

HERAS PLUS BROCHURE

June 2020 – December 2021



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FOREWORD by Veronika Nitsche

Dear friends of the HERAS Plus project,

With this brochure, we are happy to share what we have been able to achieve in the frame of this project so far. The HERAS Plus project aims at advancing higher education and research in Kosovo in line with the European Higher Education Area, the European Research Area, and the Sustainable Development Goals. A set of ambitious outputs and activities is attached to this aim, targeting at quality assurance, economy, and labour market relevance, international cooperation, and the Social

Dimension of higher education. The start of HERAS Plus and the pandemic almost coincided. Nevertheless, the intervention is on track with only a few delays in the implementation, which we see as a joint success with our stakeholders and the academic community in Kosovo. Additionally, it paid off that we've always strongly relied on national expertise. The consortium, consisting of WUS Austria, the Centre for Social Innovation (ZSI), and



Figure 2. Meeting between Austrian and Kosovo Education Ministers Fassmann and Nagavci

the Austrian Exchange Service (OeAD), has been present in Kosovo for many years and is well connected to the higher education sector and its actors. This enables us to react flexibly to the local situation and its requirements. The importance of the connection between Kosovo and Austria, especially in the field of higher education, was again emphasized when the education ministers Fassmann and Nagavci met in Vienna on the occasion of the centennial of World University Service in September 2021.

Through applying a human rights-based approach (HRBA), the project also contributes to developing the capacities of MESTI and other relevant public institutions to meet their obligations related to the right to education and to strengthen the capacities of students, including those from marginalized groups to claim their rights in this respect.

This is also related to our holistic approach, where all stakeholders, at all levels, are part of the process. Consequently, we understand HERAS Plus as a joint endeavor of all those involved. Besides the local stakeholders mentioned above, this also includes the Austrian Development Agency represented by the Coordination Office and, last but not least, our team in Prishtina, which is the backbone of the HERAS Plus project.

Thank you all for your dedicated work!

Veronika Nitsche

On behalf of the HERAS Plus Consortium



Figure 1. Veronika Nitsche, WUS Austria

Overview

Topics overview of the support provided from June 2020 to December 2021 includes (but not limited to):

Supporting Applied Sciences:

- › Roadmap for Applied Sciences;
- › Administrative Instruction for Applied Sciences;
- › Advocating for an Applied Sciences approach.

Supporting the Law on Higher Education:

- › Several working group meetings support and active participation/contribution in all working group meetings.

Supporting Kosovo Accreditation Agency (KAA) to implement ENQA recommendations:

- › Memorandum of Understanding with KAA;
- › Training Manual for experts;
- › Revision of Accreditation Standards;
- › International expertise review of the KAA Strategic Plan;
- › Supporting KAA Law – international support offered for the steering committee of working group on KAA Law, and two workshops supported.

Supporting the implementation of the Law on Transfer of Knowledge and Technology and advancing Research and Innovation (R&I):

- › Input paper on the field of transfer of knowledge and technology;
- › Supporting the established working group;
- › Expertise support in drafting the Administrative Instruction on Transfer and Forms of Knowledge and Technology Transfer (approved);
- › Organized the first Conference on Research and Innovation Policy Dialogue;
- › Conference on R&I follow-up policy brief.

Developing the first Kosovo Current Research Information System – CRIS:

- › Drafting the Roadmap for CRIS;
- › Drafting the Software specifications for CRIS;
- › Supporting the CRIS working group;
- › Tendering procedures initiated and planned support for CRIS implementation (trainings-know-how) identified and agreed with MESTI.

Supporting Smart Specialization Strategy (S3):

- › The S3 Platform developed and launched;
- › Supporting donor-synergies, discussing and defining the upcoming support.

Human Rights-Based Approach (HRBA) in Higher Education:

- › Study on anchoring HRBA in public HEIs in Kosovo;
- › Workshop – presentation and discussion of the study – preparations for follow up support instruments.

University level support:

- › Memorandums of Understanding signed with all public universities;
- › Baseline Assessments conducted for six public universities;
- › Capacity Building for Academic and Managerial Staff on various topics; in the scope of functionalizing the existing “Institutes/Centres of Excellence” and on identified needs (such as project writing/management);
- › Drafting new regulations and procedures;
- › Reviewing, revising, adapting various documentations of universities;
- › Various trainings (tailor-made) of the identified gaps on the Baseline Assessments and on the emerging needs.

Programmatic Partnerships:

- › Five Programmatic Partnerships awarded

Research Grants:

- › Nine Research Grant Project awarded

Fellowship Grants:

- › Ph.D. and Post/Doc Scholarships awarded: Postdoc 6 candidates (total 17 scholarship months) and Ph.D. 3 candidates (total of 47 scholarship months) 64 months Scholarships.

