

# Budget Analysis for the municipalities of Peja and Prishtina

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## Abbreviations

- ILO** – International Labour Organisation
- MCYS** – Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports
- MEST** – Ministry of Education, Science and Technology
- MICS** – Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey



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# Citizen Friendly Budget - Peja 2015



# 1. Introduction

For citizens, it is crucial to be systematically informed and understand the policies and programs that are included in the budget as they directly impact their lives and wellbeing. The majority of the budget reports or documents that are published by governmental institutions are complex and citizens have difficulties to understand them. Therefore, through Citizen Friendly Budget this information will be presented in simple format easy to understand. The principal idea behind the Citizen Friendly Budget is to increase civic participation, enhance transparency and accountability among public institutions at the municipal level.

With the current structure of budget, children needs are not made visible in the Municipal Budget. Therefore without further disaggregated data that shows how much of the municipal spending actually reaches children, it is impossible to assess how successful the Municipality has been in terms of implementing its commitments to children by securing direct and indirect allocations, which can be traced and monitored.

Despite various actions, Kosovo still falls behind in putting this theory into practice. Concentrated in other priorities, the government and the policy makers missed to address or put more effort on investing in the fundamental areas that are directly related to children, such as: safety, social welfare, education, health, etc.

<sup>1</sup> The insufficient progress in these sectors directly influences the wellbeing and development of children, restraining their right to a decent standard of living.

This document can be used as a guideline for local governing institutions and officials who are accountable for formulating, developing, and monitoring the annual budget. The way budget is presented in this document will help citizens to understand better the budgetary process, allowing them to keep their representatives responsive to their needs, therefore contribute to good governance and greater transparency.

## 2. Budget and Budgetary Process Cycle

### 2.1. What is a budget?

There are different definitions that similarly emphasize the real meaning and purpose of the budget. The most common one describes it as:<sup>2</sup>



**“A government’s financial plan (or operating budget) for a certain fiscal year (January 1 through December 31) which consists of projected revenues and expenditures. Essentially, it reflects main policy concerns and strategic programs of the Government that need to be executed within a particular year.”**

<sup>1</sup> Fostering Child-Focus Spending in local municipalities (2014). Save the Children.

<sup>2</sup> A Guide through the Process of Budgeting for Indiana Local Governments. (2013) Budget Division Department of Local Government Finance.

## 2.2. The budget as a process/ Responsible Bodies

As the most effective policy instrument and most important managerial tool, government budgeting is a process, and its foundation is more than projecting governmental revenues and expenditures for a specific year. The budget serves as a financial strategy that addresses policy priorities crucial for an effective operation of the local governments for a particular period.<sup>3</sup>

As a process, budget preparation is continuous in nature as its formulation, approval, and execution occurs throughout the year.

The legal framework prescribes several concrete steps which must be respected during the development and adoption of the annual municipal budget. The body responsible for assisting municipalities with fulfilling their budget-related obligations is the Municipal Budget Department at the Ministry of Finance. The key deadlines for budget preparation are presented in Figure 1.

**Figure 1:** Annual key deadlines of municipal budget development process<sup>4</sup>

<b>30 April</b>	The Government shall approve the Medium Term Expenditure Framework covering the next fiscal year and estimates for the following two fiscal years.
<b>15 May</b>	Issuance of the First Budget Circular of the current fiscal year to the chief finance officer of each budget organization, including municipalities. “Budget Circular includes, the procedures to be followed by the municipality in preparing its proposed budget, including deadlines; the information which must be presented in the proposed budget; and information on grant level estimates and expenditure ceilings”.
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<b>1 September</b>	The Mayor must submit the municipal budget proposal to the Municipal Assembly.
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<sup>3</sup> See Law No. 03/L-048 on Public Financial Management and Accountability

<sup>4</sup> See Law No. 03/L-048 on Public Financial Management and Accountability, Municipal Budget Circular 2015/01, Law No. 03/L-221 Amending and Supplementing Law No. 03/L-048 on Public Financial Management and Accountability.

### 3. Goals and objectives of Municipality of Peja

The main vision of the municipality of Peja is to become “western Kosovo’s economic center, promoters of tourism, agriculture and agro-industry for a sustainable development. In the next 3 years Peja intends to be a region with sustainable socio – economic development, with the main focus in tourism, mountain tourism, agriculture, protection of original values of culture and nature, a region that will provide quality education, clean and healthy environment healthy for its citizens”.<sup>5</sup>



In the Figure 2 are presented strategic objectives of the Municipality of Peja for the mandate of 2014-2017.

**Figure 2:** Strategic objectives of the Municipality of Peja for the mandate 2014-2017



Promoting and attracting local and foreign investments, state funds and other agencies in the development of the tourism sector.



Supporting and promoting Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) as a prerequisite to increase employment, creating for new jobs.



Alleviating poverty through agricultural development.



Providing equal opportunities in access to infrastructure, qualitative education, healthy and clean environment to live in.



Enhancing youth development through providing a rich cultural and sports attractions for all citizens of the Municipality of Peja.

<sup>5</sup> Strategic Development Plan of the Municipality of Peja, 2015.

## 4. Budget Classification

### 4.1. Where does the money come from?

In general, Revenues are defined as money received by the Government to finance provision of the services to its citizens.

The Law on Local Government Finance specifies in details the financial resources offered to municipalities in Kosovo, consisting of municipal own source revenues, grants, and other funding necessary for the implementation of municipal competences.



**Government General Grant<sup>6</sup>** is an amount appropriated to a municipality that may be used by the municipality for any purpose relating to its competencies.



**Education Specific Grant<sup>7</sup>** is an amount appropriated to municipalities intended to finance the cost of delivering a minimum standard level of pre-primary, primary, and secondary education.



**Health and Social Service Grant<sup>8</sup>** is an amount appropriated to municipalities intended to finance the cost of offering a minimum standard level of public primary healthcare.



**Municipal Own Source Revenues<sup>9</sup>** are all the money municipalities receive or collect from their own sources.

### Peja's Budget

Compared to other municipalities in Kosovo, the local government of Peja has the third largest budget sharing. For the year of 2015, the overall budget was 21,125,278.00 € where the largest quantity of receipts derive from Education Specific Grant (36.7%), following Government General Grant (36.4%), Municipal Own Source Revenues (16.1%), and Health and Social Service Grant (10.8%).

In Figure 3 are presented total budget revenues of the Municipality of Prishtina for the year of 2015

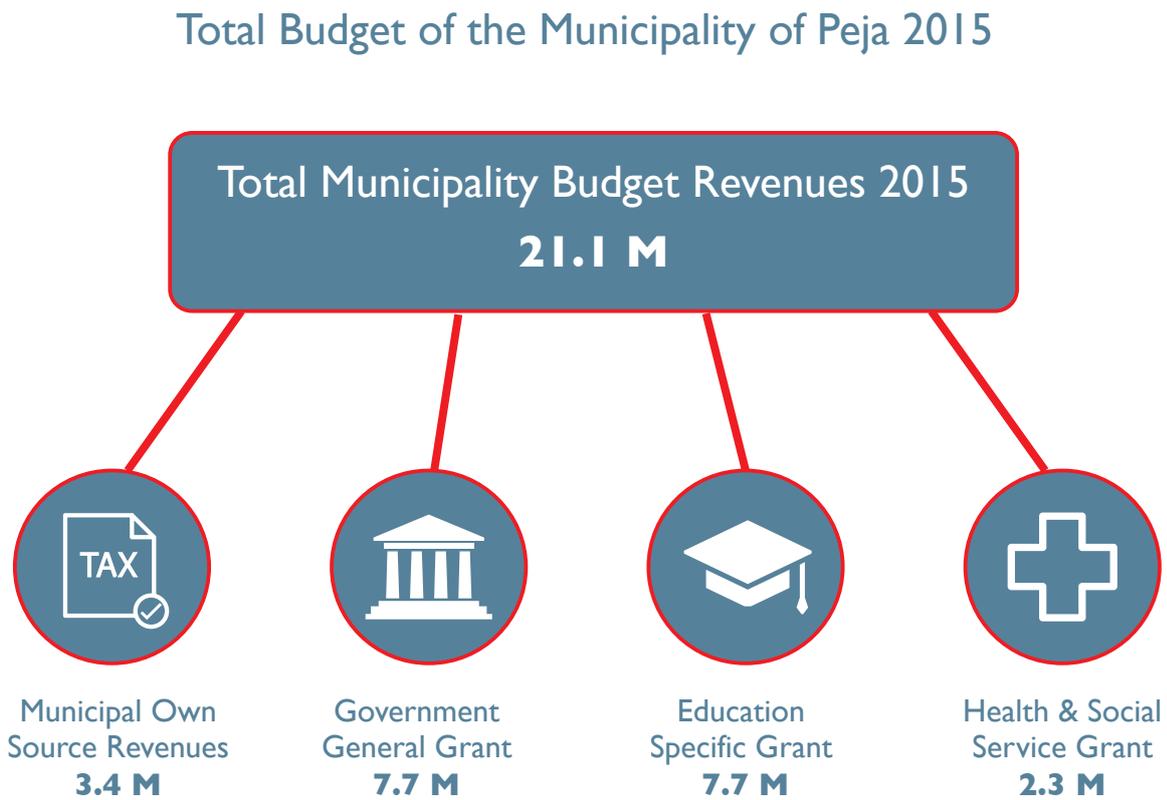
6 See Law No.03/ L-49 On Local Government Finance, Article 24

7 See Law No.03/ L-49 On Local Government Finance, Article 25

8 Jacobs, D et al. Budget Classification. IMF.

9 See, Law No.03/ L-49 On Local Government Finance, Article 8

**Figure 3:** Total Budget Revenues of Municipality of Peja 2015



**Municipal Own Source Revenues<sup>10</sup> are all the money municipalities receive or collect from the following sources:**

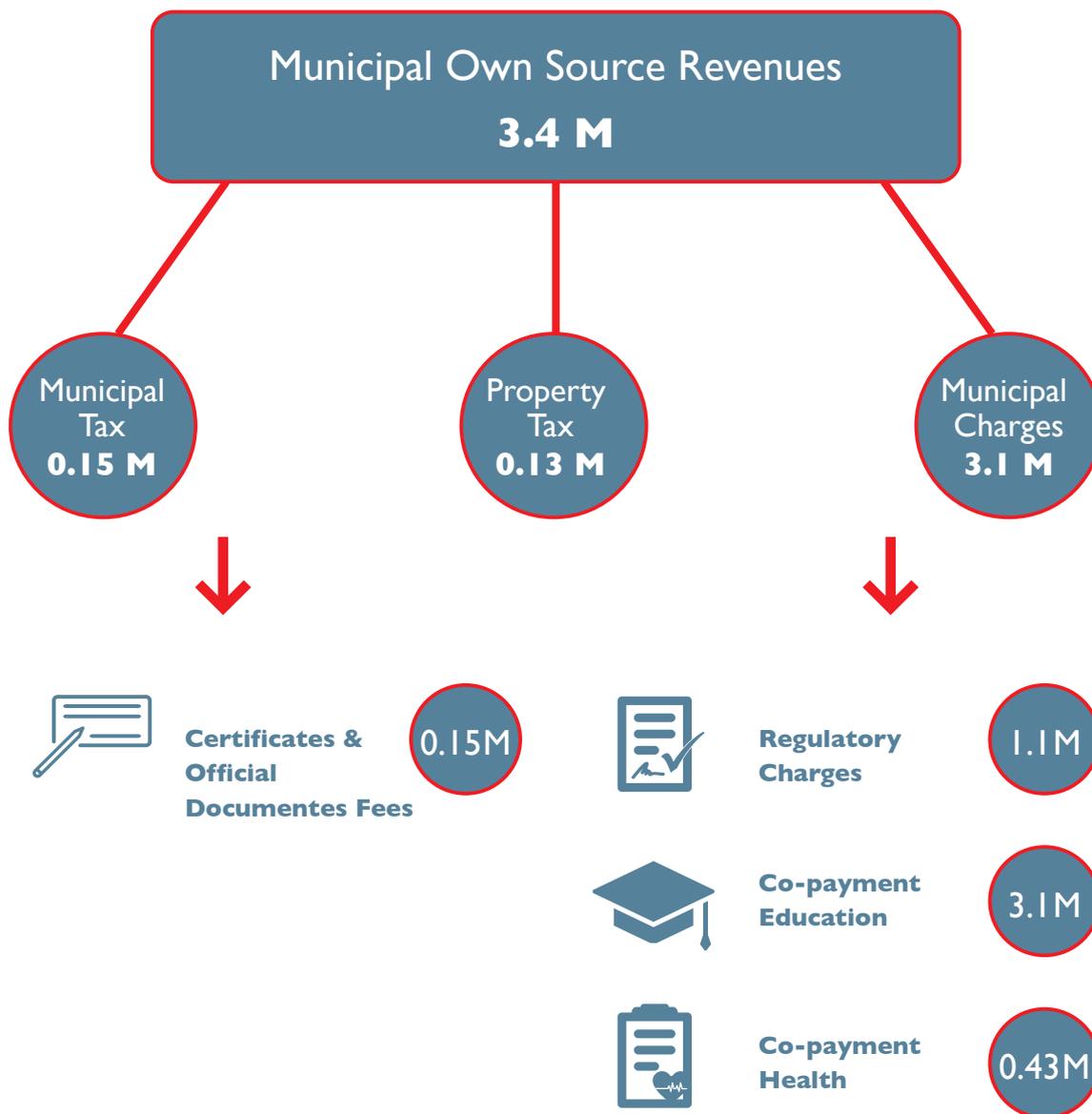
- a. Municipal taxes- Fees and user charges for public services provided by the municipality.
- b. Property Tax
- c. Municipal Charges - Regulatory charges, income from rent, education and health co-payment, and other municipal charges.
- d. Other income- Grants/ donations from foreign governments or organizations, etc.

For more information regarding Municipal Own Source Revenues see Figure 4.

<sup>10</sup> See Law No. 03/ L- 049 on Local Government Finance.

**Figure 4:** Municipal Own Source Revenues – Peja 2015

## Municipal Own Source Revenues - Peja 2015



### 4.2. Where does the money go?

A budget classification system establishes a normative framework for policy creation and accountability. The accurate classification of expenditures and revenues is essential for policy creation and analysis, efficient distribution of resources among sectors, daily budget administration, and greater transparency. <sup>11</sup>

<sup>11</sup> See footnote 8

### 4.3. The economic classification

The economic classification of the budget categorizes the type of spending incurred in central or local governments mostly used for day to day administration, classified in goods and services, utilities, wages and salaries, subsidies and transfers, and capital expenditures.<sup>12</sup>



**Goods and Services-** are municipality's spending including travel expenses, telecommunication services (mobile phone costs, internet costs), supplies (office supplies, medical and school supplies), fuel (expenditures for machinery oils, coal and wood, fuel for generators, fuel for heating and fuel for cars), maintenance (buildings, roads, information technology equipment etc.)



**Utilities -** are expenses for electricity, water, waste, central heating, telephone costs, judicial decisions, etc.



**Wages and Salaries -** or employees' compensation, this classification type comprises the compensation/payment of general government employees, municipal in this case, consisting of officers' payment and honorarium, excluding travelling and daily allowances.



**Subsidies and Transfers-** are grants (unrepayable transfers) that government/ municipality distributes to private or public enterprises, international organizations, grants for education (scholarships), payments for welfare of the disadvantaged groups of society, payments for war invalids etc.



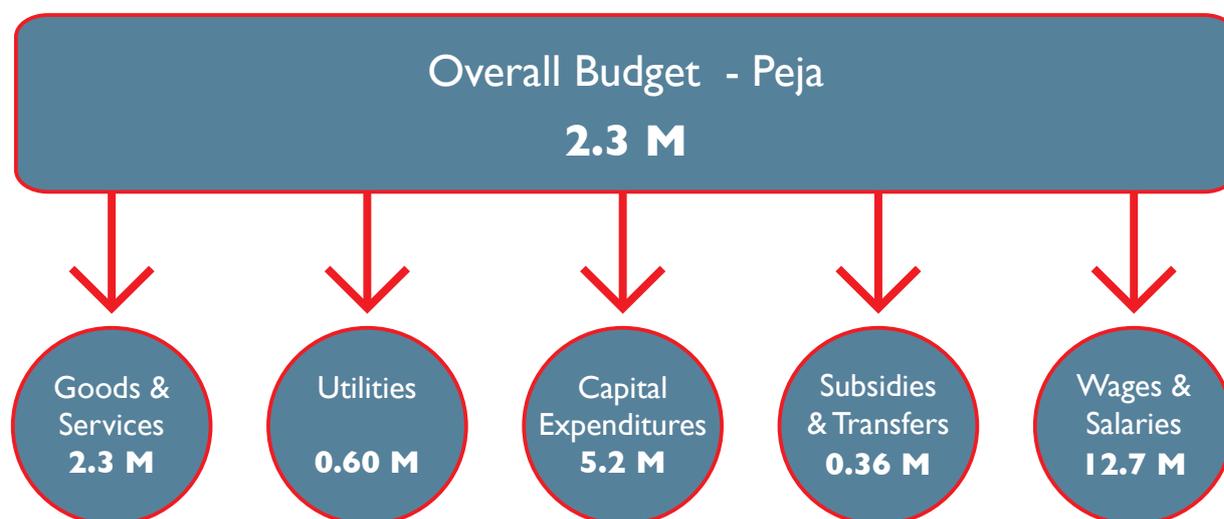
**Capital Expenditures -** are government/municipality capital investments in different projects such as infrastructure (roads, lighting), buildings, environment, education (constructions of schools, new equipment for schools and laboratories), health (hospitals, health equipment), etc.

