology

1. Executive Summary

This document is one of the outputs of an in-depth analysis of key Adult Learning and Education (ALE) concepts, laws, relevant national strategies, and other respective documents and policies, with the aim of establishing and developing the Adult Learning and Education Network in Kosovo (ALE NK) and the capacities of the Network's member organizations. This document will also help outreach efforts towards other organizations that may join the Network and to inform the general public about ALE opportunities and benefits, as well as to encourage them to get involved in the opportunities offered by ALE NK's Member organizations.

Also, this document takes into consideration other important elements, such as the historical development of ALE in Kosovo, its providers, programs provided domestically, and the like.

Adult Learning and Education Network in Kosovo – ALE NK

In order to bring together ALE stakeholders and providers and formalize cooperation, on October 27 and 28, 2022, the ALE-NK establishment workshop was held in Tirana. It reviewed organizational and operational models of similar Networks from different countries of the region and beyond. The founding members pledged to establish the Board of Directors immediately after the workshop, and on November 2, the constitutive meeting of the Board and its leadership was held.



Currently, the network is composed of seven members: Ministry of Education, Science, Technology and Innovation (MESTI), Employment Agency of the Republic of Kosovo (EARK), Agency for Vocational Education and Training and Adult Education (AVETAE), DVV International, Kosova Education Center (KEC), Hareja NGO, and the European College of Kosovo (ECK). These stakeholders seek to employ legal and legitimate mechanisms and instruments to further develop ALE and engage in advocacy efforts, aiming at achieving the specific objectives arising as obligations from legal documents. The network has expressed its interest and is also open to new members whose mission is Adult Learning and Education.

Since its inception, the Network has delivered various initiatives, to which all members have contributed. Several seminars have been held, most notably the “Open Doors” activity, with member institutions and organizations hosting meetings, site visits, roundtables, etc., as part of the “Adult Learning and Education Week” activity.

These activities have been hosted in different municipalities depending on the scope of the institutions and organizations of the Network.





ALE NK has now drafted its Statute and Internal Regulation. Network members, on March 9 and 10, 2023, agreed on the content of the Statute and the Internal Regulation, with the latter integrating and regulating the interests of the Network. Therefore, taking into consideration ALE NK members' needs for their own continuous development in terms of building and developing advocacy capacities, this document will serve as a basis for understanding the importance of network advocacy and its actions and content. This document provides a summary of the mechanisms and initiatives that would assist in enhancing, developing and increasing the involvement of Network members in ALE advocacy initiatives, which will help to raise the awareness of the general population about the importance of ALE and opportunities offered domestically for adults and their involvement in the development of new skills and abilities.

2. Methodology

The methodology used in drafting this document is based on ALE NK's needs analysis, network advocacy capacities, and the analysis of existing legal and professional documents.

Specifically, this analysis is based on:

- Analysis of documents and legislation;
- Meetings and interviews with network members;
- Analysis of publications.

Data and assessments of network advocacy capacities were collected in advance through joint meetings. During the meetings, the main areas in which network advocacy will be focused at the local and local level were identified, and the strategic objectives were defined. These meetings have also served to share the best practices and experiences of the network in the field of advocacy, in order to iterate good practices and achieve results.

In order to achieve the best results, the analyses shared at these meetings identified central and local level stakeholders in and supporters of advocacy objectives and actions , while also identifying the stakeholders targeted by advocacy actions.

3. Introduction

Adult Learning and Education are vital for individual development and a country's economic growth and social progress. They enable adults to acquire new knowledge and skills, improve their employability, and improve their quality of life. However, advocacy is essential to promote Adult Learning and Education and to enhance access to these opportunities. This document describes strategies to increase advocacy skills for the Adult Learning and Education Network in Kosovo - ALE NK.