Support to Horizon Europe – National Contact Points (NCP) structure:

- › Workshop with previous NCPs;
- › Two ‘Train the Trainers’ Trainings;
- › Training with Researchers;
- › Support for the nomination of new NCPs and association of Kosovo to Horizon Europe;
- › Revising the NCP Regulation.

Setting up the Kosovar-Austrian Alumni system:

- › The first Organization of Kosovar-Austrian Alumni (OKAA) established.



HERAS PLUS Kick-off event

On 25 November 2020, HERAS Plus Project marked the official Kick-off of the Project. The launching event took place in a hybrid format and attracted the interest and attendance of over 75 participants representing the main stakeholders, Austrian Development Agency (ADA) project holders and implementation organizations, representatives of public Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), experts and academicians as well as members of the Media.



Figure 3. Kick-off Event, 25 November 2021

The Austrian Ambassador to Kosovo, His Excellency Mr. Christoph Weidinger, addressed the Project Kick-off event and emphasized that donors are committed to support Kosovo in undertaking the necessary reforms to make the Higher Education system in Kosovo harmonized with the European standards: “a demonstration of our commitment to support the efforts of Kosovo in establishing modern, competitive, transparent, and well-functioning education

system that is line with the standards and principles of the European Union (EU).” The event was co-moderated by Ms. Diellza Kukaj, Minister’s Political Advisor, and Mr. Aqim Emurli, Team Leader of HERAS Plus. The event generated a lot of interest from participants and resulted in some very insightful comments and interaction.

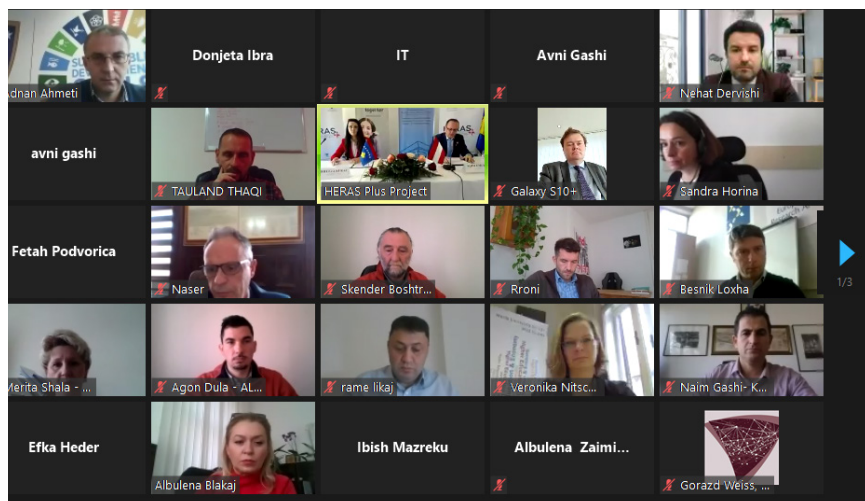


Figure 4. Kick-off Event, 25 November 2021

ACTIVITIES BY LEVELS OF INTERVENTION

Supporting the applied science focused instruments in Higher Education

Development of a “Roadmap for identifying opportunities for implementing Programs in Applied Sciences in Kosovo” and an “Administrative Instruction on Applied Sciences.” In the framework of promoting applied sciences at the policy level to increase the relevance of study programs and graduates’ labor market and employability, a roadmap was drafted to identify opportunities for the implementation of Applied Science Programs in Kosovo.

The roadmap was drafted through local and international expertise, referring to best practices. The whole process occurred within the working group established by Ministry of Education, Science, Technology and Innovation (MESTI) and supported by the project.

Several working meetings were held leading up to the presentation and discussion of the final draft, with the participation of MESTI, representatives of the Austrian Development Agency (ADA), members of the working group, and other parties.

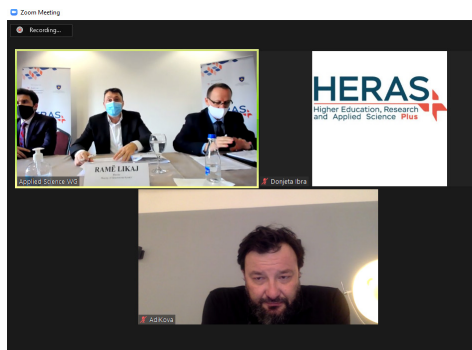


Figure 5. Working Group Meeting on Applied Sciences in Kosovo: Policy Options, 09 December 2021



Figure 6. Working Group meeting – presentation of the draft report on Administrative Instruction, 04 March 2021

Building on the roadmap’s recommendations, an Administrative Instruction on Applied Sciences was drafted using national expertise. The roadmap and the Administrative Instruction were presented to the new cabinet at MESTI, the Roadmap findings were discussed, and recommendations were given for further steps in implementing the science-based approach applied in higher education.