Figure 5 presents the mid-year review of the Budget of Peja for 2015 classification of budget.

<sup>12</sup> Semi-Annual Budget Report 2015, Ministry of Finance.

**Figure 5:** Economic organization of Budget of Municipality of Peja 2015

## Mid Year Review Budget 2015 - Peja



In terms of economic classification of budget, it can be seen that Wages and Salaries (60%) represent the major spending of municipality's total budget followed by Capital Expenditures (25%). Less than 20% of municipality's total expenditures goes for Goods and Services, Utilities, Subsidies and Transfers.

### 4.4. Program classification

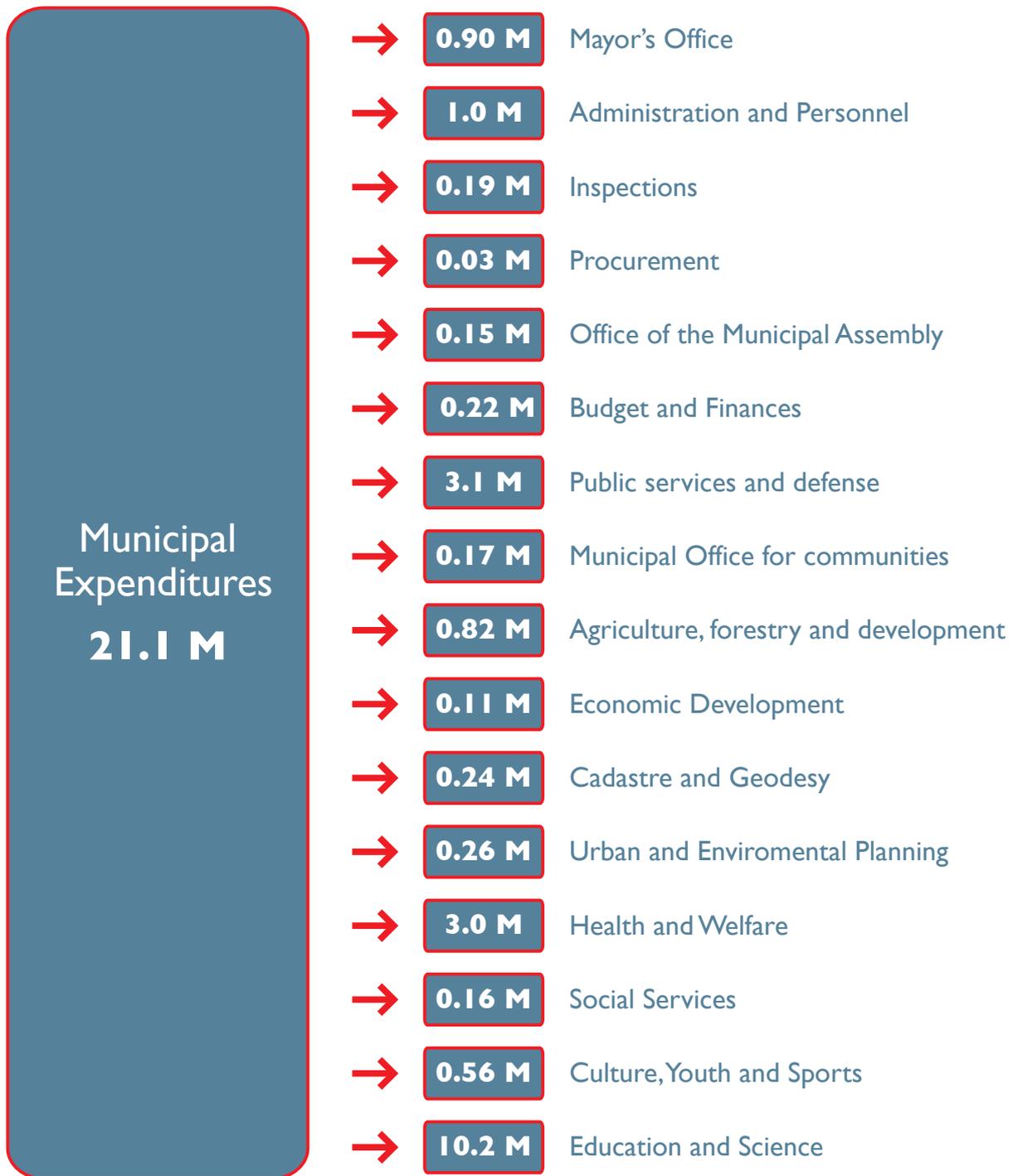
Program classification of the budget is another approach of classification of expenditures. Program consists of a set of activities that meets particular policy objectives of the government/municipality (e.g., public infrastructure or cultural services). Programs can be segmented in subprograms or activates (e.g., sports and recreation activities/ subprogram which enters under the culture, youth, and sports program). With the application of program classification, government/municipalities will easier classify and define their goals and objectives and monitor their operation through performance indicators.

From the program organization of budget, the category for which the municipality of Peja mostly spent is Education and Science (48%), following Public Services, Civil Defense and Emergency (15%), Health and Welfare (14%), Administration and Personnel (5%), Mayor's Office (4%), Agriculture, Forestry, and Development (4%), Culture, Youth and Sports (3%), Budget and Finance (1%), Urban & Environmental Planning (1%), Social Services (1%), Cadaster and Geodesy (1%), Economic Development (1%), Inspections (1%), Office of the Municipal Assembly (1%), Municipal Office for communities (1%), and Procurement (0.2%).

Detailed information regarding the municipal expenditures by program classification in money value are presented in Figure 6.

**Figure 6:** Municipal Expenditures of 2015 by Program Classification – Peja 2015

## Municipal Expenditures of 2015 by Program Classification - Peja



#### 4.4.1 Where are the children?

Protecting children and offering opportunities for their development are amongst the most important action government should undertake. In Peja, as in every local government of Kosovo, different actions have been initiated for the purpose of welfare and development of children and youth. However, the way budget is tracked or presented in the Tables of budget of the Republic of Kosovo it is very difficult to identify the amount of allocated funds with particular focus on children.

The limited data presented in the budget are not broken down in a method that empowers a child-sensitive analysis of budgeting and classification of expenditures at a more detailed level (programs that directly serve children, the procedures they follow, their objectives or funding history). The major obstacle when it comes to enhancement of transparency, community involvement, and more objective decision-making procedures in relation to budget, is the insufficient budgetary data and program information available at central and local governmental levels.

#### 4.4.2 Education and Science

In line with municipality's commitment to provide more qualitative educational services for the children and students in Peja, an estimated amount of 10.2 million EUR was apportioned to education and science category.

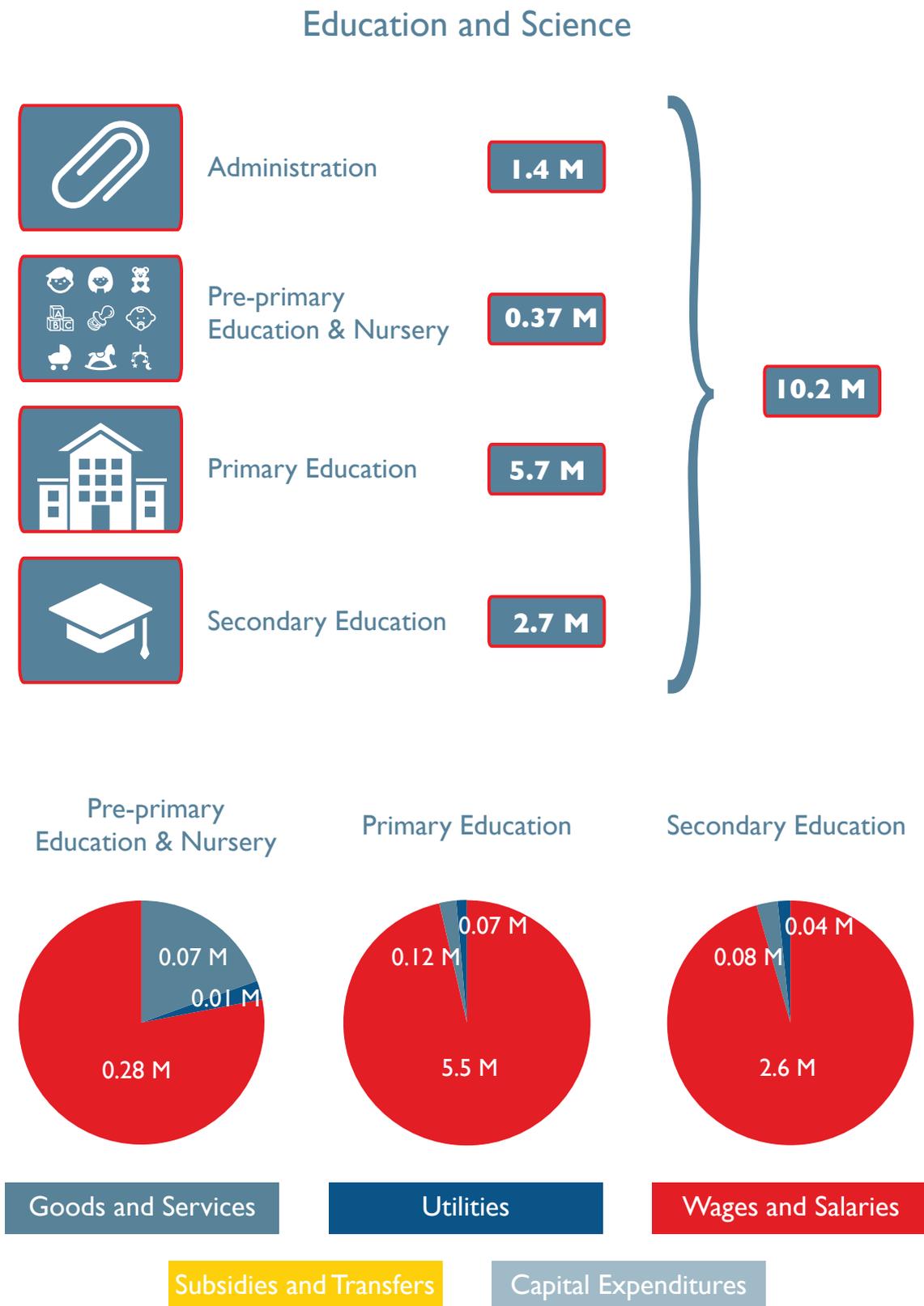
##### **Municipality's initiatives in regards to this sector:**

- Investing in school infrastructure (installment of central heating and construction of hall sports in different schools)
- Furnishing schools and their cabinets with new equipment.
- Investing in improving security in schools (construction of surrounding walls in schools).
- Building new schools in different parts of the municipality.

Data presented in the info graphic below emphasize that from the total amount of budget allocated to Education and Science category, the majority is distributed to Primary (56%) and Secondary Education (26%), following expenses in Administration (14%) and Pre-primary education (4%). In the three of these subcategories the majority of the allocated budget goes to Wages and Salaries and Goods and Services.

In Figure 7 are graphically presented the Municipal Expenditures on Education and Science for 2015.

**Figure 7:** Municipal Expenditures on Education and Science– Peja 2015



#### 4.4.3 Culture, Youth and Sports

With the aim to enhance youth development and promote creativity through culture and sport, the municipality allocated 0.55 million EUR for this sector, where 100 % of the allocation was spent on Cultural Services. Unfortunately, none of the municipal programs of budget classifications have a dedicated amount of investment aimed at children there is not a dedicated amount of investment aimed at children. None of the municipalities of Kosovo have a specific child-focused budget. However the actions/initiatives/expenditures indirectly are related to the wellbeing and development of children e.g. construction of tennis courts, books in libraries, organization of different cultural and sport activities, etc.

**Some of the municipality's initiatives to support this sector include:**

- Regulation of the areas in front of Karagaqi Hall Sport and construction of new tennis courts.
- Adding new books in the libraries of the city.
- Organization of different cultural and sport activities (supporting various national festivals, exhibitions, book fairs, traditional fairs, and youth initiatives, etc.)

Additional information on municipal spending on Culture, Youth, and Sport sector for the year of 2015 are presented on Figure 8.

#### 4.4.4 Public Services, Civil Defense, and Emergency

Allocation of 3.1 million EUR has been assigned for road infrastructure and firefighter's services. Road Infrastructure (88%) represent the major amount of the allocation, while the remaining 12% goes to fire fighters services.

**Important initiatives include but are not limited to:**

- Construction of new roads and restoration the existing roads throughout the municipality (with the main focus in rural areas).
- Implementation of construction law.
- Public lighting projects, etc.

Additional information on municipal spending on Public Services, Civil Defense, and Emergency sector for the year of 2015 are presented on Figure 8.

#### 4.4.5 Health and Welfare

As an important sector that needs special focus and needs huge improvement is Health and Welfare sector. With the aim to improve the health of its citizens and the services they receive from public medical institutions, the municipality of Peja has allocated 2.9 million euro to support various health initiatives. From the total amount of the budget allocated to Health and welfare sector 98% is distributed to Primary Care Medical centers.

**Some of the key initiatives the municipality has undertook to accelerate the improvement of the health sector include:**

- Building new Centers of Family Medicine (with the main focus in rural areas).
- Decontamination of health facilities in the Municipality of Peja (primary care centers and hospitals).
- Construction of new cabinets in different centers of family medicine in Peja.

Additional information on municipal spending on Health and Welfare sector for the year of 2015 are presented on Figure 8.

**Figure 8:** Municipal Expenditures by program organization of budget– Peja 2015



## 4.5. Subsidies and Transfers

From the total amount of municipal expenditures only 365,000 € (2% of total expenditures) has been allocated to Subsidies and Transfers. The majority of this fund 89 % is allocated to Mayor’s Office, following Social Services 8%, and Administration 3%.

### Municipality’s initiatives for social services and development of agriculture:

- Distribution of cows to support low income families and agriculture.
- Initiation of Perimkultura project “Support to farmers in setting up greenhouses for the cultivation of vegetables”
- Initiation of different projects to support persons with special needs and integration of children with disabilities (opening of the special classroom in primary schools for children with Autism, etc).

**Figure 9:** Municipal spending on Subsidies and Transfers- Peja 2015



## 5. References

A Guide through the Process of Budgeting for Indiana Local Governments (2013), Budget Division Department of Local Government Finance. [http://www.in.gov/dlgf/files/2013\\_Budget\\_Manual\\_10\\_9\\_2013.pdf](http://www.in.gov/dlgf/files/2013_Budget_Manual_10_9_2013.pdf)

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Law No. 05/L-001 on Budget of republic of Kosovo for the year 2015

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Peja's Budget 2015, Ministry of Finance.

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Tables of Budget of Kosova for the year of 2015.



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<sup>16</sup> See Law No. 03/L-048 on Public Financial Management and Accountability, Municipal Budget Circular 2015/01, Law No. 03/L-221 Amending and Supplementing Law No. 03/L-048 on Public Financial Management and Accountability.

### 3. Goals and objectives of Municipality of Prishtina

Since the beginning of its mandate in 2014, the operating principles of the municipality of Prishtina are grounded upon the main 12 promises/ goals to transform Prishtina in a city with “sustainable economic and social development, improved quality of life through enabling to its citizens access to more effective services and providing them a developed local market, advanced urban planning, regulated urban traffic, qualitative educational and medical services, providing conditions for affordable housing, easy access to municipal services through the digitalization of services and complete transparency, where citizens can feel safe and equal”.<sup>17</sup>



Twelve promises of the Municipality of Prishtina for the mandate 2014-2017 are presented in Figure 2.

**Figure 2:** Twelve promises of the Municipality of Prishtina for the mandate 2014-2017



**Sustainable Water Supply for 24 months** - beginning with the evaluation of losses based on which investment plans will be initiated and executed.



**Day care centers with affordable costs in every part of the municipality**- assessment of the need for day care centers in all neighborhoods and villages of the municipality of Prishtina and creation of action plans for new day care centers with affordable prices in every part of Prishtina.



**Education for development** - starting with evaluation of educational sector employees based on performance, selection of directors with participation of the community, providing free meals for grades I-V, investing in school infrastructure (internet connection and book shelves for each child for grades I -V) and improving security in schools.



**Market of domestic products** - through creation of a market where local farmers can sell their products excluding VAT and enhance the collaboration of domestic producers with other institutions and groups.



**Establishment of order in urban planning** - through banning illegal construction, implementation of construction law, creation of new regulatory plans and reformation of public transport.



**Equality in Prishtina** - through elimination of administrative taxes for social cases and creation of programs to exclude vulnerable from payment for municipal services, integration of children with disabilities and participation of persons with special needs in public institutions.