In the context of demographic changes and the increasingly complex needs of society, ALE is an essential instrument for promoting social cohesion. However, adult learning is often under-funded compared to other sectors of the education system, as is the case in Kosovo. ALE, across Europe, faces the challenge of securing its funding and enhancing its quality.¹

Adult learning has a number of benefits not only for the individual, but also for society, economy, and democracies overall. Benefits include positive effects on, among others, income and employability, health, civic engagement, reduction of criminal activity. Rapid changes in the labor market, an aging population and global competition increasingly indicate the need to use all available knowledge, skills and competences – regardless of where and how the individual acquired them.

Adult Learning refers to education and training attended by adult learners. It is the process through which adults acquire knowledge, competence and skills, either formally or non-formally. By recognizing formal and non-formal learning, new opportunities are opened for individuals who have acquired

¹ Invest in adult learning Executive summary of the outcomes of the FinALE project https://eaea.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/Finale_summary_a5_English-online.pdf

certain knowledge and skills during their lifetime, to acquire formal and further education/skills and career advancement.

ALE is mainly conceived as formal and non-formal education, and the relevant legislation uses the term "Adult Education and Training".²

An investment in adult learning is an investment in the population. Several quantitative and qualitative studies have shown wider benefits of ALE for both the individual and the economy and society as a whole. ALE advocacy is important because it can help promote lifelong learning and provide opportunities for personal growth and development.

Individuals benefit from ALE through:

- Increased employability, which leads to monetary effects;
- Increased well-being in terms of better mental and physical health;
- Increased confidence;
- Ensured social benefits, such as a wider social circle and greater civic engagement;
- Enhanced personal and interpersonal skills, such as self-esteem and empathy.

The economy benefits from ALE through:

- Increased innovative capacities;
- Enhanced competitiveness through increased productivity and innovation;
- Encouraged development due to increased employment and innovative skills;

² Kosovo Adult Learning and Education Quality Study, (2021), DVV International Kosovo

- Higher tax collections.

The society benefits from ALE through:

- Enhanced health of the population;
- Reduced criminal activities;
- Increased sustainability and preservation of the environment;
- Promotion of social cohesion and respect;
- Strengthened social/political perspective, namely the development of democracy;
- Increased active citizenship;
- Increased cultural integration.³⁴

⁴ Invest in adult learning Executive summary of the outcomes of the FinALE project
https://eaea.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/Finale_summary_a5_English-online.pdf

4. Legal basis

The field of ALE is regulated by Law No. 04/L-138 on Vocational Education and Training, which is intended to regulate the system of vocational education and training in accordance with the needs of the economic and social development of the Republic of Kosovo, including economic and technological changes, the demands of the labor market and the needs of individuals towards the market economy, optimally utilizing financial, human and infrastructure resources. Also, the law regulates the structure, organization and management of institutions that provide vocational education and training.⁵

In terms of importance, referring to the National Development Strategy 2030 (NDS), the lack of links between education and the labor market manifests itself in the form of a significant skills gap in the market, affecting the level of employment and private sector development.⁶

In the Education Strategy 2022-2026 and respective Action Plan⁷, the strategic objective for increasing participation in Adult Learning and Education is introduced, and indicators for measuring the attainment of said objective are specified. Education Strategy 2022-2026, in the state agenda,

⁵ Law No. 04/L-138 on Vocational Education and Training. Article 1. <https://gzk.rks-gov.net/ActDetail.aspx?ActID=8676>

⁶ National Development Strategy 2030 <https://konsultimet.rks-gov.net/viewConsult.php?ConsultationID=41413>

⁷ Ministry of Education, Science, Technology and Innovation, September 2022, *Education Strategy 2022-2026, Action Plan*, <https://masht.rks-gov.net/strategjia-e-arsimit-2022-2026plani-i-veprimit/>

5. Adult Learning and Education Network in Kosovo - ALE NK and background of its members

ALE NK's constituent members are public and non-public institutions in terms of legal status, but which share the goal of empowering and promoting comprehensively all stakeholders in the field of ALE.