In addition, the project has continued to support the working group on the Higher Education Law and offered a one-day workshop on the scope of support for this activity.

Support to Kosovo Accreditation Agency

This activity supports the Kosovo Accreditation Agency (KAA) in reviewing its current policies and practices to make them more relevant to the national context and enable more comparable, more user-friendly, and transparent assessments for all stakeholders. Some of the reached milestone activities:

► **Manual for External Evaluation of Higher Education Institutions.**

The “Manual for External Evaluation of Higher Education Institutions” developed/drafted is one of the activities planned as part of the Memorandum of Understanding between HERAS Plus and the Kosovo Accreditation Agency (KAA) signed in November 2020.

The handbook provides an overview of Higher Education in Kosovo and essential developments in the Higher Education system to contextualize the meaning of the international experts engaged by the KAA for external institutional and program evaluation. The manual also explains the accreditation process and provides practical guidance to international assessment experts on implementing the Accreditation Standards Manual and related annexes for completion in the assessment process.



Figure 7. Launching “The Manual for External Evaluation of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs)”, 24 February 2021

The manual has been approved as official training material by KAA and is used to train new Accreditation experts. The Manual package contains: (1) Main Manual (in Albanian and English); (2) Eight accompanying annexes, including relevant templates; (3) Expert input from the evaluation phase, interviews with experts, KAA, and other stakeholders regarding best practices and lessons learned, and (4) A brief report with recommendations for improving KAA processes and general quality assurance in Kosovo Higher Education. This Manual brings KAA one step closer to fulfilling the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA) requirements/recommendations.

► Supporting the Kosovo Accreditation Agency Law (KAA)

The support for the Law on Kosovo Accreditation Agency consisted of international expertise support for the respective working group, active participation in the working group sessions (and direct support for two sessions). The support continued after the public consultation phase, towards finalization of the law for further proceedings.

► Review of Accreditation Standards

In December 2021, revised accreditation standards were submitted to KAA, including Institutional and Program Accreditation standards and Lists of Indicators for Institutional and Program Accreditation. HERAS Plus has engaged international and national expertise for this review and provided substantive and logistical support.

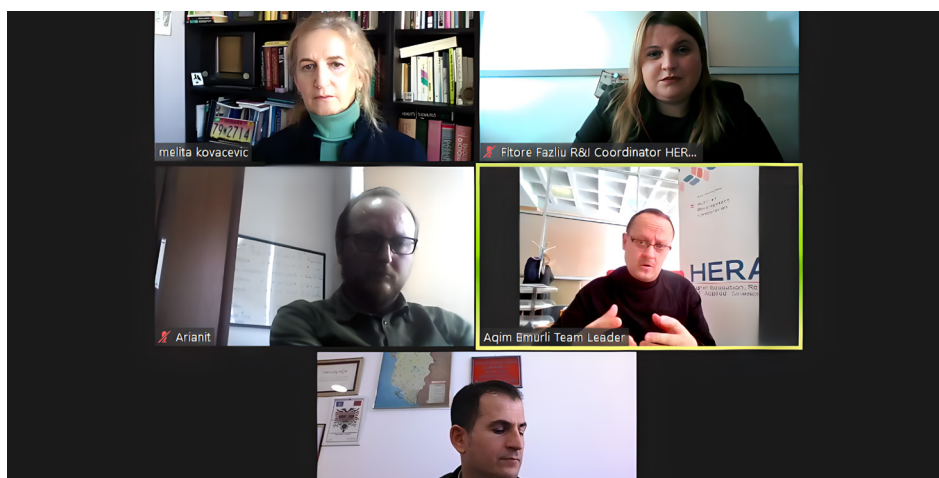


Figure 8. Kick-off Meeting for Revision of Accreditation Standards Manual, 10 March 2021

Several activities have been conducted in the framework of the activity to support the review of accreditation standards (an essential requirement of ENQAs recommendations). Three workshops were held in this activity's scope, with a broad representation of Higher Education Institutions and relevant stakeholders. The working methodology, activity plan, and roles/tasks expected from HERAS Plus and KAA were identified and agreed upon, including establishing the working group by KAA, with KAA staff and the board's representatives, HEIs, students, and other stakeholders. Inputs from working group discussions were addressed in finalizing the draft package of accredited standards, presented in the third workshop and submitted to the KAA for further procedures on December 20, 2021.

Supporting Research and Innovation

► Drafting the Administrative Instruction on Transfer and forms of knowledge and technology transfer.