**Traffic regulation in Prishtina** including reformation of the public transport and payment system, providing free transport for pensioners, social cases, and other vulnerable groups.

<sup>17</sup> Prishtina, po behet (2014). Raporti Njehjecare 2014- Komuna e Prishtines.



**Affordable housing** for public sector employees with more than 10 years of serving the public sector.



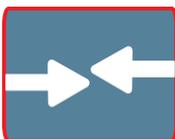
**The opening of the municipality for citizens-** improving transparency through quarterly publications of financial reports, transparent procurement, easier access to public documents, offering certificates online, introduction of “one stop shop” system, etc.



**Improving healthcare** sector through offering regular medical and stomatology services in schools, patronage services for patients with disabilities (home visits), and creating more sophisticated medical information systems through personal medical ID.



**Reformation of property taxes** - introduction of new property tax levels based on material condition and the number of habitants in residential buildings.



**Decision making in neighborhoods** - functionalization of local communities to meet the citizens' needs and reorganization of neighborhood councils.

## 4. Budget Classification

### 4.1. Where does the money come from?

In general, Revenues are defined as money received by the Government to finance provision of the services to its citizens.

The Law on Local Government Finance specifies in details the financial resources offered to municipalities in Kosovo, consisting of municipal own source revenues, grants, and other funding necessary for the release of municipal competences.



**Government General Grant<sup>18</sup>** is an amount appropriated to a municipality that may be used by the municipality for any purpose relating to its competencies



**Education Specific Grant<sup>19</sup>** is an amount appropriated to municipalities intended to finance the cost of delivering a minimum standard level of pre-primary, primary, and secondary education.



**Health and Social Service Grant<sup>20</sup>** is an amount appropriated to municipalities intended to finance the cost of offering a minimum standard level of public primary healthcare.



**Municipal Own Source Revenues<sup>21</sup>** are all the money municipalities receive or collect from their own sources.

### Prishtina's Budget

Compared to other municipalities in Kosovo, the local government of Prishtina has the largest budget sharing. For the year of 2015, the overall budget was 62,114,156.00 € where the largest quantity of receipts derive from Municipal Own Source Revenues (43.7%), following Education Specific Grant (25.0 %), Government General Grant (23.7%), and Health and Social Service Grant (7.6%). In Figure 3 are presented total budget revenues of the Municipality of Prishtina for the year of 2015.

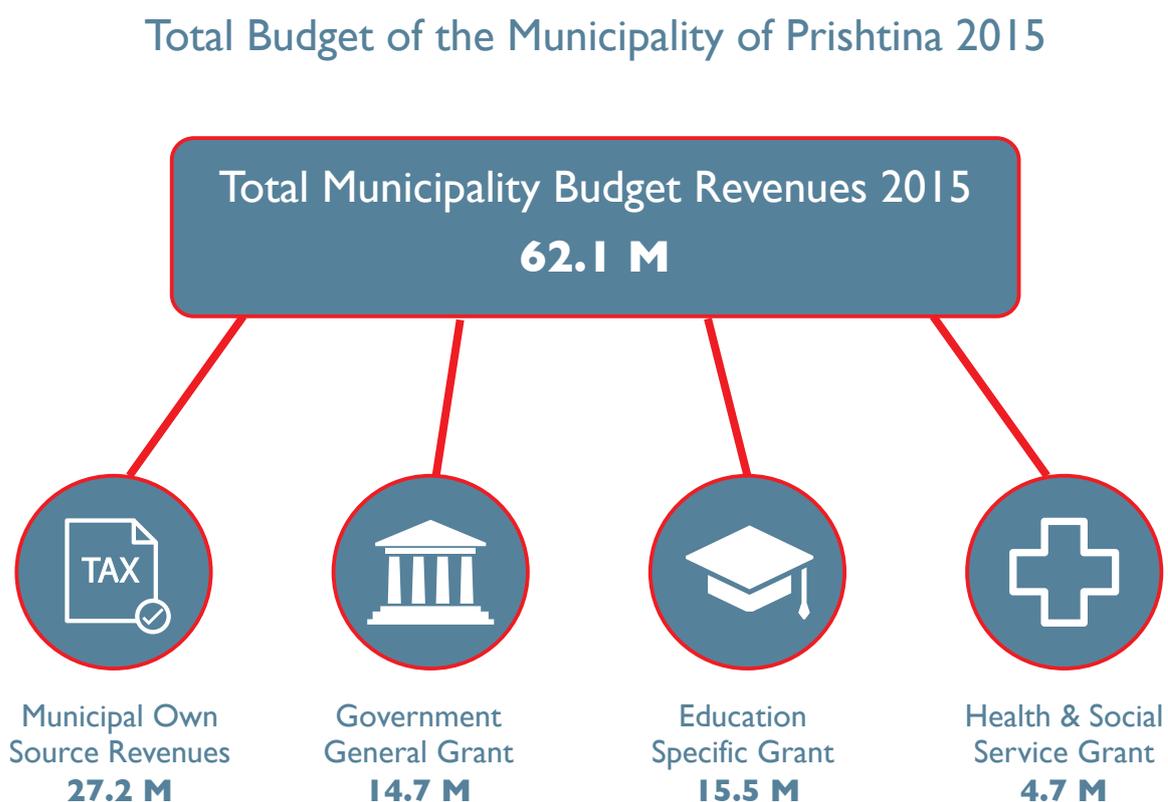
18 See Law No.03/ L-49 on Local Government Finance, Article 24.

19 See Law No.03/ L-49 on Local Government Finance, Article 25.

20 Jacobs, D et al. Budget Classification. IMF.

21 See, Law No.03/ L-49 on Local Government Finance, Article 8.

**Figure 3:** Total Budget Revenues of Municipality of Prishtina 2015



**Municipal Own Source Revenues<sup>22</sup> are all the money municipalities receive or collect from the following sources:**

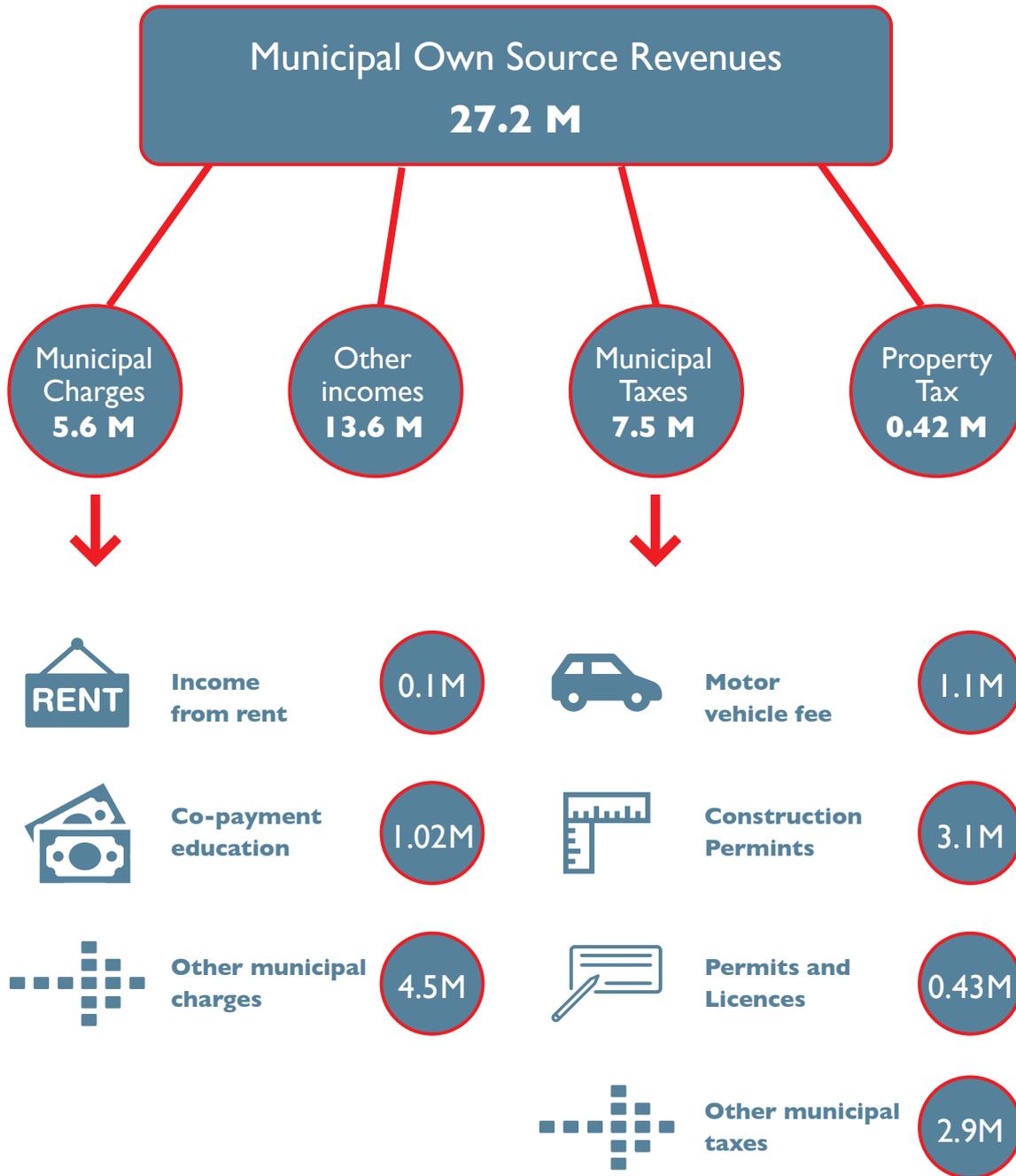
- a. Municipal taxes- Fees and user charges for public services provided by the municipality.
- b. Property Tax
- c. Municipal Charges - Regulatory charges, income from rent, education and health co-payment, and other municipal charges.
- d. Other income- Grants/ donations from foreign governments or organizations, etc.

For more information regarding Municipal Own Source Revenues see Figure 4.

<sup>22</sup> See Law No. 03/ L- 049 on Local Government Finance.

**Figure 4:** Municipal Own Source Revenues – Prishtina 2015

## Municipal Own Source Revenues - Prishtina 2015



### 4.2. Where does the money go?

A budget classification system establishes a normative framework for policy creation and accountability. The accurate classification of expenditures and revenues is essential for policy creation and analysis, efficient distribution of resources among sectors, daily budget administration, and greater transparency.<sup>23</sup>

<sup>23</sup> See footnote 8

### 4.3. The economic classification

The economic classification of the budget categorizes the type of spending incurred in central or local governments mostly used for day to day administration, classified in goods and services, utilities, wages and salaries, subsidies and transfers, and capital expenditures.<sup>24</sup>



**Goods and Services-** are municipality's spending including travel expenses, telecommunication services (mobile phone costs, internet costs), supplies (office supplies, medical and school supplies), fuel (expenditures for machinery oils, coal and wood, fuel for generators, fuel for heating and fuel for cars), maintenance (buildings, roads, information technology equipment etc.)



**Utilities** - are expenses for electricity, water, waste, central heating, telephone costs, judicial decisions, etc.



**Wages and Salaries** - or employees' compensation, this classification type comprises the compensation/payment of general government employees, municipal in this case, consisting of officers' payment and honorarium, excluding travelling and daily allowances.



**Subsidies and Transfers** - are grants (unrepayable transfers) that government/municipality distributes to private or public enterprises, international organizations, grants for education (scholarships), payments for welfare of the disadvantaged groups of society, payments for war invalids etc.



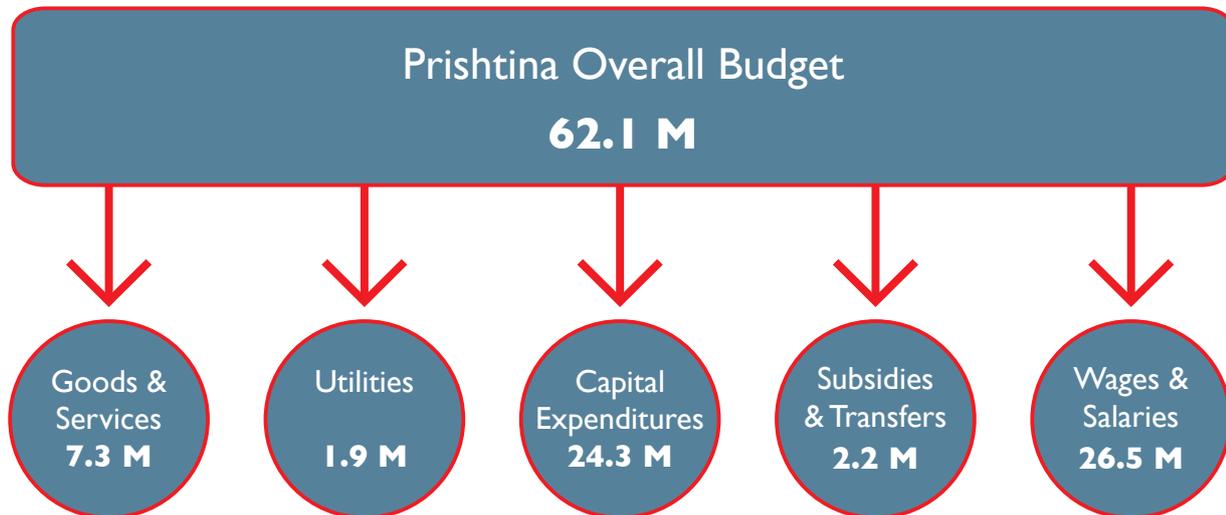
**Capital Expenditures** - are government/municipality capital investments in different projects such as infrastructure (roads, lighting), buildings, environment, education (constructions of schools, new equipment for schools and laboratories), health (hospitals, health equipment), etc.

Figure 5 presents the mid-year review of the Budget of Prishtina for 2015 classification of budget.

<sup>24</sup> Semi-Annual Budget Report 2015, Ministry of Finance.

**Figure 5:** Economic organization of Budget of Municipality of Prishtina 2015

## Mid Year Review Budget 2015 - Prishtina



In terms of economic classification of budget, it can be seen that Wages and Salaries (43%) represent the major spending of municipality's total budget followed by Capital Expenditures (39%). Less than 15% of municipality's total expenditures goes for Goods and Services, Subsidies and Transfers, and Utilities.

### 4.4. Program classification

Program classification of the budget is another approach of classification of expenditures. Program consists of a set of activities that meets particular policy objectives of the government/municipality (e.g., public infrastructure or cultural services). Programs can be segmented in subprograms or activates (e.g., sports and recreation activities/ subprogram which enters under the culture, youth, and sports program). With the application of program classification, government/municipalities will easier classify and define their goals and objectives and monitor their operation through performance indicators.

From the program organization of budget, the category for which the municipality of Prishtina mostly spent is Education and Science (40%), following Public Services, Civil Defense and Emergency (22%), Health and Welfare (13%), Administration and Personnel (8%), Budget and Finance (6%), Culture, Youth and Sports (4%), Agriculture, Forestry, and Development (2%), Urban & Environmental Planning (2%), Social Services (1%), Cadaster and Geodesy (1%), Economic Development (0.5%), Mayor's Office (0.4%), Inspections (0.4%), Office of the Municipal Assembly (0.3%), Municipal Office for communities (0.3%), and Procurement (0.09%).

Detailed information regarding the municipal expenditures by program classification in money value are presented in Figure 6.

**Figure 6:** Municipal Expenditures of 2015 by Program Classification – Prishtina 2015

## Municipal Expenditures of 2015 by Program Classification - Prishtina



#### 4.4.1 Where are the children?

Protecting children and offering opportunities for their development are amongst the most important action government should undertake. In Prishtina, as in every local government of Kosovo, different actions have been initiated for the purpose of welfare and development of children and youth. However, the way budget is tracked or presented in the Tables of budget of the Republic of Kosovo it is very difficult to identify the amount of allocated funds with particular focus on children.

The limited data presented in the budget is not broken down in a method that empowers a child-sensitive analysis of budgeting and classification of expenditures at a more detailed level (programs that directly serve children, the procedures they follow, their objectives or funding history). The major obstacle when it comes to enhancement of transparency, community involvement, and more objective decision-making procedures in relation to budget, is the insufficient budgetary data and program information available at central and local governmental levels.

#### 4.4.2 Education and Science

In line with municipality's commitment to provide more qualitative educational services for the children and students in Prishtina, an estimated amount of 24.6 million euros was apportioned to education and science category.

##### **Municipality's promises/ initiatives in regards to education sector:**

- Assessment of the need for day care centers in all neighborhoods and villages of the municipality of Prishtina.
- Creation of action plans for new day care centers with affordable prices in every part of Prishtina, and reparation of old buildings.
- Providing free meals for grades I-V.
- Construction of new schools and reparation of old ones.
- Investing in school infrastructure (internet connection and book shelves for each child for grades I -V).
- Furnishing 34 cabinets of 12 schools in Prishtina with new equipment.
- Investing in improving security in schools.