In ALE NK's act of establishment, institutions from the central level, but also civil society representatives, have pledged to develop and further establish mechanisms that focus on ALE. In this regard, these institutions and organizations, the Ministry of Education, Science, Technology and Innovation (MESTI), Employment Agency of the Republic of Kosovo (EARK), Agency for Vocational Education and Training and Adult Education (AVETAE), DVV International, Kosova Education Center (KEC), European College of Kosovo (ECK), "Hareja" Non-Governmental Organization (NGO), possess solid experience, but the need for adaptation and further advocacy advancement is evident. This is also based on ALE NK's own discussions and findings.

To get to know closely the profile of the founding members, their activities and mission are summarized below:

MESTI is the government unit responsible for all activities in the field of ALE. In terms of importance, MESTI sits at the core of the entire ALE cycle and development of. As a public institution responsible for the development and advancement of education policies, this ministry is organized in five departments, meanwhile, the field of ALE falls under the department of

Vocational Education.⁹ Taking into account all the legal responsibilities and ALE's hierarchical organization, it was considered necessary that ALE NK should be led by MESTI. From there are derived the responsibilities and actions which must coincide with the strategic objectives.

The **EARK** is an independent body within the Ministry of Finance, Labor and Transfers (MFLT), whose main task is administering the labor market and implementing employment and vocational training policies in Kosovo. The EARK has important objectives, including improving the quality and efficiency of public employment services, modernizing and reforming vocational training services, expanding the coverage and increasing the efficiency of active labor market measures, and performing and enhancing analyses on different aspects of the labor market. The agency offers employment and vocational training services for unemployed persons, jobseekers, employers, employees and foreign nationals who are aiming for employment in Kosovo.¹⁰

AVETAE is an institution established by the Government to supervise and develop vocational education and training for adults. This institution is an advisory body for MESTI and its operation is regulated and determined by other MESTI by-laws¹¹. AVETAE is responsible for the administration and leadership of educational and vocational training institutions and for increasing the financial, human and infrastructure resources of all public VET institutions. This body consists of 15 members representing ministries, competence centers, VET institutions, chambers of commerce and trade unions.¹²

DVV International has been working in Kosovo in the field of education since 2005. The purpose of the enterprise is to build an efficient and effective Adult

⁹ Ministry of Education, Science, Technology and Innovation. *Vocational Education Department*. <https://masht.rks-gov.net/home-2/departamentet/departamenti-i-arsimit-profesional/>

¹⁰ Ministry of Finance, Labor and Transfers. *Employment Agency of the Republic of Kosovo*. <https://apr.k.rks-gov.net/Content/Agency/Index>

¹¹ Law No. 04/L-138 on Vocational Education and Training. Article 14. <https://gzk.rks-gov.net/ActDetail.aspx?ActID=8676>

¹² MEST Administrative Instruction 14/2014. Kosovo Agency for Vocational Education and Training and Adult Education (AVETAE) <https://gzk.rks-gov.net/ActDetail.aspx?ActID=10187>

Learning and Education system. DVV International works with local partners to enhance and expand Adult Learning and Education offers, also focusing on target groups. Furthermore, among the main points of work of DVV International in Kosovo is the training of teachers in the methodology and didactics of Adult Learning and Education, with the aim of contributing to enhanced quality. In particular, the training of secondary school teachers for centers of non-formal education and vocational training, improvement of curricula and programs for Adult Learning and Education, and better cooperation between competent ministries, NGOs and other training institutions, constitute the essence of DVV International's engagement in this sector.¹³

KEC is a local non-governmental and non-profit organization established in 2000, focusing on providing in-service teacher training programs. Training still remains an important aspect of KEC's activity, but over time, the organization has expanded its scope of work into four key areas: 1) Improving the quality of education, 2) Human Rights; 3) Networking and participation in policy making, and 4) Research in the field of education. KEC has a wide range of local and international partners consisting of non-governmental organizations, consultancy companies, development agencies, and state institutions.¹⁴