In consultation and at the request of MESTI, the project supported the development of the Administrative Instruction on Transfer and Forms of Knowledge and Technology Transfer. An input paper on Knowledge and Technology Transfer was developed through international expertise and was presented and discussed during the working group's first meeting. Comments and suggestions from the working group and MESTI were reflected in the final version submitted to MESTI. The Administrative Instruction was finalized and processed for signature by the Minister.

► Conference on Policy Dialogue for Research and Innovation

HERAS Plus and the Ministry of Education, Science, Technology, and Innovation (MESTI) organized the Conference on Policy Dialogue for Research and Innovation (R&I) on November 5, 2021. The event aimed to launch a political dialogue between governmental institutions and key stakeholders to develop a list of the immediate, medium, and long-term actions needed to develop an efficient and effective support system for research and innovation in Kosovo. Some of the topics discussed were R&I ethics, opportunities, barriers for researchers, Kosovo's expectations from R&I, and the role of the academic diaspora. The Inputs and Outcomes of the Conference informed a policy paper on the following actions identified as essential to ensure the development of a fruitful Research and Innovation system in Kosovo, which was submitted to MESTI in December 2021.

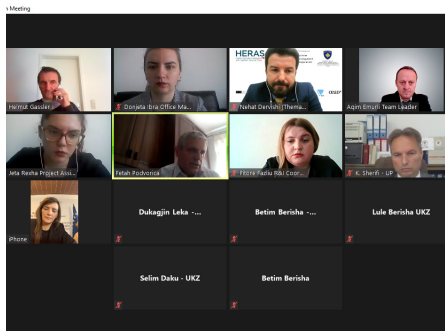


Figure 9. Workshop on Knowledge Transfer & Technology, 16 April 2021



Figure 10 Conference: Policy Dialogue on Research and Innovation, 05 November 2021

Development of the Kosovo – Current Research Information System (CRIS)

The roadmap for developing the Kosovo “Current Research Information System (CRIS)” was developed through an extensive assessment phase through interviews, focus groups, and data analysis. The roadmap was launched, and several presentations were made at a promotional event to representatives of MESTI, Universities, and other stakeholders. In 2021, HERAS Plus signed a Memorandum of Understanding with ERASMUS +-funded project ResearchCult to avoid a seemingly overlapping activity: CRIS by enabling synergies between projects. In consultation with MESTI, HERAS Plus and the ResearchCult project, the CRIS working group was initiated and established with the mandate to: Contribute to the drafting of the CRIS Terms of References (ToR) and the drafting of the CRIS Administrative Instruction to make CRIS operational and establish the regulatory basis.

Within the working group, and with the local expertise engaged by HERAS Plus, the “Terms of Reference: CRIS Software Specifications” were drafted, the tender dossier was drafted, and the call for the selection of the CRIS developer was opened. Selection of the developer and the development and piloting of CRIS is planned to occur in the first part of 2022.



Figure 11. Launching of the CRIS Roadmap on 25 May 2021

Support to the Smart Specialization Strategy

The Smart Specialization Strategy (S3) platform was developed, tested, and launched in a dedicated event, in close cooperation with the Office for Strategic Planning of the Prime Minister's Office and the Ministry of Economic Development.

The main features of the electronic platform are an overview of the process of continuous development of S3; a database of crucial research/development policies, reports, publications related to research and development; communication in a mixed format of ten users from the relevant departments/units and the general public; and a basis for further advancement of features as functions (as the S3 process progresses).

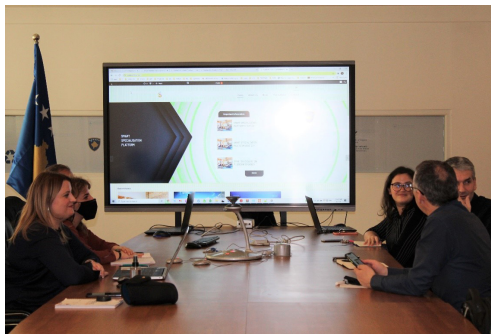


Figure 12. S3 e-platform, beta testing, 02 April 2021



Figure 13. Launch of S3 Platform, 07 July 2021

Supporting a Human-Rights based approach in Higher Education



Figure 14. HRBA in Higher Education workshop, 15 September 2021

HERAS Plus analyses and integrates into all project activities a human rights-based approach (HRBA) and has specific activities that promote human rights and gender equality. In this context, research has been conducted on good practices and existing mechanisms at the level of public universities in Kosovo to incorporate a human rights-based approach. The research has been focused on the following areas: learning environment, teaching, and research activities. The research was presented in a workshop with broad participation of relevant institutions, which contributed to discussing the report's findings and the orientation of future project interventions. Based on the discussions and suggestions of the workshop, the need arose for an analysis of gender equality in Higher Education, and HERAS Plus plans to undertake this analysis in 2022.