Data presented in the info graphic below emphasize that from the total amount of budget allocated to Education and Science category, the majority is distributed to Primary (51 %) and Secondary Education (26 %), following expenses in Administration (12 %) and Pre-primary education (11 %). In the three of these subcategories the majority of the allocated budget goes to Wages and Salaries and Capital Expenditures. In Figure 7 are graphically presented the Municipal Expenditures on Education and Science for 2015.

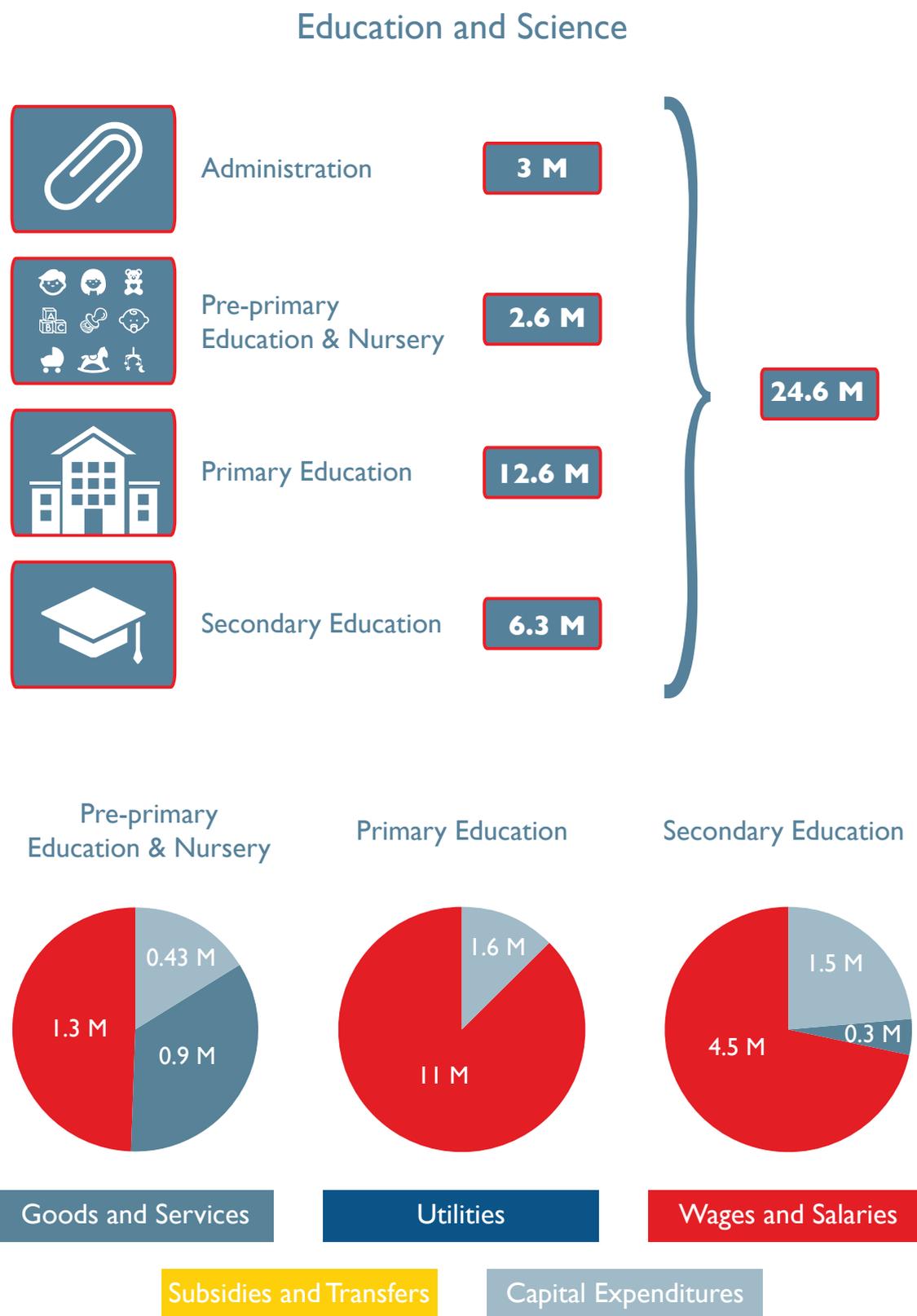
##### 4.4.2 Culture, Youth and Sports

With the aim to enhance youth development through culture and sport, the municipality allocated 2.6 million euros for this sector, where 61 % of the allocation is spent on Cultural Services and 39% on Sports & Recreation.

##### **Municipality's initiation in regards to culture, youth, and sports program:**

- Construction of playing corners and sports fields in the municipality of Pristina.
- Construction of closed Olympic swimming pool.
- Renovation of sports facilities.
- Supplying schools and city libraries with new books.
- Restoration of cultural heritage objects, etc.

**Figure 7: Municipal Expenditures on Education and Science– Prishtina 2015**



#### 4.4.3 Culture, Youth and Sports

With the aim to enhance youth development through culture and sport, the municipality allocated 2.6 million euros for this sector, where 61 % of the allocation is spent on Cultural Services and 39% on Sports & Recreation.

##### **Some of the municipality's initiatives in regards to culture, youth, and sports program:**

- Construction of playing corners and sports fields in the municipality of Pristina.
- Construction of closed Olympic swimming pool.
- Renovation of sports facilities.
- Supplying schools and city libraries with new books.
- Restoration of cultural heritage objects, etc.
- Additional information on municipal spending on Culture, Youth, and Sport sector for the year of 2015 are presented on Figure 8.

#### 4.4.4 Public Services, Civil Defense, and Emergency

Allocation of 13.6 million has been apportioned for road and public infrastructure, and firefighter's services. Road Infrastructure (62%) represent the major amount of the allocation, following public infrastructure by 33 %, and fire fighters services by 5%.

##### **Important initiatives regarding traffic regulation and urban planning in Prishtina:**

- Reformation of the public transport and payment system.
- Providing free transport for pensioners, social cases, and other vulnerable groups (lines 3 and 4).
- Creation of the public parking company in the center of Prishtina "Parkingu Prishtina".
- Anti-parking measures in the center of the city- in prohibited parts, release sidewalks.
- Creation of policies to limit the circulation of cars in the center.
- Banning illegal construction.
- Implementation of construction law.
- Creation of new regulatory plans and reformation of public transport.

Additional information on municipal spending on Public Services, Civil Defense, and Emergency sector for the year of 2015 are presented on Figure 8.

#### 4.4.5 Health and Welfare

As an important sector that needs special focus and needs huge improvement is Health and Welfare sector. With the aim to improve the health of its citizens and the services they receive from public medical institutions, the municipality of Prishtina has allocated 8.2 million EUR to support various health initiatives.

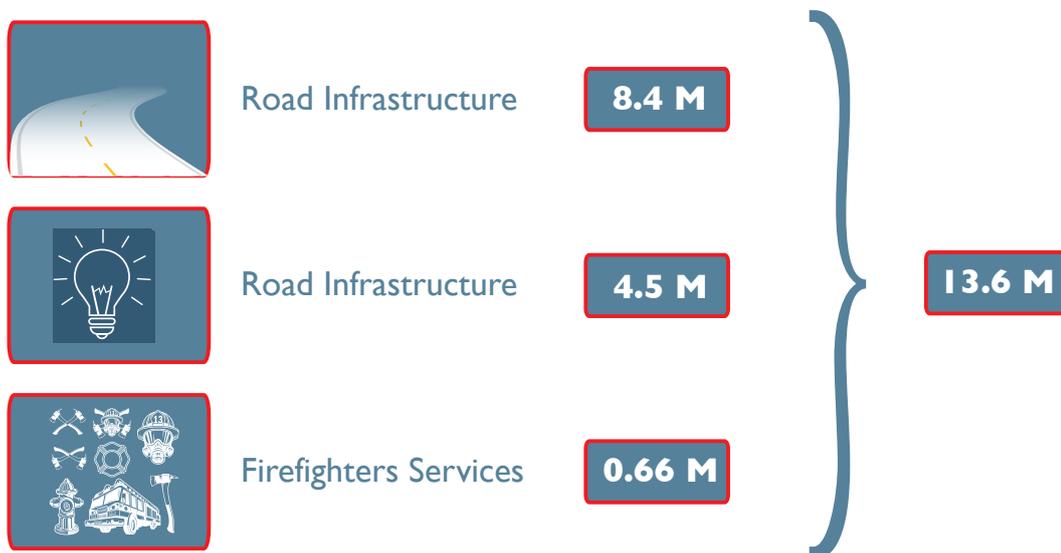
##### **Some of the key initiatives the municipality has undertook to accelerate the improvement of the health sector include:**

- Offering regular medical and stomatology services in schools.
- Patronage services for patients with disabilities (home visits).
- Creating more sophisticated medical information systems through personal medical ID.

Additional information on municipal spending on Health and Welfare sector for the year of 2015 are presented on Figure 8.

**Figure 8:** Municipal Expenditures by program organization of budget– Prishtina 2015

### Public Services, Civil Defense and Emergency



### Culture, Youth and Sport



### Health and Welfare



## 4.5. Subsidies and Transfers

### **Agriculture**

In line with the priority to support domestic producers and increase local production capacities through various grants and subsidies, the local government of Prishtina 47 % of its total budget apportioned for Subsidies and Transfers has distributed to agriculture field, with the main focus in agriculture and farming.

#### **Some of the Municipality's subsidies for agriculture :**

- Allocated subsidies for vegetable production
- Support for egg production farms.
- Support for wheat planting.
- Capacity building for storage of fruits and vegetables.
- Capacity building honey production and support for the development of ecological beekeeping.
- Support for the establishment of new orchards (tree fine-raspberries and strawberries).
- Direct Payment Support for beekeepers.
- Support to farmers for irrigation of agricultural crops.
- Serra and Potatoes.

### **Culture, Youth, and Sports**

Considering the fact that Prishtina is the city of young people, many coming from other rural areas for studies or more working opportunities, significant investments have been made in improving this sector. In support for the youth development through culture and sport, the municipality of Prishtina has distributed 23 % of its total budget allocated for Subsidies and Transfers for this sector.

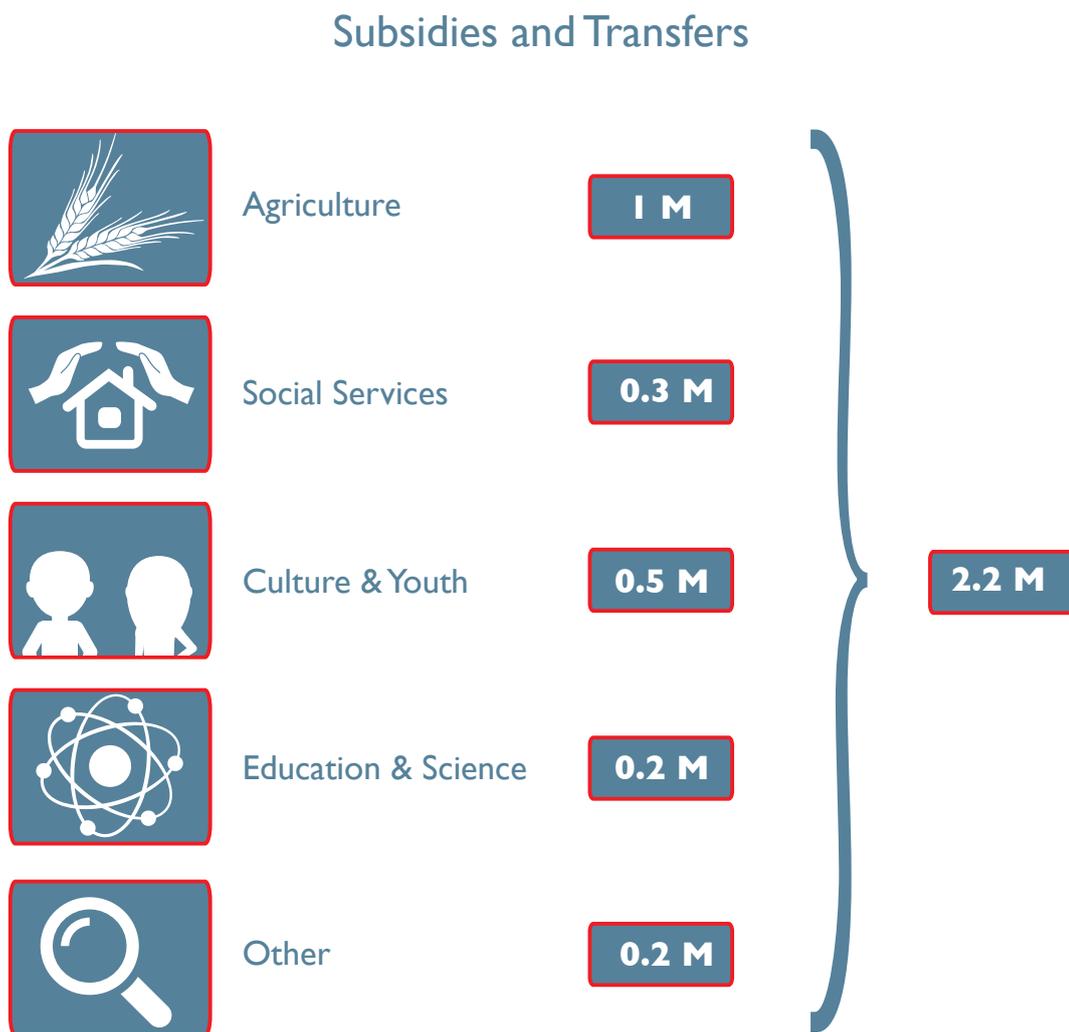
#### **Municipality's subsidies for culture :**

- Subsidies for financing of municipal cultural institutions (Dodona, FCC, etc.)
- Financial support for independent cultural institutions, festivals and annual events.
- Subsidies for Publishing, Visual Arts Exhibitions, Music, Manifestations & Events, Film, and Theater.

### **Social Services**

Social Services is the third sector mostly supported by the local government of Prishtina were 13% of its total budget apportioned for Subsidies and Transfers has been distributed to social sector services.

**Figure 9:** Municipal spending on Subsidies and Transfers- Prishtina 2015



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Law No. 03/L-221 Amending and Supplementing Law No. 03/L-048 on Public Financial Management and Accountability.

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Prishtina's Budget 2015, Ministry of Finance. [file:///C:/Users/admin/Downloads/Buxheti\\_PR\\_MF\\_2015\\_VF.pdf](file:///C:/Users/admin/Downloads/Buxheti_PR_MF_2015_VF.pdf)  
Semi-Annual Budget Report 2015, Ministry of Finance

Tables of Budget of Kosova for the year of 2015.

## 6. Appendices

### 6.1. Appendix A: Citizen's Engagement in the preparation of budget

Every year the Municipality of Prishtina holds public discussions for the preparation of the budget for the following year. This year it held public discussions with citizens for the preparation of the budget of 2016. These discussions were based on the instructions provided in the 1st Budget Circular of 2016 for municipalities issued from the Ministry of Finance of the Republic of Kosovo and the Law on Public Financial Management and Accountability for each budgetary program.<sup>25</sup>

The purpose of the public discussions is to increase citizen's engagement in the preparation of the budget and the Medium-Term Expenditure Framework, as well as review the proposed budgets for the following fiscal year. In the table below is presented the schedule of the budget public hearings for the Budget of Year 2016 in Prishtina.

**Figure 10:** Budget Public Hearings for the Budget of Year 2016 in Prishtina

Program	Date	Time	Location
General Discussion	20.08.2015	16:00	The old building of the municipality
Public Services	20.08.2015	18:00	The new building of the municipality
Local Infrastructure	21.08.2015	18:00	The old building of the municipality
Economy & local development	24.0.2015	18:00	Primary School- Prugovc
Urbanism and Cadaster	25.08.2015	16:00	The new building of the municipality
Culture, youth, & sport	25.08.2015	18:00	"Hivzi Sylejmani" Library, Tauk Bahce
Healthcare	26.08.2015	18:00	Family Medical Center
Education	27.08.2015	18:00	Primary School " Xhemajl Mustafa" Dardani
General Discussion	28.05.2015	18:00	The new building of the municipality

Other means of communication through which citizens of Prishtina will have the opportunity to get engaged with the preparation of the municipality budget are access through official municipality web page and forums where different topics are discussed.

<sup>25</sup> Degjimet Publike Buxhetore per Buxhetin e Vitit 2016 (2015).





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# Budget Analysis for Children in the Municipalities of Pristina and Peja 2015



## I. Introduction

The socio-economic development processes in Kosovo are at their very early stage. Widespread poverty continues to hamper the potential for economic and social advancement. Children are among the disproportionately affected and vulnerable groups of this society. Children in Kosovo are more likely to be under national poverty lines, engaged in precarious situations such as forced labour and begging, and suffer malnourishment and other type of preventable diseases.<sup>26</sup> Kosovo has begun to work towards improving the economic and social situation of children.

Although not yet a UN member country, the constitution of Kosovo includes by reference the International Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). In addition, there is a legislative and institutional framework to protect children against forced labour, sexual exploitation and other illicit activities as well as to ensure basic rights such as free and compulsory education.

Kosovar institutions have started to include objectives that relate to children's welfare in their policy-making agendas. Examples of these objectives can be found in the strategies and action plans compiled mainly by Ministry of Education Science and Technology and that of Health and Labor and Social Welfare.