The **ECK** is an higher education private institution. The core values of the institution are those that enable it to become a center that will stand out for cooperation and transparency, a place where international best practices are offered, an environment that offers opportunities for employment and professional development, a place from which graduates will come out with practical skills and the will to use them, and a center that offers quality teaching and long-term experience for teaching and for scientific research.¹⁵

¹³ DVV International <https://www.dvv-international.ge/alb/kosova/profili>

¹⁴ Kosova Education Center [KEC site](#)

¹⁵ European College of Kosovo [ECK site](#)

“Hareja” NGO has been operating as a center since February 11, 2000. Until 2002, the organization operated under the Italian Ai.Bi (AMICI DEI BAMBINI) NGO, but since February 2002, it has acquired the status of a local NGO. Initially, this center had fewer activities, with which it started its work, but now it is the only local youth center that provides services and empowers the youth with many diverse activities the center provides in a non-profitable way.¹⁶



6. Public and Non-Public Providers

¹⁶ “Hareja” Youth Center <https://www.facebook.com/qendrarionrehareja/>

Continuous professional development in the workplace is not yet recognized in our country. Whereas, Adult Learning and Education is offered in four types of institutional settings: formal secondary or post-secondary qualification in Vocational Education and Training (VET) schools, vocational training, usually work-related or as a job creation measure, provided in public or private vocational training centers, compensatory education for those who have left school at an early age, and adult learning of various types, such as language training, Information and Communication Technology (ICT), crafts, art, music or culture courses offered by private providers or NGOs.¹⁷

6.1 Accredited ALE Providers¹⁸

ALE providers in Kosovo, both public and private, must pay a fixed fee to the National Qualifications Authority (NQA) for the qualification validation process in the National Qualifications Framework (NQF).¹⁹

Providers of formal Adult Learning and Education are diverse, from upper secondary providers to private institutions, NGOs and professional associations.

- Vocational Education Schools
- Secondary of Tertiary Colleges
- Competence Centers
- Vocational Training Centers
- Public or Private Training Providers
- NGOs

¹⁷ Kosovo Adult Learning and Education Quality Study, (2021), DWV International Kosovo

¹⁸ Kosovo Adult Learning and Education Quality Study, (2021), DWV International Kosovo

¹⁹ Republic of Kosovo, Government. (2014) *Administrative Instruction (MEST) No. 35/2014 on Criteria and Procedures for the Validation and Approval of National Qualification and Accreditation of Institutions Providing Qualifications in Kosovo* <https://gzk.rks-gov.net/ActDetail.aspx?ActID=10433>

6.2 Non-Formal Adult Learning and Education Public Providers²⁰

In addition to schools, colleges and Competence Centers (CCs) that mainly represent the nascent formal Vocational Education and Training (VET) sector, there is the public non-formal VET sector, represented mainly by eight Vocational Training Centers (VTC).

Now these centers operate under the MFLT. VTCs operate in each of the seven regions of Kosovo; Prishtina, Prizren, Peja, Gjakova, Ferizaj, Gjilan, Mitrovica and Doljane (in Mitrovica North). VTC opportunities are offered by two programs, institutional or combined training. The former means the ability to increase the personal perspective for employment or maintain it, while the combined one is based on VTC partnerships with businesses.

6.3 Private ALE Providers²¹

Cactus Education – specialized in the provision of education for adults in the field of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) skills.

In addition to Cactus Education, a significant number of centers for foreign language skills, for all ages, are accredited in Kosovo. Among them are **The Cambridge School, Smart Center, Britannica-ELT**, etc.

In addition to the aforementioned providers, employers, firms or enterprises are also important stakeholders. They help develop labor market-oriented skills. A good model is the **Kosovo Telecom** Training and Development Center, accredited by the NQA, or the model of **the Kosovo Energy Corporation (KEK) Training Center**.