Supporting the capacity building of Public Universities

Several consultative and coordination meetings were conducted with each public Higher Education Institution regarding the planned support activities, with the Baseline Assessments being the priority step in establishing the support needs. Six Baseline Assessments of the current situation in public Higher Education Institutions were drafted and launched. These Baseline Assessments covered various aspects, including the current state of institutional issues, learning and teaching environment, research and innovation outcomes and capacities, the importance of labor market programs, quality assurance, and the dimensions of a human rights-based approach. A structured process of theoretical research, data collection, meetings, and other activities were part of these assessments, e.g.,

Workshop with the University of Applied Sciences in Ferizaj on the Cooperation of the University with Industry (with the participation of staff and students). The findings of these Baseline Assessments will inform the support provided within the HERAS Plus fund dedicated to building the institutional capacities of public Universities.



Figure 15 Baseline Assessment promotion event at University 'Haxhi Zeka' in Peja, 15 November 2021

A policy brief, concluding the comprehensive findings of the Baseline Assessments was presented in the Higher Education Conference by the international and national expertise, in front of representatives from the Higher Education Institutions, MESTI and other relevant stakeholders. The policy brief invited a constructive debate and feedback, which proved very relevant towards the finalization of this document.



Figure 16. Kosovo Higher Education Conference, 07 September 2021

Supporting the strategic development of the Public Universities

The competitive/earmarked fund dedicated to the strategic development of public universities operates based on procedures and criteria included in the request for support submitted by the Universities, justifying the need for support and planned activities. Activities carried out within this fund, for each University, for 2021 are as follows:

► University “Fehmi Agani” Gjakova

In phase one, the project has supported the University “Fehmi Agani” in Gjakova (UFAGJ) in the process of developing the Strategic Plan 2021 -2025. In this context the project provided expert input and also facilitated the working group (WG) sessions. Further, in phase one, the project supported UFAGJ also in conducting successful preparation for the institutional accreditation process. The project advised the WG that was preparing the application and also conducted Mock Simulation interviews which will interact with KAA international experts during the process of institutional accreditation.

In phase two, the project supported UFAGJ in the process of reviewing and harmonization of the internal regulatory framework. In this context the project provided expert support to the WG working on this process. A package of nine documents were reviewed: (1) Regulation of procedures and disciplinary measures for students; (2) Regulation on the students’ elections; (3) Regulation on internal organization and systematization of jobs;(4) Regulation on personal income of academic staff, allowances, honoraria and permanent commissions; (5) Regulation on rules and procedures for general elections’; (6) Regulation on internationalization and mobility; (7) Regulation on doctoral studies; (8) Regulation on the work of the Senate; (9) Regulation on elections at the University “Fehmi Agani” in Gjakova and the work of the University Council.



Figure 18. The first Workshop in the process of functionalizing the Didactic Center for Excellence in Teaching (DCET), at University “Fehmi Agani” Gjakova, 30 September 2021

At the request of University “Femi Agani” in Gjakova, HERAS Plus has designed a comprehensive support plan dedicated to strengthen the capacity of the “Didactic Centre for Excellence in Teaching” in the following areas: Competence-based Teaching Methodologies; Management and Leadership in Education; and also Contemporary Research Methodology and Publication in Scientific Journals. Trainings for trainers were held during 2021 for: Research and Publications and Training of Management and Leadership Trainers. Further trainings will continue in 2022 mainly in the portfolio of Competence-Based Teaching Methodologies.



Figure 19. Workshop with UFAGJ on Research, Journals and Publications, 26&27 November 2021

► “Isa Boletini” University of Mitrovica

The University “Isa Boletini” Mitrovica (UIBM) has been supported (through engaged



Figure 20. Leadership and Team Building Training for the University “Isa Boletini” in Mitrovica, 07&08 December 2021

expertise) with the: (a) Review and finalization of the Strategy for Scientific Research 2021-2025; (b). Drafting a plan for monitoring the implementation of the Strategic Plan and training on the use of the monitoring plan; (c). Staff capacity building through leadership training and team building.

(d). Through expertise and three-day workshop, the review and harmonization of six regulations were done: (1) Regulation on procedures and criteria for selection, re-election, and promotion of academic staff; (2) Regulation on evaluation procedures

related to the engagement of external collaborators; (3) Regulation on the organization and functioning of the centre for professional development and education; (4) Regulation on the operation and use of the university management system (SMU); (5) Regulation on the transfer of studies; (6) Regulation on the scope and work of the committee on statutory issues.