In light of these prevailing problems in Kosovo, the large scale objectives of this research are to support institutions to effectively engage the citizens' and especially children's view in the budgeting process, increase transparency and raise funds to allocate to children's programmes.

One of the ways to facilitate civic participation is to provide transparent and accessible tools for the civil society and public, such as an independent detailed analysis of the legislative, strategic and expenditure framework operating in the country. By preparing material which independently informs, this report will help in increasing civic participation which will in turn ensure that children are rightly heard and their needs are taken into account when the allocation of resources is done.

The concrete goals of this analysis are to map out the situation of and expenditure on children in the municipality of Pristina and Peja for 2015. It will shed light on the extent that children are prioritised in these municipalities mainly by overviewing the legislative as well as the strategic framework in which they operate. It will support these findings by analysing in detail the budget for 2015 and the amounts allocated for children. Lastly, it will attempt to provide an evaluation of the budget based on findings from key indicators, group discussion with children and municipal representatives well as qualitative interviews with relevant stakeholders.

Thus, through this analysis we will answer two questions. The first one is estimating the extent of allocations and spending on children in the two municipalities separately. The second question is mainly on the autonomy and desire of relevant institutions to spend and target children in their policymaking process.

This study is structured as follows. The next section explains in detail the methodology applied to this analysis. The third section contains findings for expenditure on children as a whole and it gives detailed explanations for the targeted sectors: Education, Health, Protection and Development. The fourth section provides central remarks and the last section outlines 7 detailed recommendations that have sprung from this budget analysis for children for the municipality of Pristina and Peja.

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26 Stubbs, P. and Danijel Nestić. (2010) Child Poverty in Kosovo - Policy Options Paper & Synthesis Report. UNICEF, Croatia.

## 2. Methodology: Framework for budget analysis for children

The budget analysis methodology was prepared after consulting and carefully reviewing the documents provided in the Save the Children Resource Centre, specifically the guides and toolkit for Child Rights Governance and Budget analysis.<sup>27</sup> The analysis is done primarily at the municipal level focusing only on that of Pristina and Peja. The country level approach has been used wherever documents and data were not available at a lower level. The reason for the lack of documents at the municipal or even lower level is either that they do not exist (i.e. municipalities do not have their own strategies for children) or at times they exist only for internal purposes such as work plans, expenses data, etc. The building blocks of the methodological approach to this study are the definitions of the target group, sectors and question which the policy paper will answer.

While the title evidently reveals that the target group for this analysis are children, we have attempted to define this group as precisely as possible as which has allowed us to make the distinction between relevant programs, the level of expenditure, commitments made as well as the performance indicators. Enlarging or shirking the target group can reveal different outcomes. For example, if one takes only infants, their performance in health indicators might be relatively better than the adolescents or vice versa. According to international standards, UNCRC specifically, child is defined as a person below the age of 18. Even though, the UNCRC is not signed directly by Kosovo as it is not a member of UN, the convention is included in the country constitution. Article 22 of Kosovo's constitution allows for the direct applicability of certain international agreements and instruments among which is the Convention on the Rights of the Child. In this analysis the UNCRC definition has been adopted since Kosovo does not have a distinct one and by Article 22 it allows for the international agreements to be applicable unless stated otherwise.

The UNCRC categorizes rights in generally four topic areas: Survival, Development, Protection and Participation rights. These rights are more or less in line with what has been put forth in the Article 50 of the Constitution in Kosovo. However, the budgetary allocations and expenditure cannot follow directly this structure. Typically they are separated into different areas that govern health, education, etc. Thus the applied sectors in this analysis are Health; Education; Protection and Development. The latter sector is a wide one which includes numerous elements that do not strictly belong to one of the aforementioned sectors, but maximize a multitude of aspects of children's potential and their development. The analysis answers key questions of the report per targeted group and per targeted sector.

Before continuing with the analysis, the framework as well as the context for analysis were set up. The latter has been derived from the current state of legislation and commitments of the state with respect to children. Kosovo's Constitution, the child related legislation as well as the local and national strategies have been thoroughly scanned to disentangle what are the state's commitments and obligations for as well as the rights of children in Kosovo. The rationale for having gone over the aforementioned documents has been to provide as accurate, up to date and objective overview of the policies and situation of children in Kosovo.

Given that the focus of this paper is the municipality, their autonomy on decision making was scrutinised in addition to the amount of funds they receive from the central budget. The adequateness of these expenditures and programs in turn has been compared against key indicators of the targeted sectors (education, health, protection and development). This assessment of the current situations, projections and, more importantly, sustainability of central and local funds has allowed us to critically assess the expenditure for children at the municipal level. The legal coverage extrapolated from the analysis of aforementioned documents refers to an evaluation of whether the local bodies are meeting their input obligations. In other words, the latter have been measured to some extent by looking at the availability of adequate legislation and strategies, prioritisation of children and the nature of expenditure. The effective coverage refers to the analysis of whether the local bodies are meeting their output obligations. This has been measured through checking the level of access, participation and satisfaction of different groups in programs run by the municipalities.

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27 Save the Children (2010). Budget for Children Analysis: A beginner's Guide. Save the Children and HAQ: Centre for Child Rights.

Following the above line of thinking will enable us to make a thorough analysis of the municipalities' performance. Analysis can then reveal whether the municipality is performing better at the input or output side, what can be potential sources of funding and provide recommendations on areas which seem most problematic.

In addition to desk analysis, the methodology consists of group discussions and in-depth interviews, which have been conducted in order to explore the needs and opinions of children and those of relevant stakeholder how to best represent and fulfil children's rights through the budgeting processes of the given municipalities, Peja and Prishtina. Four group discussions were held, two in each municipality, one with relevant stakeholders and one with children. The list of participants can be found in the Appendix A.2. There were in total 6 Semi-Structured Interviews with relevant stakeholders. The questionnaire and the list of interviewees can be found in the Appendix A.3.

These additional in-the-field instruments have equipped us with substantial information to understand, analyse and identify the potential channels of raising the voices of children in the decisions and policy making process of the local and even central level institutions. The information derived from the discussion has been especially relevant for understanding the effective coverage of expenditure on children considering the lack of detailed data on the matter.

### 3. Children and the Budget: Legislation, Expenditure and Coverage

The budgeting process in Kosovo as such does not offer a single code for expenditure on children. Based on this and the impossibility to disentangle which projects directly impact children, the analysis employs the methodological approach provided in detail in Section 2. In short, to fully analyse the budget and see how much and how adequate the expenditure on children is and what more can be done for them, it is important to assess the laws, strategies and their current situation with respect to their rights.

Wherever local documents were missing, the central ones were obtained assuming that while there are differences they are not too stark to be misleading. The drafting and implementation of strategies as well as the expenditure on children as a whole may or may not directly lead to satisfactory results when it comes to respecting children's rights as it will be seen in the following subsections.

However, it gives a comprehensive picture of the whole situation on children's rights and expenditure to respect them for the targeted municipalities. For example, table 1 below provides the formal mapping for the targeted sectors for children at the central and local level for Pristina and Peja. The most striking message is that there are no local action plans or strategies for children on an overall level or even for separate sectors. This fact is especially relevant given that the responsibilities have been decentralised and it is the municipality who should act in devising programs for children. The existence of strategies at the central level does not have a follow-up plan at the local level which may serve as a breaking point in the chain of actions. The laws and the reference to UNCRC make the legislation rather in sync with international levels. There is still no law on public health that targets specifically children. Protection is also an underdeveloped part of the legislation for children and a new law for this case is in the process of drafting. Development has certain laws which are applicable to, but more needs to be done to emphasize essential elements of child's development in the legislative framework.

**Table I: Legislative and Formal Mapping of Children's Rights in Kosovo 2015**

Legislative and Formal Mapping of Children's Rights in Kosovo 2015						
	Laws	Strategy / Action Plan			Comments	
		Central	Local			
			Pristina	Peja	Laws	Strategy / Action Plan
Children's Rights	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	×	×	Article 50 of Kosovo's Constitution	OGG compiles the strategy for Children's Rights at central level.
Education	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	...	×	Law 2006/02-L52; 2008/03-L-068; 2011/04-L-032; 2006/02-L67; 2011/04-L-097	MEST compiles the strategy for children's education at the central level. The work plan of Pristina's municipality provides special targets for the education of children.
Health	×	<input type="checkbox"/>	...	×	Laws 2004/38; 2013/04-L-249; 2012/04-L-125; 2011/04-L-081; 2006/02-L81	Ministry of Health has compiled a strategy at the central level for the health of mothers and children. There are some targets related to health of children in the Pristina's municipality work plan.
Protection	×	...	×	×	Laws 2010/03-L-182; 2010/03-L-238; 2013/04-L-218	New law specific on child protection in the process of drafting. There is a strategy at the national level for protection of children against child labour.
Development	×	×	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Laws 2009/03-L-145; 2008/03-L-022; 2010/03-L-212	In both Peja and Pristina municipalities, the Departments for Youth, Culture and Sports have action plans for recreational activities that include children and their development.

### 3.1. Revenues and Expenditures for 2015

In addition to the formal framework, from which one can derive the importance attached to children in these two municipalities, the level of spending towards children reveals a substantial part of the actual efforts put from the institutional side on this direction. The budgeted revenues for the municipality of Pristina as of 2015 stand at €62,114,156 and that of the municipality of Peja amounts to a total of €21,125,278. Figure 1 below shows that the Government's General Grant accounts for 24 and 36 percent of the budgeted revenues for 2015 for Pristina and Peja respectively. The education Specific grant contributes significantly to the 2015 budget with 25 percent for Pristina and 37 percent for Peja. The municipality's own revenues which are typically made of property tax, municipal charges, etc., are rather large for Pristina as they account for 44 percent whereas in the municipality of Peja they are 16 percent.

**Figure 1: Total Budgeted Revenue 2015 by Source**

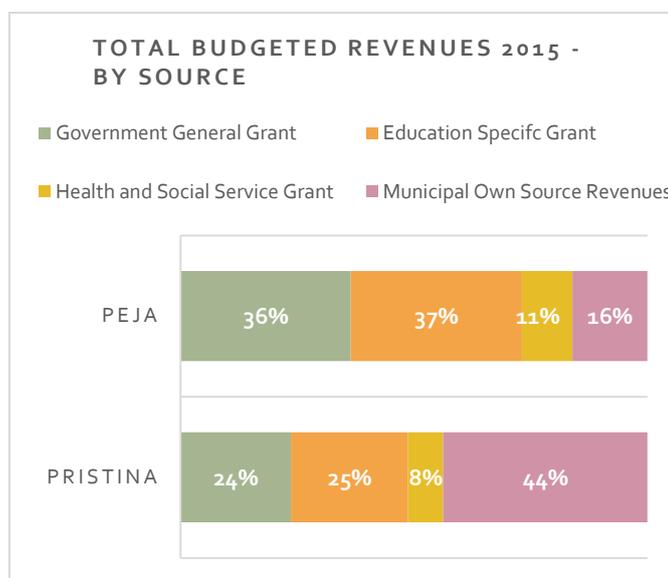
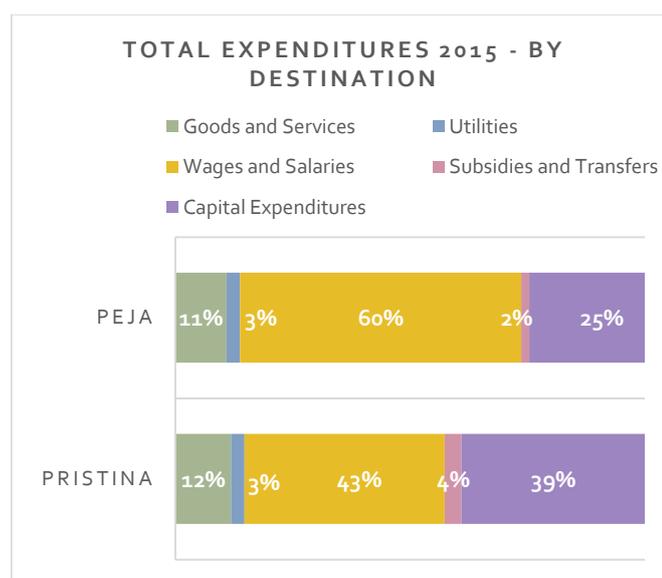


Figure 2 on the right shows that the allocation of budget for both municipalities is oriented towards wages and salaries, around 60 percent of the 2015 budget for Peja and 43 percent for that of Pristina.

The second largest expenses in these two municipalities are Capital Expenditures, 39 and 25 percent of the Pristina and Peja's budgets respectively. The subsidies and transfers take up a very small portion of the 2015 budget with 4 percent for Pristina and only 2 percent for Peja.

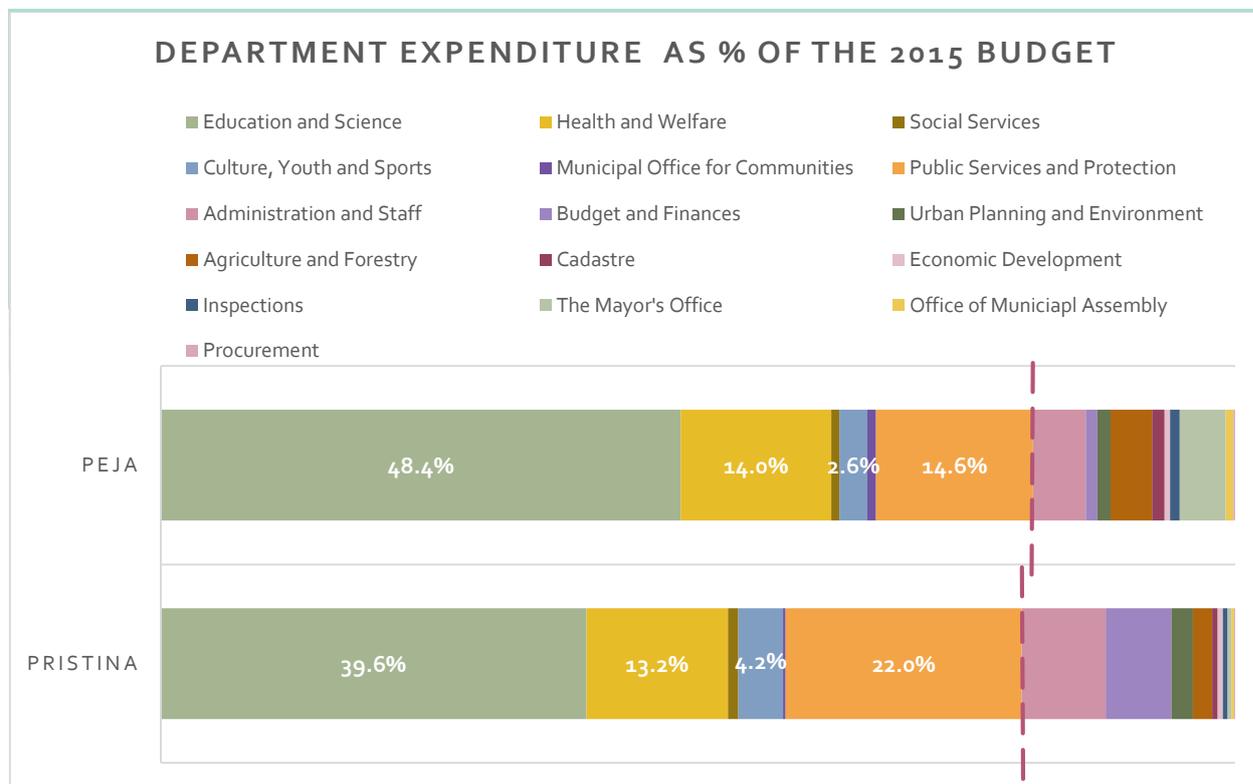
**Figure 2: Total budgeted expenditures 2015 by destination**



The budget's expenditure is further broken down by departments and offices of each municipality. The figure 3 below shows that the majority of the funds goes towards the departments of Education and Science, 39.6 and 48.4 percent for Pristina and Peja respectively. The second most financially resourced departments for 2015 are the Public Services and Protection for both municipalities. Departments of Health and Social Welfare also take a relatively significant part of the budget 13.2 and 14 percent for Pristina and Peja respectively. The dashed line separates the departments on the left, which can be more directly linked with children, to those on the right who have little to do with this age group. The departments on the left of the dashed line include Education and Science, Health and Welfare, Social Services, Youth, Culture and Sports, the Office for Communities and, lastly, Public Service and Protection.

Based on this representation around 80 percent of the budget goes to these departments and offices for both municipalities, which is a sizeable figure in itself. However, these departments do not have children as the sole targets and encompass a wider pool of society. Thus, within these departments, the expenditure may be allocated to different age groups and less so towards children. To better grasp the amount spent on children, the expenditure in each sector/department will be further addressed in the following subsections of this report.