But, referring to the World Bank publication on the findings from the survey of skills towards employment and productivity, regarding the connection and

²⁰ Kosovo Adult Learning and Education Quality Study, (2021), DWV International Kosovo

²¹ Ibid.

regular communication of employers with the education system, it turns out that only every fifth employer maintains such contacts. From this we notice that there is a lack of connection or cultivation of opportunities between employers and the education system.²²

When talking about Public Providers, we need to mention the **American Corner** in Prishtina, which with its activities is committed to establishing or creating cultural connections between America and Kosovo, through access to literature, lectures, English language training, etc.

Other stakeholders involved in ALE are **Non-Profit Providers**.²³

Most worthy of note are: **KEC**, which provides training for adult educators and performs educational research and consultancy;

Balkan Sunflowers (BSFK), through its programs, aims to increase the inclusion and participation of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians in education and public life in Kosovo.

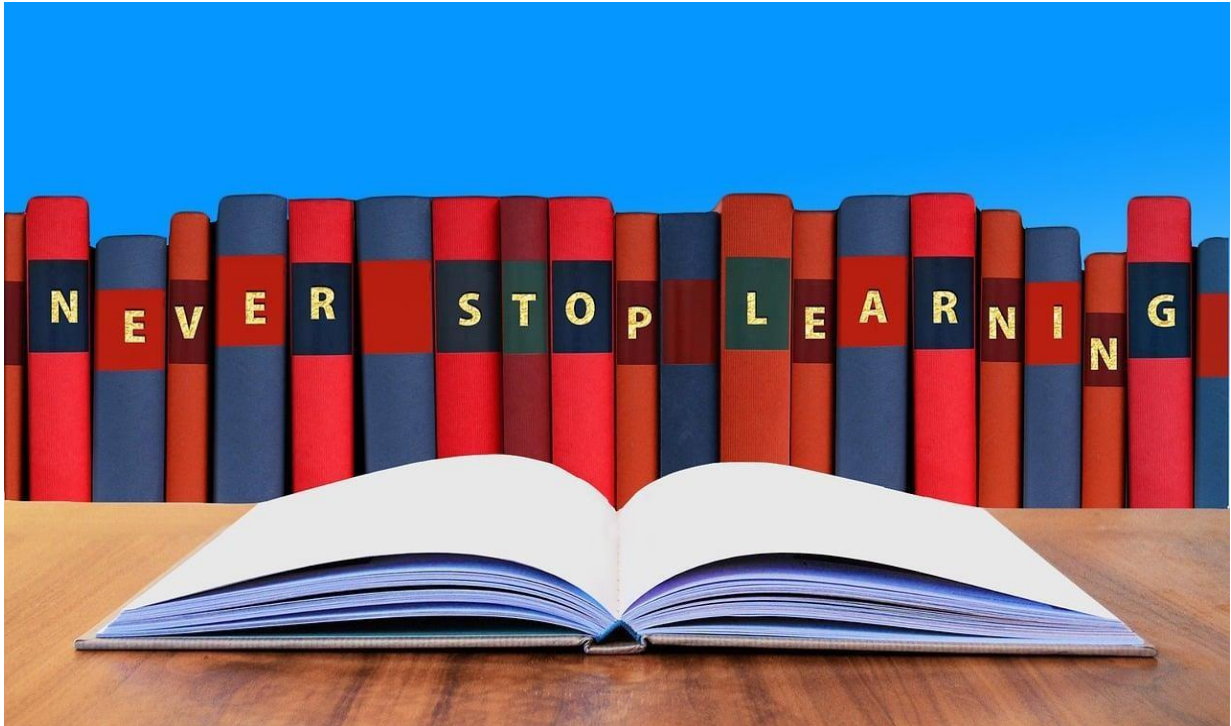
The **Kosovo Women's Network** consists of over 150 member and partner organizations. This network aims to increase and improve access to education for ethnic minority groups, fight gender stereotypes, etc.