► University “Ukshin Hoti” in Prizren

The project supported the University “Ukshin Hoti” in Prizren (UUHP) with expertise and related workshops in activities:

(a) Review and harmonization of the University regulatory framework. Initially, a diagnostic assessment of the legal framework (a package of 21 regulations) was conducted to analyse and understand the needs and the level of intervention (review, harmonization or drafting). A report was compiled, which served as a basis for intervention in amending the following two regulations: (1) Code of Ethics, and (2) Regulation on Disciplinary Procedure.



Figure 21. The diagnostic workshop with a focus on regulatory framework of University “Ukshin Hoti” in Prizren, 25 August 2021

(b) Supporting the University working group in monitoring of implementation of Strategic Plan including providing a template and guideline. In the context of this activity, the project also assisted the University in reviewing, revising and defining the Key Performance Indicators that are part of the existing Strategic Plan.



Figure 22. Workshop with University “Ukshin Hoti” in Prizren in reviewing the Strategic Plan, 19&20 November 2021

► University Prishtina “Hasan Prishtina”

In 2021, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed with the University of Prishtina “Hasan Prishtina” (UP) which defined the areas of support and cooperation.



Figure 23. University of Prishtina “Hasan Prishtina” and the ‘HERAS Plus’ Project sign the Memorandum of Understanding, 05 March 2021

More specifically, for the UP, support was provided in: (a) The “Roadmap for advising the senior management of the University of Prishtina (UP) on measuring the performance of academic staff” was developed through a comprehensive analysis of the existing legal and institutional mechanisms that exist at the UP and interviews/exchanges with crucial academic and managerial staff.



Figure 24. Workshop with UP in relation to finalization of Roadmap on Academic Performance, 12 November 2021.

The roadmap was drafted in consultations with the Rector of UP and his cabinet, members of the Steering Board, Deans, and the Secretary.



Figure 25. Presentation of the Regulation on Open Access to Research Infrastructure, 16 July 2021

(b) Project cycle management trainings (PCM) with individual support sessions (two training sessions and three coaching sessions for each group) for the staff of the University of Prishtina “Hasan Prishtina”.

(c) The “Regulation on Open Access to Research Infrastructure (ROARI)” was drafted to regulate the use of the Research Infrastructure at the UP and enable inter-institutional cooperation and industry and the private sector. The regulation is in the process of approval at the UP(d) Two Regulations of the University of Prishtina “Hasan Prishtina” were reviewed and harmonized: (1) Regulation for basic studies - Bachelor, and (2) Regulation for Master studies. After revision/harmonization, the same were approved by the University

► **University “Kadri Zeka” Gjilan**

A Memorandum of Understanding was signed with the University “Kadri Zeka” in Gjilan and the areas of support for this Institution were defined. More specifically, during 2021, the following support was offered: Preparatory trainings for the institutional accreditation process including Mock Simulation sessions with all target groups that will interact with the team of KAA international accreditation experts. These groups included the senior management of the University, staff of quality assurance, Deans (program holders), teaching staff, students, alumni (graduates) and industry/employers. Support in reviewing and revising the current Strategic Plan was provided as well.



Figure 26. The mock-simulation on institutional accreditation, 19 January 2021

► **Haxhi Zeka” University of Peja**

On 17 November 2021, the project HERAS Plus launched the Baseline Assessment (BA) Report for the University “Haxhi Zeka” in Peja. The Report is a concise, but comprehensive, overview of the University’s current institutional development. The assessment is made in nine different dimensions. In addition, the BA identifies a significant number of areas for improvement, which are expressed in the form of recommendations with clear mechanisms and indicators.



Figure 27. HERAS Plus and University “Haxhi Zeka” in Peja signed Memorandum of

► **University of Applied Sciences in Ferizaj (UASF)**

Activities implemented with University of Applied Sciences in Ferizaj are: (a) Substantial support in the process of developing Strategic Plan 2022 – 2026 (expert input, facilitation of working groups, and workshops); and (b) Support in the process of reviewing and harmonizing the internal legal framework with the newly adopted Statue of the University.



Figure 28. HERAS Plus supports University of Applied Sciences in Ferizaj in reviewing the internal Regulations, 09&10 June 2021

Support through the Programmatic Partnership Grants

The Program Partnership Grant scheme received six applications, five of which were selected for funding by the Selection Board. Of the awarded projects: two had as their primary focus the importance of the labor market; one had as its primary focus medical research (with social impact); one had as its central objective human rights, and one of the projects focused on the implementation of the European Standard Quality Assurance Guidelines (ESG).