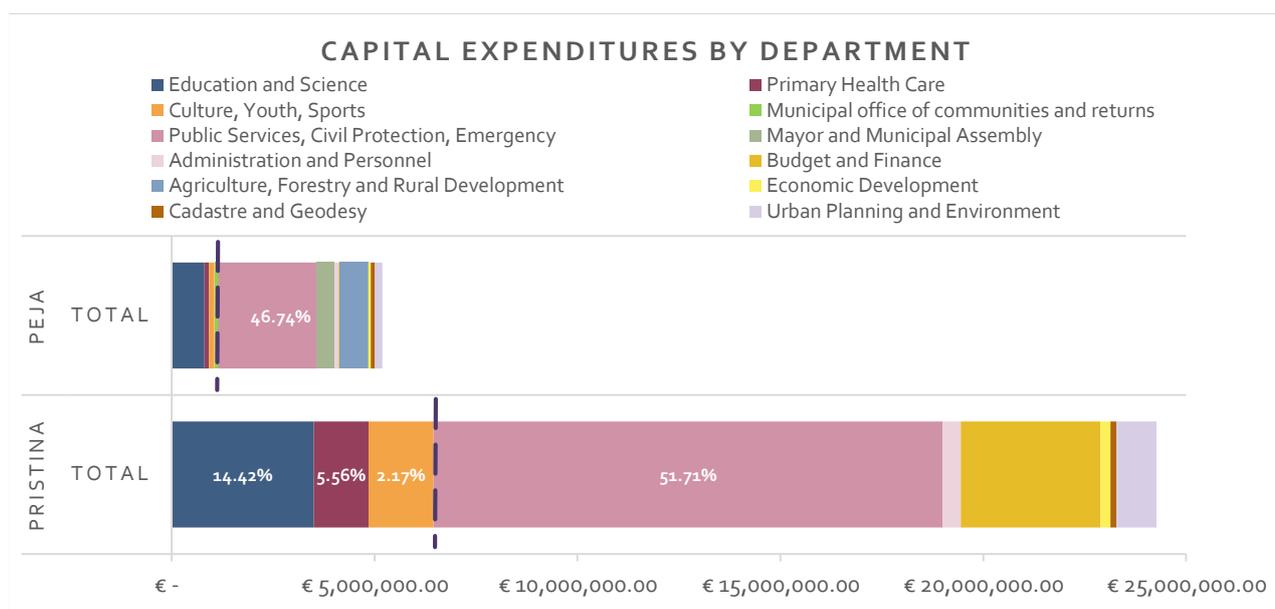
**Figure 3:** Department Expenditure as Percentage of Budget 2015



The capital expenditures which make up a significant part of these municipalities' budgets, around 39 and 25 percent of the Pristina and Peja's respectively, are also broken down by departments. The dashed line separates the departments on the left, which can be more directly linked with children, to those on the right who have little to do with this age group. The departments on the left of the dashed line include Education and Science, Primary Health Care and Municipal Office for Communities and Returns.

More than a quarter of the total capital expenditures for the municipality of Pristina goes to the aforementioned departments and about 22 percent of Peja's budget. The Social Services, Civil Protection and Emergency take the largest part of capital expenditures, but most of these projects are on road infrastructure, which cannot be categorized as a direct impact expenditure for children.

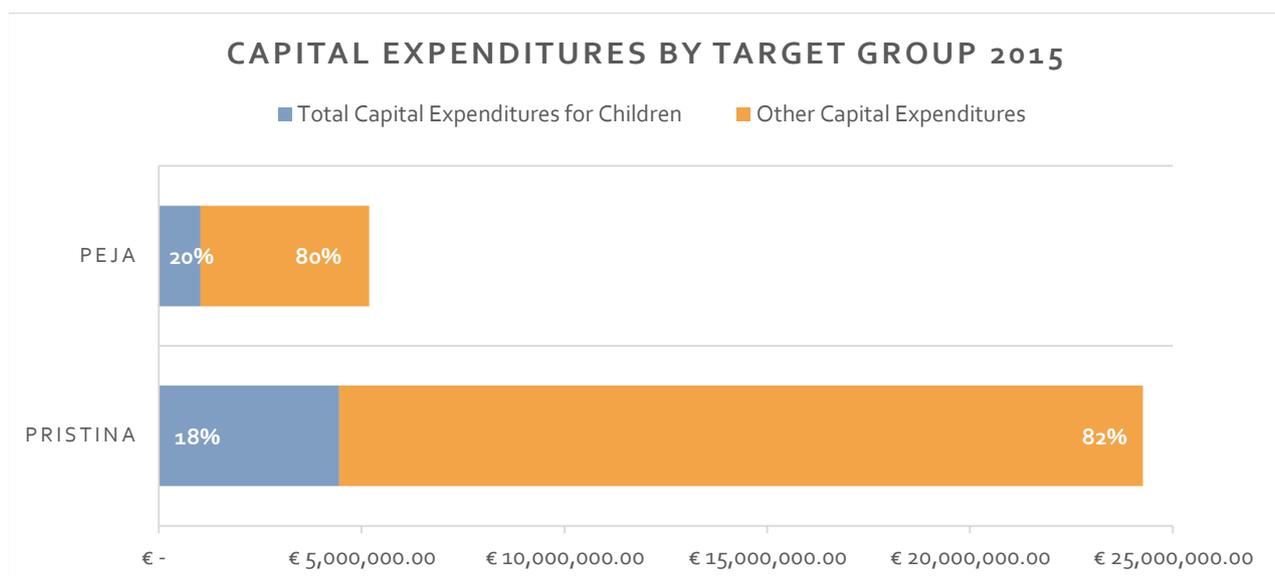
**Figure 4: Capital Expenditures by Department**



In order to truly grasp, the total amount of capital expenditures that target specifically children, the whole list provided by the budget tables of these municipalities was scanned. Adding up these targeted expenditures reveals that 18 and 20 percent of the amount allocated to Capital Expenditure projects has been targeted towards children in the municipality of Peja and Pristina respectively as it can be seen from the figure 5 below.

Those portions amount to a total of €4,450,000 spent in the municipality of Pristina and about €1,030,000 in that of Peja as capital expenditures for children for 2015. The type of projects will be explained in detail in each subsection and the full list of Capital Expenditures for Children can be found in the Annex A. I.

**Figure 5: Capital Expenditures by Target Group**



### 3.2. Children as Priority and Transparency of Expenditure: Findings and feedback from group discussions

Looking solely at the numbers at the aggregate level of departments, which work with children, does not represent a very dire condition. However, the scope of the responsibilities and work of these departments is too wide to infer that a substantial amount of their budgeted expenses for 2015, as represented above, are indeed allocated towards children. Thus, in order to understand, whether in reality the issues and needs of children are being addressed in these municipalities, one needs to look at whether there are strategies and funds allocated for their implementation within these departments.

If strategies, priorities and any project that targets children exists in these municipalities, one also must take a look at the transparency and how the process of arriving at a certain objective, project, or allocation of expenditure is made, whether children or relevant stakeholders were consulted and whether those resources truly reach them in the end. In order to answer such questions, it is hard to derive any meaningful conclusion from the number and figures in the budget or the documents provided. The group discussion with both stakeholders and children and the qualitative interviews in both these municipalities enabled us to get more insight on such issues. The key messages at the overall level from the group discussions and interviews will be summarised in the following paragraphs while the rest of the feedback from the ground on each department will be provided for each section in the following chapter.

Given the absence of municipal action plans and strategies targeting only children, it can be inferred that there is still no joint effort at the local level to make children a priority. Participants in the discussion who were mostly municipal representatives also confirmed the absence of strategies and action plans and stated that the work of their departments was mostly done based on the laws. While the legislation is important, the absence of strategies and action plans leaves the municipality and departments' work towards children without a clear vision. The group discussion further revealed that the main reason for this is the lack of coordination and inability to deal with the decentralisation of institutional responsibilities which took place after 2009. Thus, the latter represent some of the key obstacles to undertake comprehensive child-focused initiatives. This hasty decentralisation according to one of the participants has, in effect, left municipalities with responsibilities which they cannot adequately take over. A representative from the Office of Good Governance, which is responsible for drafting the National Strategy and Action Plan on Children's Rights, expressed concern regarding the level of cooperation of the municipal representative institutions when drafting such strategies, reporting for the situation on the ground and undertaking projects or programs that target children.

The representative from the Centre for Social Welfare in the municipality of Pristina also noted the discrepancy between the budgeting for children, a responsibility of the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare, and the competencies that the municipality has regarding the prioritisation of children. He further maintained that given the low competencies as well as lack of will, the municipality has been doing very little in this direction according to him. The secondary rate of importance attached to children by the institutional bodies in Kosovo, be that local or central, lead to a lack of mechanisms to increase funds and efforts towards addressing children's needs. For instance, an example of the lack of mechanisms is the absence of a budgeting code that records expenditure targeted only for children. This feeds back to the absence of monitoring and measurement tools to evaluate whether the children's needs are being addressed by the expenditures at the municipal level. Additionally, this does not inform the allocative process when funds are being distributed towards different departments.

Thus, as the municipal representatives confirmed it is very rare that a department has a special budget dedicated only towards children. It was also highlighted in the discussion that the lack of a budget code for financing child related programs further restricts the opportunities as foreign donators are often reluctant to donate money when they are not certain that the money will be spent solely on children and that it will not be allocated to a department as a whole. In general, it is rather difficult to disentangle the amount of money spent and the number of children that benefit from programs and services offered by the municipality. This can be found only for projects implemented but not for overall services. As it will be seen below, it is not solely the budgeting system that makes this disentanglement difficult, but also the level of transparency in the municipality.

The level of transparency can be measured through the extent to which children and relevant stakeholders are consulted when the budgetary allocations. The discussion group with stakeholders in the municipality of Pristina revealed that the level of transparency and accountability has seen improvements in the past years. Some departments, such as the department for Youth, Culture and Sports, consult the youth (individuals aged 15-24) independently and through Councils for Local Youth Action when compiling their Action Plans.

The municipal representatives in both the Peja and Pristina municipality stressed the availability of numerous public discussion and consultations on the budget and other policy making initiatives which give the citizens a chance to express their take on the municipality's plans. However, in general the children's opinion is rarely taken into consideration as there are no effective and sustainable mechanisms to incorporate it beyond these discussions.

Moreover, in the discussion in the municipality of Peja, the direct inclusion of children's opinions when drafting the budget was not even seen as appropriate as their judgement was not deemed fit for such topics due to a young age. This is in line with findings of other reports that stress the prevailing view in the society that adults should speak on behalf of children rather than children raising their own voices. Additionally, the interviews with relevant stakeholders, such as NGOs that work in these topics, contained some doubt as to how functional the public discussions are. In other words, it is hard to see whether those opinions of the attending citizens are truly included in the final decision making process.

After the lack of participative mechanisms was noted in the discussion, participants gave several suggestions on sustainable and effective tools to include children's opinions such as making simple short surveys in each school on their worries and needs. This would give a representative view on what areas should be prioritized for children and consultation with relevant stakeholders would ensure the proper policy response to those needs. Other suggestions were to make a workgroup in order to include children's viewpoints. These workgroups would initially inform the children on the budget and then try to engage them with it.

Whereas the adults show some reluctance to include children, the discussion held with them in both municipalities showed they had clear and concise opinions as well as suggestions on how to solve issues concerning them. Part of these children that were members of assemblies, ROR etc. were more informed on the budget. The rest who did not attend such extracurricular activities, stated that they were never visited or asked on their opinion in the municipality of Pristina. One of the students in the municipality of Peja stated that there was an occasion when random pupils were brought together to voice their opinions on what the municipality should do for them. Thus, there is some consultation in both municipalities but not at the desired level. In general, the findings on both the discussion groups and qualitative interviews pointed towards the same conclusion that when it comes to children in Kosovo, there are only sporadic efforts here and there is no sustainable effort to prioritise children at the local level.

## 4. Analysis by Sectors

After presenting the general findings on how important children are considered at central and municipal level, in this chapter each one of the targeted sectors are addressed in detail. The subsections start by overviewing the legislation and strategies available per sector. They continue by analysing the spending on each sector and separating where possible the amounts allocated to children. In that part, we also attempt to evaluate current expenditure by putting it into perspective with performance indicators on those sectors.

The last part of each subsection provides feedback from the discussions held with children and stakeholders at each municipality as well as the qualitative interviews. It must be noted that the Education sector is addressed in more detail. The reason for this is that Departments of Education work almost exclusively with children; adult learning is still a relatively new concept in our country and higher education is primarily a responsibility of MEST. The other relevant departments for each sector do not work exclusively with children and, thus, given the difficulty of extracting information on each sector's work, it was even harder to find information on programs that target specifically children.

## 4.1. Education

### Legislative framework

The main law that regulates the education sector is the Law on Pre-university Education in the Republic of Kosovo<sup>28</sup>. This law regulates the provision, quality, availability and access of education. It additionally addresses schooling for children with special needs, home schooling where necessary, free transport for children which attend special needs schools. It also dedicates a special part regarding the governance of schools and other clauses to ensure enrolment, such as free transport to schools for children which live more than 4 km distance from school. This law entrusts the child's school attendance responsibility primarily to parents. It further promotes good governance practices by the establishment of institutions such as -the council of Parents which operates mostly at the central level and it is intended to represent interests of parents on various child and family policies. The governance of schools is partly delegated to specially created bodies, such as the Directing Councils (Këshilli Drejtues) and the Student Council. According to the law, each school must have both these councils. The former one, DC, is made up of pupils (for ISCED 2 or 3), parents and NGOs/civil society representatives. According to the law, this council has substantial autonomy to set rules of the school, has a say in the expenditure of school budget and other donations as well as coordination of other delegation schemes between the municipalities. The existence of such bodies and their wide responsibilities attest to the decentralization of the education system and give scope for autonomy of schools, on a legal basis at least.

Going beyond the central level, the law on education for municipalities of Republic of Kosovo further consolidates the autonomy of municipalities with respect to education<sup>29</sup>. This law empowers the municipalities to build, maintain, register, and supervise the public education system in their area. Financing of the education system is also delegated to the municipalities. Those municipalities that express the desire to teach in Serbian, can do so with an imported Serbian curriculum from Republic of Serbia after getting approval from the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology.

This promotes proper education accessibility for children of the Serbian and other communities and allows for a certain level of autonomy in the education system of different communities.

The law on pre-school education regulates the access, quality, rules and standards of procedure (financing) regarding pre-school education.<sup>30</sup> Pre-school is on a voluntary basis in Kosovo, whereas pre-primary school is compulsory. The first language is Albanian, but the law foresees the program language to be mixed in communities with mixed ethnicity. It also sets the price for pre-school enrolment which is aimed at covering food and didactic material expenses. According to the law, this price is set by after consulting the wages and structure of family in Kosovo. Social assistance beneficiaries and certain other categories (children with disabilities, children of veterans, hospitalized children) are exempt from this payment. Pre-school programs may be financed by the Central Budget, Founders, Payments from parents as well as donations and other sources. The municipality is responsible for establishing the pre-school institutions. A special role is given to municipalities here, since their budget is supposed to cover the maintenance and investment costs on the property and tools of public pre-school institutions.

### Strategies and Action Plans

The vision for the development of the education sector in Kosovo in the near future are synthesized in the Kosovo Education Strategic Plan 2011-2016<sup>31</sup>. Beyond this strategy, Kosovo also has compiled special action plans dedicated to the education of children with special needs. The most recent one was that of 2014<sup>32</sup>. Targets on education are also specifically mentioned in the overall strategy for children's rights in Kosovo 2009-2013<sup>33</sup>.

28 The Law on Pre-university Education in the Republic of Kosovo (2011/04-L-032)

29 The Law on Education for municipalities of Republic of (2008/03-L-068)

30 The Law on Pre-school Education in the Republic of Kosovo (2006/02-L52)

31 MEST (2011) Kosovo Education Strategic Plan 2011-2016. accessed at: [http://www.entwicklung.at/uploads/media/2c\\_Kosovo\\_Education\\_Strategic\\_Plan\\_\\_EN\\_\\_FINAL\\_DRAFT.pdf](http://www.entwicklung.at/uploads/media/2c_Kosovo_Education_Strategic_Plan__EN__FINAL_DRAFT.pdf)

32 MEST (2014). Action Plan of the Division for Education of Children with Special Needs 2014. accessed at: [http://masht.rks-gov.ne/uploads/2015/06/aaaa2\\_1.pdf](http://masht.rks-gov.ne/uploads/2015/06/aaaa2_1.pdf)

33 OGG (2009). Strategy and National Action Plan on Children's Rights. Office for Good Governance, Pristina. Accessed at: [http://www.kryeministri-ks.net/zck/repository/docs/Strategy\\_and\\_National\\_Action\\_Plan\\_on\\_Childrens\\_Rights\\_2009-2013.pdf](http://www.kryeministri-ks.net/zck/repository/docs/Strategy_and_National_Action_Plan_on_Childrens_Rights_2009-2013.pdf)

At the central level, the priorities for the education of children consist of inclusive, qualitative and early schooling education systems. The actions identified to fulfil these objectives for inclusive education are: all children of due age should attend pre-primary education and at least half should attend pre-school education regardless of gender and ethnicity. With respect to quality and, especially, pre-school education, targets for 2016 include among others setting a system for training and accrediting teachers for pre-school, developing and implementing gender sensitive curriculums for children of age 0 to 6 years old, increasing awareness on the importance of pre-school education, etc. The targets for pre-university education are mainly oriented towards building of capacities for management of education system, quality assurance mechanisms related to curricula and assessment, inclusion of all pupils in the system with special attention paid to the needs of vulnerable, poor and disadvantaged students. They also address the school environment, specifically safety – physical and psychological. Specific attention is devoted to reducing number of shifts in schools which springs from the lack of sufficient school infrastructure and human resources.