Youth Centers deliver activities oriented from non-formal education and raising awareness, to non-formal capacity building for civil society.

²² World Bank (2019). Kosovo Country Report: Findings from the Skills Towards Employment and Productivity Survey. Washington DC.

<https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/209751557432399449/pdf/Kosovo-Country-Report-Findings-from-the-Skills-towards-Employment-and-Productivity-Survey.pdf>

²³ Kosovo Adult Learning and Education Quality Study, (2021), DVV International Kosovo



7. Advocacy Strategic Objective

ALE NK's Advocacy Strategy is to enhance network capacities to advocate for and raise the awareness of the public about the importance of ALE, and it will determine the actions and advocacy activities directed towards central

and local institutions, and the wider ALE community. The strategic advocacy objective aims to convey the intentions of the Adult Learning and Education Network in Kosovo towards the realization of the rights of adults to be educated and trained, by focusing the activities that will be undertaken towards awareness-building at the central and local level.

The strategic objective and actions have been formulated taking into account the existing challenges and problems faced by ALE in general, and ALE NK itself, such as the lack of public outreach about the opportunities offered by institutions and service providers to develop one's full potential to be trained or retrained for the labor market, and the lack of mechanisms for the implementation of legislation.

The strategic objective on advocacy includes all steps towards advancing public outreach about ALE importance and possibilities.

The details of the strategic objective, the planned actions which will contribute to the achievement of the strategic objective on advocacy, and the expected results, are as follows

7.1 Strategic Objective

Increase number of member organizations and empower ALE NK members for ALE advocacy. Network and cooperate with partners and institutions in order to raise public awareness about ALE in Kosovo.

This strategic objective is directly related to the advocacy actions of the Network aiming at enhancing ALE NK advocacy capacities and coordination of joint initiatives.

Expected Results:

- All members of the network pledge to advocate, within their mandates, for public awareness-building about the importance of ALE and the opportunities provided domestically.
- The number of ALE NK network members will at least double by the end of 2024, and network members will develop their advocacy skills.
- Each member of the network at least once a year will be involved in the realization of advocacy activities, which will be introduced in the joint annual plan drafted at the start of each year.

7.2 Actions

- I. Advocacy Trainings Delivery The network must provide training sessions to its members on advocacy skills, such as public speaking, effective communication and engagement with policy makers. This will help members to communicate the importance of Adult Learning and Education to policy makers and the general public more effectively.
- II. Develop Advocacy Resources: The network must develop resources accessible in one place for the entire network, such as fact sheet packs and case studies, to support its members' advocacy efforts. These resources must be tailored to specific audiences, such as policy makers, employers, and community members, and should highlight the benefits of Adult Learning and Education.
- III. Foster Cooperation: The network must foster cooperation between members to share resources, knowledge and expertise. This can help build a stronger advocacy network and amplify the impact of individual efforts. The network must encourage members to cooperate on advocacy efforts, such as joint letters/policies to policy makers, joint press releases or joint events.

- IV. Encourage Sharing Stories: The network must encourage its members to share their stories about the impact of Adult Learning and Education. These personal stories can be powerful tools for advocacy and can help to invest in Adult Learning and Education.
- V. Monitor Policy Developments: The network must monitor policy developments related to Adult Learning and Education at local and central level. This can help the network stay informed and identify opportunities for advocacy. The network must provide regular updates to its members on policy developments and encourage them to engage in advocacy efforts where appropriate. The network must also monitor the implementation of laws related to ALE.
- VI. Media Presence. The network must provide platforms for members to share experiences and stories, such as social media, blogs or magazines. The best form of promoting the network and the activities of its members, and informing the opinion about ALE, is through the media, therefore the network must undertake some concrete actions such as:
- Creation of a common identifying slogan of the network.
 - Organization of 4 Podcasts per year, each hosted by a different member of the network.
 - Creation of a FB page where the activities of the network and network members will be promoted.
 - Greater representation in visual and print media.
 - Creation of posters with QR codes that will be placed in public places, but that have no other information on the poster, and that will stimulate the curiosity of passers-by to scan the QR code. Through the QR code link, they receive information about the network and what ALE opportunities exist in our country, and who the service providers are.