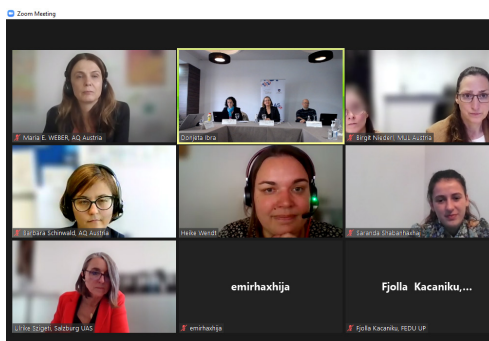


Figure 29. Workshop for Programmatic Partnership Grantees, 03 November 2021

Programmatic Partnership	Coordinator	Partner
1. Upscaling University-Industry cooperation through education-knowledge transfer	Fachhochschule Salzburg GmbH (Salzburg University of Applied Sciences)	University of Applied Sciences in Ferizaj
2. Treatment of pediatric acute lymphoblastic leukemia with a modified resource-conserved BFM protocol in Kosovo	Medical University of Graz Department of Paediatrics and Adolescent Medicine	Medical Faculty of the University of Prishtina "Hasan Prishtina"
3. Research capacity building to strengthen Empirical Education Research on Social Cohesion and Equity in Kosovo	University of Graz, Faculty of Environmental, Regional and Educational Sciences	1. University "Isa Boletini" in Mitrovica; 2. University "Ukshin Hoti" in Prizren; and 3. University of Prishtina "Hasan Prishtina"
4. Professional development for engineers of tomorrow (PDET)	Montanuniversitaet Leoben	University "Isa Boletini" in Mitrovica
5. Programmatic Partnership between the Kosovo Accreditation Agency and the Austrian Accreditation Agency	Agency for Quality Assurance and Accreditation Austria (AQ Austria)	Kosovo Accreditation Agency (KAA)

In support of Kosovo's association with the Horizon Europe program and the strengthening of the existing National Contact Points (NCP) structure, ad-hoc support and capacity building were provided through the two 'Train the Trainers' sessions, as well as the review and adaptation of NCP Regulation, following the publication of the Horizon Europe program. More specifically, the following support was offered:

- a) An Input Paper on the association of Kosovo to Horizon Europe (responsibilities and benefits) was drafted by the international expertise for MESTI;
- b) A workshop on Horizon Europe: benefits and responsibilities of Kosovo's association with Horizon Europe;
- c) Ad-hoc support during the nomination of new members of the National Contact Points and new structures arising from Kosovo's pending association on Horizon Europe:



Figure 30. Workshop on Horizon Europe, 18 February 2021



Figure 31. First Train the Trainers session on Horizon Europe for NCPs, 08 July 2021

g) Individual consultations between the project expert and potential ap-

Supporting the research and innovation cooperation through the Research Grants

The open call on Research Grants was accompanied by information sessions and other forms of dissemination: thirteen applications were received under this call, which aims to facilitate exchange and scientific cooperation with partners from Southeast Europe and Austria.



Figure 33. Selection Board Meeting for Research Grants, 31 May 2021

Research Grant	Coordinator	Partner
1. Air Pollution in Kosovo - impact on human health, behaviour change, and policy recommendations	Medical University of Vienna, Center for Public Health	University of Prishtina "Hasan Prishtina", Medical Faculty; Ss. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje
2. Historical demography in Kosovo	University of Graz, Institute of History	University of Prishtina "Hasan Prishtina", Faculty of Philosophy and University of Tirana, Department of History
3. The impact of COVID19 on consumer food safety perception in Kosovo and Albania - an international comparison with developed countries	University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences, Vienna (BOKU)	University of Prishtina "Hasan Prishtina", Faculty of Agriculture and Veterinary and Agricultural University of Tirana and Faculty of Economics and Agribusiness
4. Community-based multilingualism meets internationalization: the University of Prizren as a nexus of intercommunity contact in Kosovo	University of Vienna, Faculty of Philological and Cultural Studies	University "Ukshin Hoti" in Prizren, Faculty of Philology
5. Building a post-war justice system in Kosovo: The independence, impartiality, fairness and accountability of the internationalized judiciary	University of Graz, European Training and Research Centre for Human Rights and Democracy	University "Haxhi Zeka" in Peja, Faculty of Law
6. Physical fitness, anthropometric and nutritional status of young Kosovan adults - an 8-yr follow-up study	University Vienna, Centre for Sport Sciences and University Sports	University of Prishtina "Hasan Prishtina", Faculty of Physical Education and University of Tirana
7. The Testimonies of State Reprisals: Experiences of Imprisonment, Work Dismissals, and Social Exclusion. Narratives of Kosovan Educators, Students, and Artists between 1989 and 1999	University of Graz, Centre for Southeast European Studies	University of Prishtina "Hasan Prishtina", Faculty of Philosophy and University Business Academy in Novi Sad, Serbia
8. Automated Examination Timetabling in the Faculty of Electrical and Computer Engineering - University of Prishtina	Technical University Vienna (TU), Institute of Logic and Computation	University of Prishtina "Hasan Prishtina", Faculty of Electrical and Computer Engineering and University of Sarajevo, Faculty of Electrical Engineering
9. Farmer's Handbook as a tool to improve pig welfare in Kosovo and Albania	University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences, Vienna (BOKU), Department of Sustainable Agricultural Systems	University of Prishtina "Hasan Prishtina", Faculty of Agriculture and Veterinary and Agricultural University of Tirana, Faculty of Veterinary Medicine