Lastly and most importantly, by 2014 full responsibilities for management of finances are devolved from the central to municipality level and further from municipality to school level. In order to truly take an inclusive stance on their education system objectives, the government of Kosovo has also adopted the action plan for the division for education of children with special needs, the most recent one being in 2014<sup>34</sup>. It mostly aimed at building capacities and enhancing human resources so that the quality of education is suited to the needs of these children. Typical actions taken are the construction of Resource Centers, training of teachers, events and activities to raise awareness, etc.

At the local level, the legislation obliges the education directorate in each respective municipality to have their own annual plan. The representatives from the education directorates of both Peja and Pristina municipalities stated that they indeed have a working plan.

However, these documents are for internal purposes and, thus, not ready available on the online platforms. It must be noted that for the municipality of Pristina, the most recent work plan which assesses the municipality's work up to date includes certain objectives that are directly related to the education of children<sup>35</sup>.

Some of the examples are: choosing directors that are active in their communities; testing and evaluating education staff – teachers – based on performance; free meals for grades 1 to 4; investing in school infrastructure to ease the burden of school bags for children. Moreover, throughout 2014, lockers for each child have been allocated to all the school in Pristina. Other things that have been accomplished with regard to children's education in Pristina, are registrations in schools and pre-school institution only based on criteria, buying and equipping schools with adequate and engaging tools and infrastructure, improvements in infrastructure and functionalization of the centres for professional advancement. Additionally, there are plans for making kindergartens and other pre-school institutions affordable and available in every part of the municipality. In the coming years, it is planned that all the schools in the municipality will have access to internet and there is a plan included in the next budgeting years for building the museum of science.

A similar document of the recent years could not be found for Peja municipality, but during the discussion, the director of education updated us on the work done and their plans for the future. Among the central accomplishments were the improvement of infrastructure for pre-school institutions, such as shutting down the kindergartens that did not fulfil basic criteria of hygiene and comfort as well as building new kindergartens to meet the needs of the citizens. According to the municipal director for education, additional achievements were made in infrastructure of primary and secondary schools, as well as vocational schools which have seen an increase in enrolments from "150 to 490 pupils". Better cooperation with parents and inclusion of them as key decision-makers was also mentioned as part of the work plan for education in this municipality.

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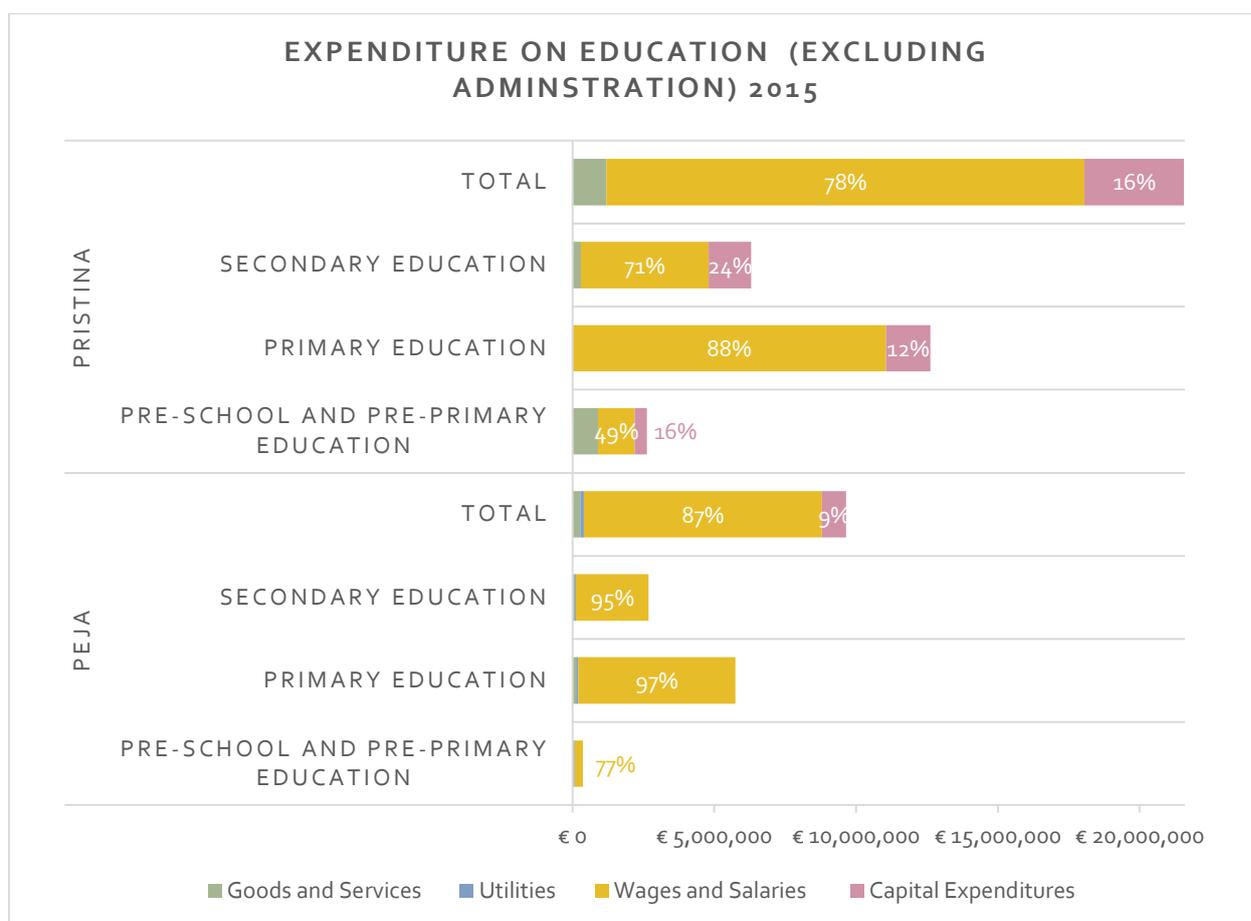
34 OGG (2009). Strategy and National Action Plan on Children's Rights. Office for Good Governance, Pristina. Accessed at: [http://www.kryeministri-ks.net/zck/repository/docs/Strategy\\_and\\_National\\_Action\\_Plan\\_on\\_Childrens\\_Rights\\_2009-2013.pdf](http://www.kryeministri-ks.net/zck/repository/docs/Strategy_and_National_Action_Plan_on_Childrens_Rights_2009-2013.pdf)

35 Municipality of Pristina (2014). Annual Report: Prishtian po bëhet!, The Municipality of Pristina. Accessed at: [https://kk.rks-gov.net/prishtina/getattachment/Municipality/President/President-Report/Raporti-Komuna-e-Prishtines-FINAL-\(1\).pdf.aspx](https://kk.rks-gov.net/prishtina/getattachment/Municipality/President/President-Report/Raporti-Komuna-e-Prishtines-FINAL-(1).pdf.aspx)

### The budget and education 2015

Figure 6 below shows the total budgeted expenditure for the education department in each municipality. The figures are further broken down into the three sections of education: pre-school and pre-primary education, primary education and secondary education. The total education expenditure for 2015 in the municipality of Pristina stand at €21,559,260 and €9,646,038 in that of Peja. The most striking element of the figure below is that wages take up the utmost majority of expenditure in education. In the municipality of Pristina 78 percent of the total budget in education is spent in wages and salaries and this figure stands at 87 percent. Only for the pre-school and pre-primary education is this figure substantially lower, at 49 percent of the budget for that subsection in the municipality of Pristina and 77 percent in that of Peja. The municipality of Pristina spends 16 percent of the budget for education in capital expenditure and this figure is 9 percent for the municipality of Peja.

**Figure 6:** Expenditure on Education (excluding administration) 2015



The absolute figures on expenditure alone cannot tell us much about how adequate these amounts are and whether they are meeting the children’s needs. Table 2 below tries to go one step further in measuring the expenditure on children by providing the share that each section has in the overall expenditure in education as well as the amount spent per child. Primary education seems to be a priority in the expenditure allocation for both municipalities as the majority of the funds are allocated towards this sector, 56 and 51 percent of the education budget for municipality of Peja and Pristina respectively.

Pre-school and pre-primary education hold the smallest share at about 4 and 11 percent of the education budget for municipality of Peja and Pristina respectively. The last two columns of the table show the share of expenditure for children in each subsection. When taking into account the total expenditure on education (including administration) and the number of children enrolled in the system, the municipality of Peja spends about €498 per child in 2015 and the municipality of Pristina spent around €524. Subdividing these amounts into the sectors of education, the municipality of Pristina spends about €663 per child in the pre-school and pre-primary education, €441 per child in primary and secondary education.

The figures per child for the municipality of Peja stand at €243 per child for pre –school and pre-primary education and €443 per child for primary and secondary education. It must be noted that these amounts mostly go towards salaries and wages as seen in the previous figure.

**Table 2:** Expenditure on Education as % of 2015 Budget and Per Child

Municipality	Expenditure (in current Euros and as percentage of total spending in education)				Number of Students (2014-2015) <sup>a</sup>		Annual Expenditure per child (in current Euros)	
	Peja		Pristina		Peja	Pristina	Peja	Pristina
Total Education and Science	€ 10,222,824	48% <sup>b</sup>	€ 24607805	40% <sup>c</sup>	20523	46940	€ 498	€ 524
Pre-School and Pre-Primary Education	€ 367,880	3.6%	€ 2630000	10.7%	1513	3969	€ 243	€ 663
Primary Education	€ 5,743,957	56.2%	€ 12627000	51.3%	19010	42971	€ 443	€ 441
Secondary Education	€ 2,684,200	26.3%	€ 6302260	25.6%				
Administration	€ 1,426,787	14.0%	€ 3048545	12.4%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

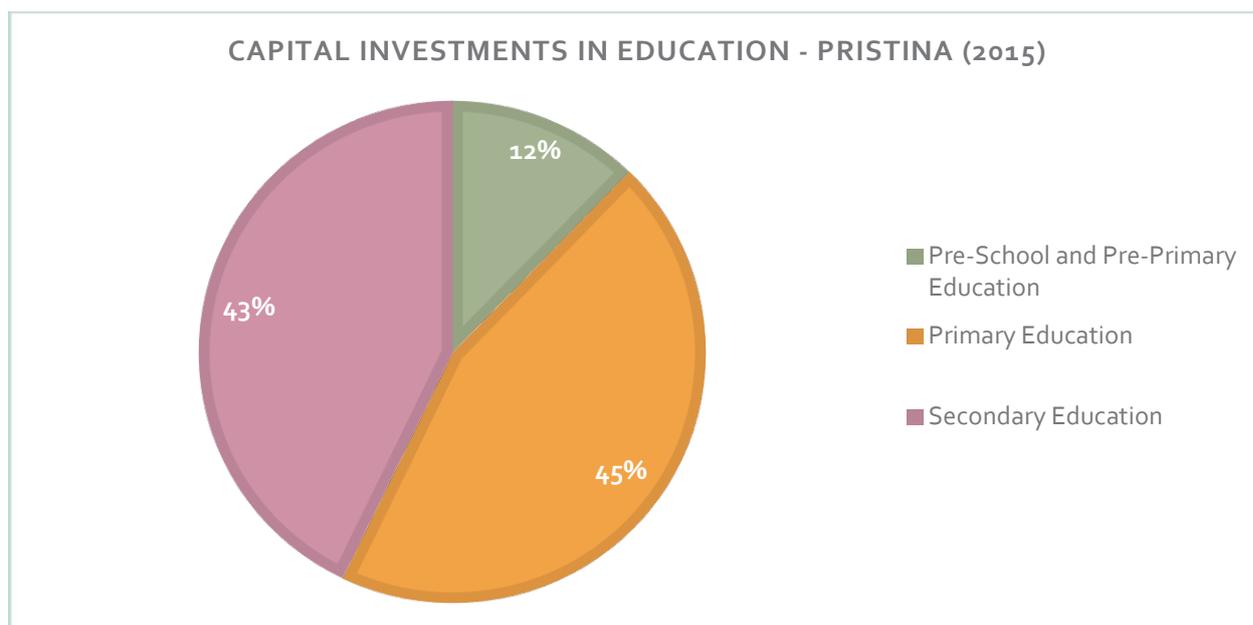
a: Data on Number of Students (2014-2015) retrieved from [link](#)

b, c :Expenditure expressed as percentage of total budget 2015

Source: Ministry of Finance, Kosovo

In the municipality of Pristina, the construction of schools and kindergartens dominate capital investments. Figure 7 on the left shows that capital expenditure is almost equally divided between primary and secondary education while around 12 percent of it is allocated to pre-school and pre-primary education. A similar figure could not be reproduced for the municipality of Peja given that their capital expenditures were all billed under the administration sector rather than separated for level of education. Nevertheless, for further inquiries there is a detailed list for all the capital expenditures for both municipalities in the Appendix A. I.

**Figure 7:** Capital Investments in Education - Pristina 2015



While the amount spent from these two municipalities on pre-school and pre-primary education is not negligible, especially for the municipality of Pristina, the indicator on school readiness is among the worst performing one as it can be seen in the table below obtained from MICS. Only 75.5 percent of children in first grade of primary school Kosovo attended pre-school during the previous school year.

This figure is even lower for children of RAE communities at only 54 percent. In general, the strategies and promises on inclusive education that were mentioned in the previous section, the children of RAE communities perform fairly worse in all the MICS indicators for education which are provided below. For instance only about half of the RAE children of secondary school age are currently attending secondary school. This figure is also worrying about the overall children of Kosovo at about 91 percent. There is a significant 8 percent of children which do not attend secondary school, which is compulsory by law in Kosovo. For further MICS education indicators, see following table.

**Table 3: MICS Education Indicators 2014**

MDG	Indicator	Description	Total		RAE	
			Female	Male	Female	Male
MDG 2.3	Literacy rate among young people	Percentage of young people age 15-24 years who are able to read a short simple statement about everyday life or who attended secondary or higher education	98	97.6	72.8	86.5
	School readiness	Percentage of children in first grade of primary school who attended pre-school during the previous school year	75.5		53.9	
MDG 2.1	Primary school net attendance ratio (adjusted)	Percentage of children of primary school age currently attending primary or secondary school	98		85.3	
	Secondary school net attendance ratio (adjusted)	Percentage of children of secondary school age currently attending secondary school or higher	90.9		53.4	
MDG 2.2	Primary completion rate	Number of children attending the last grade of primary school (excluding repeaters) divided by number of children of primary school completion age (age appropriate to final grade of primary school)	97.3		80.5	
	Transition rate to upper secondary school	Number of children attending the last grade of lower secondary school during the previous school year who are in the first grade of upper secondary school during the current school year divided by number of children attending the last grade of lower secondary school during the previous school year	91.5		69.9	
MDG 3.1	Gender parity index (primary school)	Primary school net attendance ratio (adjusted) for girls divided by primary school net attendance ratio (adjusted) for boys	1		1.01	
	Gender parity index (secondary school)	Secondary school net attendance ratio (adjusted) for girls divided by secondary school net attendance ratio (adjusted) for boys	0.97		0.9	

## Feedback from fieldwork

It was continuously stated that the low participation in pre-school education is a problematic part in all municipalities as it was also highlighted in the presentation of MICS education indicators above. For the municipality of Pristina, the main problem lies in excess demand for such facilities as was alluded to in the discussion held with stakeholders. In 2015, 12% of capital investments in Education were allocated to pre-school and pre-primary education. This municipality is in the process of applying the construction of community based kindergartens, yet the discussion highlighted that this is not enough to accommodate all the needs of this municipality. In the group discussion of the municipality of Peja the participants hinted at pre-school education is as a way to allow parents to work rather than an important element for children in itself. This may capture a significant part of the mentality and, thus, explain the low participation rate considering the low employment rate of women on one hand, and substantial supply of kindergartens on the other hand. This seems to be the case only in the municipality of Peja, as the representatives from municipality of Pristina admitted to be a long way from meeting the demands for pre-school education.

*“When none of the parents are employed, then children do not have to attend kindergarten.”*  
*Participant in the group discussion with stakeholders, Peja.*

The discussions held with children confirmed what was stated in the progress report that despite substantial funding towards education, the impact has not become evident in the children’s achievements as well as their satisfaction with the education system. While the municipality representatives listed numerous activities to train, test and monitor the teachers at pre-university level, the situation as presented by the children of these municipalities differed substantially. The main worries and needs that they listed in both municipalities had to do precisely with the education sector. Among the most frequently mentioned ones were inadequate school curriculum, incapable teachers and lack of infrastructure (i.e. science cabinets). Children even mentioned examples of inappropriate child-teacher relations, such as: teachers asking children to buy them food during class; teachers leaving the class during lesson time to smoke cigarettes and even as extreme examples as teachers sending pupils to fill in a sport betting ticket. These alarming examples provided by the participating children point towards the absence of proper monitoring of teachers in schools. In general, the children were capable of defining the problems they face in the education system in a precise manner and were quite certain that inappropriate methods, uninspired teachers, and inadequate curriculums are their barriers to attaining the qualitative learning process that they deserve.