- Creation of a promotional video/animation which aims to inform the general public about the importance of ALE and opportunities.
- VII. The network can organize discussions like "Salon Week" (panel discussion, exhibition, performance, speakers). Salons can be organized in public places, such as libraries, parks, etc.
- VIII. The network must plan meetings with policy makers, with parliamentary commissions on ALE
- IX. Organization of the annual "ALE week/fair" event. This event brings together all the stakeholders and is a good opportunity for the promotion of all service providers and media involvement.
- X. Awareness-building "Why it is good to invest in ALE". We still know very little about the overall investment in Adult Learning and Education. Research and collaboration between experts in the field of adult learning financing is needed. In particular:
- Each institution/organization must conduct in-depth country-specific research that covers more holistically the ways in which community education is funded.
 - The network must create a position paper outlining its support for political aspects, emphasizing community engagement and active citizenship, for increased ALE funding.

7.3 Target Groups:

Along with the determination of the objective and the actions that will contribute to its realization, the target groups to which the advocacy actions

will be directed and which have direct competence or can influence the development of ALE in our country, have also been defined.

The target groups are classified at the central and municipal/local level depending on the activities.

Target groups at the central level are: Assembly of Kosovo, MESTI, MFLT, Office of the Ombudsperson.

Target groups at the local level are: Mayors of Municipalities, Directorates of Education, Directorates of Finance, municipal advisors.

8. Conclusion:

Enhancing ALE NK's advocacy capabilities is essential for promoting lifelong learning and improving economic and social outcomes. By implementing the initiatives described in this document, the network can build its advocacy capabilities and create a stronger case for the importance of Adult Learning and Education.

By enhancing the Network's advocacy capacities, the institutions will help raise the financial stability and quality of ALE services.

- Noting how necessary cooperation between stakeholders is, the network must play a central role in the interactions of institutions, organizations and service providers. Therefore, the network must promote closer cooperation between stakeholders. The network must assume the role of promoter of cooperation and exchange between the various ministries involved in ALE financing.
- ALE NK must advocate for the separate treatment of ALE in education policies, and in the Education Strategy in particular. One option is to design a specific ALE Strategy or to designate an ALE-specific objective in the overall Education Strategy, which would help strengthen prioritization and investments in this direction.
- Likewise, the network must, through the actions mentioned in Section 7.2, help raise citizen awareness regarding the advantages of continuous non-formal ALE for personal, social and economic development.
- Despite positive efforts and changes, ALE continues to lack significant progress towards overcoming age limits, promoting non-commercial education, and learning, so the network must ensure appropriate lobbying for evidence-based policy-making, research and survey results.
- The number of VET providers for adults who offer courses for vocational and personal development is still small. The network must advocate, so that in addition to needs and requirements, the number and scope of program providers is increased, and that, in addition to employment and labor market measures, general financial and digital literacy skills, political and civic education, and personal development are

advanced. At the same time, it must ensure that the quality of the provision of these services is at the appropriate level.

- As social inequality becomes increasingly evident, the network must exert influence on policymakers on social gaps and making Adult Learning and Education more accessible and affordable for all, for example through learning vouchers or scholarships for individuals and tax incentives for employers and service providers.
- Studies show that ALE in Kosovo is still primarily focused on formal learning activities, which are related to the work environment, therefore the network must advocate for ALE to give more space to the development of non-formal, informal, self-directed processes, and encourage adults to take responsibility for their own personal development throughout their lives

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