Setting up the Kosovar-Austrian Alumni system

For the first time in Kosovo, the Organization of Kosovar-Austrian Alumni (OKAA) was established, with all the accompanying legal bases, statutes, founders, and board members. OKAA is expected to bring together all Kosovar scholars who have graduated from Austrian Higher Education Institutions in the last 20 years, further promote internationalization and academic mobility between Kosovo and Austria, share lessons learned, and act as a catalyst for generating new ideas.



Figure 34. OKAA Constitutive Workshop, 03 September 2021

Fellowship Grants

Professional development enabled for the academic staff and researchers of Public Universities through the Ph.D./Postdoc Fellowships offered by HERAS Plus. Respectively, in the first open call: 64 months were awarded, of which Postdoc 6 candidates (total 17 scholarship months) and Ph.D. 3 candidates (total of 47 scholarship months). The candidates were evaluated on the potential to contribute to novel research and contribution for priority fields of MESTI and the National Scientific Program.

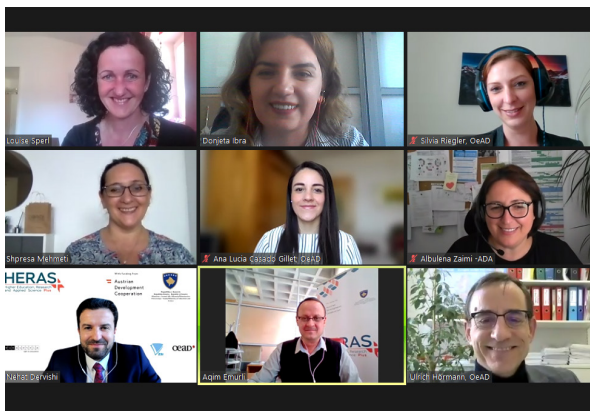


Figure 35. Selection Board Meeting for Fellowships, 31 March 2021

Steering Board meetings of HERAS Plus

The first Steering Board meeting of HERAS Plus was conducted online on February 10, 2021. The Project Consortium members and MESTI representative discussed on the progress implementation of the project, challenges faced by the Covid-19 pandemics, lessons learned and planning for the project implementation in the period ahead.

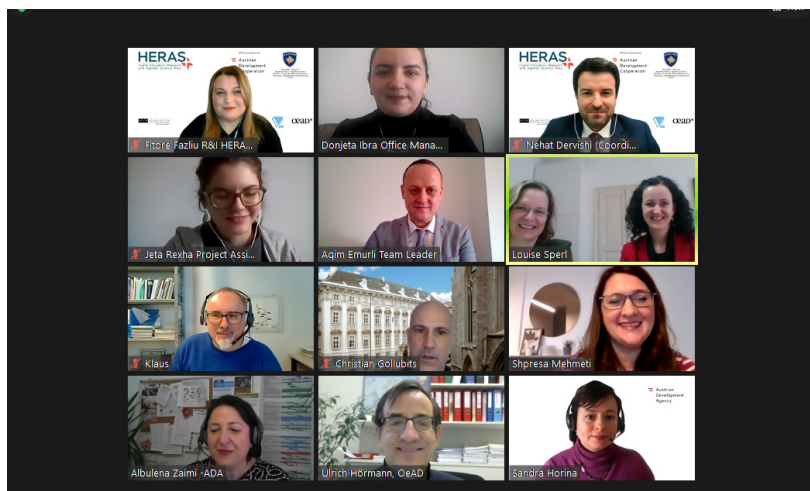


Figure 36. The first SBM, 10 February 2021

The second Steering Board meeting of HERAS Plus and meeting in an in-person setting was conducted on November 4, 2021, in a hybrid event. Presentation of the progress project implementation followed the intervention levels, per activity, milestones achieved, lessons learned and challenges faced, followed by discussion and decision making on key issues relevant to the upcoming project implementation period.



Figure 37. The second SBM, 04 November 2021



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