*“Teachers should change their methods of teaching. Some of them push us to learn things by heart, whereas it would be better to have different more attractive methods, such as class presentations.”*  
*Participant in the group discussion with children, Pristina.*

Based on the findings above, the amount spent in education is barely noticed in the achievements and satisfaction of children with the education system mainly because the overwhelming majority of funds is directed towards wages and salaries. Yet, the group discussion revealed that the teachers are often unqualified, uninspired and at times helpless due to lack of resources at school and outdated methodologies. The absence of clear strategy plan, proper monitoring and follow-up evaluations of the programs undertaken results in ineffective expenditure. Moreover, the low achievements of children together with the numerous problems listed by them also point towards inefficient and untargeted expenditure. The non-inclusion of children’s opinions on the matter further reinstates the inefficiency and lack of transparency regarding the allocation of these funds.

## 4.2. Health

The UNCRC addresses the fundamental health entitlements of children under a number of rights which are commonly labelled as survival rights. These rights cover the basic needs of existence (i.e. nutrition, shelter, basic medical services and living standards). Enjoying a healthy life from birth and onwards is essential for an adequate development of children which enables them to reach their potential. This subsection looks at the legislative framework of children's health, the strategies and action plans undertaken to guarantee the fulfilment of laws as well as analyses the budget of the two targeted municipalities. During our fieldwork, children and stakeholder were queried on a number of pressing health issues in these two municipalities. The last paragraphs in this section provide the feedback from the work on the ground.

### Legislative framework

Article 50 on the Rights of Children in the Constitution of Kosovo states that "Children enjoy the right to protection and care necessary for their wellbeing". Issues relating to children's health are regulated under several more general laws in Kosovo. The Law on Health obliges the state to provide conditions for maintaining the health of pregnant women and nursing mothers as well as a healthy start of life and development of children and youth<sup>36</sup>. It also promotes precautionary protection through health promotion programs and systematic visits to children and youth in the primary, secondary and high schools of the each municipality<sup>37</sup>. According to the Health Insurance Law, children under the age of 18 regardless of their status, those living in state institutions or foster care, those whose parents are war invalids or veterans, are exempt from their financial obligations and have a guaranteed access, free-of-charge to public health service<sup>38</sup>.

In the unfortunate case where the child is an orphan or his/her parents are not physically and/or mentally able to take care of him/her, the law on social services maintains that the department of social services and their respective Centre for Social Work/Services in the child's municipality is responsible for ensuring adequate long-term care for him/her<sup>39</sup>. Additionally, all the important decisions concerning the health and welfare of children in foster care are taken with consent by the Centre for Social Work/Services in the municipality.

The legislation of Kosovo also contains a specific law, the law on promotion and protection of breastfeeding, which has to do with infant's nutrition which is called<sup>40</sup>. This law primarily intends to ensure that mothers are informed and encouraged on breastfeeding their children. It also regulates issues pertaining to the quality and appropriateness of breast-milk supplements and/or substitutes. The importance of breastfeeding is further emphasized by clauses in the law which state that health workers should promote breastfeeding and they are forbidden to promote/hand out and/or advice on any commercial baby milk products. However, unlike other countries in the region, employed mothers in Kosovo do not benefit from regular paid breaks to breastfeed their children in the workplace<sup>41</sup>. They are only allowed to do so if the work place is not fit and cannot be adjusted for women who breastfeed.

### Strategies and Action Plans

In absence of specific strategies or action plans of the Pristina and Peja municipalities that focus on the health of children, the Strategies provided at the central level will be overviewed to highlight the key objectives in this sector with respect to children.

In the Strategy and National Action Plan for Children's Rights in the Republic of Kosovo 2009-2013, the health priorities are centred around the protection and enhancement of health condition of pregnant women, the new-born and the baby; the decrease of death rate for children and infants; improvement of health facilities access and coverage for disadvantaged subgroups of children<sup>42</sup>.

36 The Law on Health (2012/04-L-125)

37 The Law on Health (2012/04-L-125)

38 The Law on Health Insurance (2013/04-L-249)

39 The law on the change and complementation of law no. nr.02/L-17 for social and family services (2011/04-L-081)

40 The law on promotion and protection of breastfeeding (2006/02-L81)

41 Detailed information on breastfeeding on a large number of countries can be found in the ILO publication: ILO (2015) Social protection for maternity: Key policy trends and statistics. Social Protection Policy Papers, Paper 15, Retrieved August 20, 2015 [http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed\\_protect/---soc\\_sec/documents/publication/wcms\\_366590.pdf](http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_protect/---soc_sec/documents/publication/wcms_366590.pdf)

42 OGG (2009). Strategy and National Action Plan on Children's Rights. Office for Good Governance, Pristina. Accessed at: [http://www.kryeministri-ks.net/zck/repository/docs/Strategy\\_and\\_National\\_Action\\_Plan\\_on\\_Childrens\\_Rights\\_2009-2013.pdf](http://www.kryeministri-ks.net/zck/repository/docs/Strategy_and_National_Action_Plan_on_Childrens_Rights_2009-2013.pdf)

The progress report on this strategy evaluates that the budget share of Kosovo's Government allocated for healthcare is relatively low to address the aforementioned priorities. It states that in 2013, health expenditure made up for 0.39% of the total budget of the Republic of Kosovo. This amount is strikingly small and makes it difficult to put children as the centre of healthcare policies<sup>43</sup>.

The out-of-pocket expenses of citizens are rather high and serve as a barrier to full healthcare coverage for children despite being guaranteed free healthcare by law. Additionally, the report highlights that coverage of the whole territory of the Republic of Kosovo with facilities that deal primarily with children (i.e. gynaecological-obstetrical services, neonatology, etc.) remains a problematic part in ensuring the health rights of children.

The strategy highlights that the immunization of children is the utmost vital pillar of ensuring children's health rights. The rate of children that have been vaccinated against MMR and DPT3 is at 93 percent. However, due to lack of an overarching database, the number of children that have taken all the required vaccines is not known. According to the Progress Report, raising the rate of immunization to 100 percent is especially difficult because of two factors: the continuous moving of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities and the use of Serbian health services<sup>44</sup>.

Lastly, the Progress Report on the Strategy highlights that there has been an institutional effort to increase health awareness by organising campaigns, lectures and sending leaflets and other material in schools. Moreover, the network of schools that promote health has been established and the report stresses that its expansion will serve as a monitoring mechanism for the healthcare and public health institutions in Kosovo. The Ministry of Education, Science and Technology has also compiled a special strategy for promoting health in schools in Kosovo 2009-2018<sup>45</sup>. The amount allocated for the implementation of this strategy in the period 2009-2013 amounted to € 2,550,200.00. There has been no publicly accessible report on the evaluation of the strategy's implementation for the given period. The targeted indicators of this strategy are:

Healthy and supportive environment by teachers, pupils and parents, which is intended to be reached through awareness raising campaigns, projects and activities for environment and health.

- Appropriate physical and healthy environment for teaching and learning (based on guidelines for the development strategy of under graduate education in Kosovo 2007-2018). The strategy aims to fulfil this indicator by reducing work school shifts with an upper limit set at two and providing equipment, material and infrastructure fit for children with special needs and other recreational spaces.
- Sufficient human and material resources, which will be sought by training teachers for health and allocating sufficient budget to ensure health-friendly schools.
- Continuous and qualitative care for pupil's health which will be reached by providing services or referral services for all health problems and requiring school to have their own action plans on prevention of disease and other health problems specific to them.
- The satisfactory level of health and environmental culture of the pupils which is fulfilled through maintenance of schools, health check-ups and involvement of students in health and environmental activities

As previously stated, the municipalities of Pristina and Peja do not have separate strategies or action plans that target the health of children. However, in their annual work plan, the municipality of Pristina states that one of the objective of their health sector is to be in service of development, and the child specific component of this are regular medical and dentist check-ups at schools for prevention purposes.

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43 OGG (2011). Assessment of Progress for Children Strategy and National Action Plan on Children's Rights in the Republic of Kosovo 2009-2013 Volume II. Office for Good Governance. Pristina. Accessed at: [http://kryeministri-ks.net/repository/docs/Progresi\\_i\\_Raportit\\_ENG\\_01\\_web.pdf](http://kryeministri-ks.net/repository/docs/Progresi_i_Raportit_ENG_01_web.pdf)

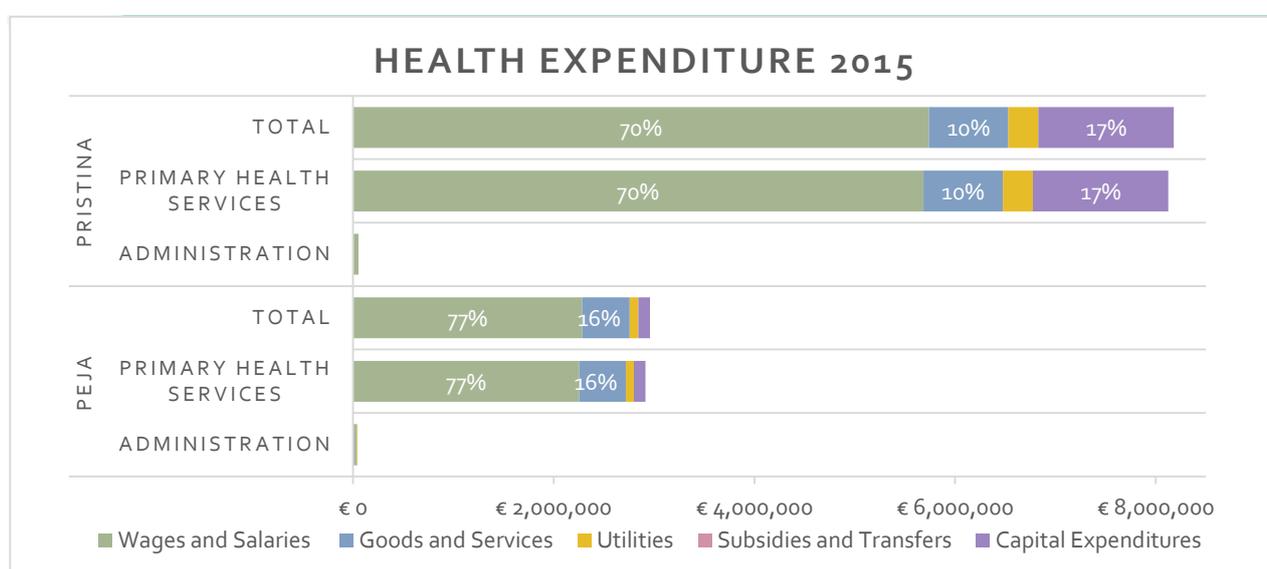
44 OGG (2011). Assessment of Progress for Children Strategy and National Action Plan on Children's Rights in the Republic of Kosovo 2009-2013 Volume II. Office for Good Governance. Pristina. Accessed at: [http://kryeministri-ks.net/repository/docs/Progresi\\_i\\_Raportit\\_ENG\\_01\\_web.pdf](http://kryeministri-ks.net/repository/docs/Progresi_i_Raportit_ENG_01_web.pdf)

45 MEST (2009) Strategy for Promoting Health in Schools 2009-2018. Accessed at: [http://masht.rks-gov.net/uploads/2015/06/strategy-for-hps-in-kosovo\\_1.pdf](http://masht.rks-gov.net/uploads/2015/06/strategy-for-hps-in-kosovo_1.pdf)

## The budget and health 2015

After overviews of the legislation as well as the priorities set by institutions in the central and local level, we now move on to see the allocated expenditure in each of these municipalities for the latest budget 2015. The municipality of Pristina and Peja allocated 13.2 and 14 percent to the Health and Well-being Departments in their 2015 budgets. Breaking down the health expenditure in each municipality, the figure 8 below reveals that the majority of this expenditure is allocated towards wages and salaries. In Pristina it is about 70 percent whereas in Peja it amounts to 77 percent. The available budget tables do not allow us to disentangle what percentage of the budget goes towards the goods and services for children, or wages of child specific staff. The capital expenditures make up for 17 and 4 percent of Pristina's and Peja's municipal budgets respectively. These capital expenditures mostly include construction of new centres for health and equipment with new medical appliances. In the municipality of Pristina, the capital expenditure of the department for Primary Health Care include an amount of € 60,000 spent on Disinfection and deracination of health and educational facilities. This is an expenditure predominately oriented towards our targeted group, the children, and it represents about 0.10% of Pristina's 2015 municipal budget.

**Figure 8:** Health Expenditure by Sector 2015



The strategies and action plans listed above reveal that the health of children is not entirely forgotten by the institutions in Kosovo. However, these objectives can only be accounted for by looking at the statistical data on key indicators of health for children. The latest MICS data are summarised in the table below. The second to last column provides the statistics for the ethnic Albanian community and the last column is for the RAE communities. The nutritional aspect of children aged 6 to 23 months is among the indicators that perform the poorest whereby only 63.3 and 32.3 percent of Albanian and RAE children respectively, have received foods from 4 or more food groups during the previous day. The immunisation data provided here also reveal a worrisome rate for both Albanian and RAE children where only 78.5 and 30.2 percent of them respectively have received all vaccinations recommended in the national immunization schedule by their first birthday (measles by second birthday). In general, while the data show an acceptable situation for children of Albanian community, the ones from RAE communities fare substantially worse for each indicator.

This may also be derived from the lack of proper programs for them. An inclusive health system was mentioned more than once among the objectives of the various strategies outlined above. However, the lack of proper action with substantial allocations towards the children of the RAE communities allows for this gap in health outcomes to emerge.

**Table 4:** MICS Health Indicators 2014

MICS Indicator	Indicator Name	Description	Total	RAE
1.1	Neonatal mortality rate	Probability of dying within the first month of life	9	29
1.2 MDG 4.2	Infant mortality rate	Probability of dying between birth and the first birthday	12	41
2.5	Children ever breastfed	Percentage of women with a live birth in the last 2 years who breastfed their last live-born child at any time	96.7	95.2
2.15	Minimum meal frequency	Percentage of children age 6-23 months who received solid, semi-solid and soft foods (plus milk feeds for non-breastfed children) the minimum number of times or more during the previous day	90.3	76.1
2.16	Minimum dietary diversity	Percentage of children age 6–23 months who received foods from 4 or more food groups during the previous day	63.3	32.3
2.20	Low-birthweight infants	Percentage of most recent live births in the last 2 years weighing below 2,500 grams at birth	5.4	9.7
3.8	Full immunization coverage	Percentage of children age 24-35 months who received all vaccinations recommended in the national immunization schedule by their first birthday (measles by second birthday)	78.5	30.2
5.5a MDG 5.5 5.5b MDG 5.5	Antenatal care coverage	Percentage of women age 15-49 years with a live birth in the last 2 years who were attended during their last pregnancy that led to a live birth (a) at least once by skilled health personnel (b) at least four times by any provider	97.8 91.8	96.5 73.6

Source: MICS 2014

### Feedback from fieldwork

Despite universal health insurance coverage of children guaranteed by law, almost none of the children that participated in the discussion groups undertook regular health check-ups. On the other hand, almost all of them claimed that they take their health very seriously. The children also admitted that there is a functioning health centre in their schools and they do get medical examinations from those centres from time to time. In the group discussion, the participating children were substantially aware about the importance of mental health as well as acknowledged the stigma towards addressing mental health issues among our society.

While a psychologist existed in each of the schools the participants attended, the children often complained that this service at school is overcrowded or not to the desired quality level. They also stressed that there should be more efforts to remove the taboos on mental health and more space for children to be able to voice their issues in this regard.

*“There are occasions where not only do pupils smoke, but the teachers as well. They leave during class and light a cigarette.”*

*Participant in the group discussion with children, Peja.*

The progress report on the children’s rights strategy maintained that the Law for Controlling of Smoking presents the biggest achievement in the field of public health in Kosovo thus far. On one hand, banning smoking in public spaces has undoubtedly ameliorated the environment for children. On the other hand, smoking is still a widespread occurrence in Kosovo and teachers do not follow strictly these rules. In the focus group discussions with children, it was revealed that it is quite common to see their teachers smoke at school. The participating children revealed that while frequency of smoking inside the class has become less common, now teachers resort to taking a 5 minute break from class to smoke a cigarette. This not only counts as loss of learning time on behalf of children, but it also serves as a bad model for them to observe. Additionally, smoking is even widespread among their peers and mostly done in hidden areas of their school environment.

In the discussion group held with stakeholders both in the municipality of Peja and that of Pristina, the main health objectives were the promotion of regular health check-ups by the health centres and other health institutions at school. Issues such as infant mortality and other health problems that affect children were often dismissed as the responsibility of central institutions, such as Ministry of Health, by the municipal representatives. The interviews held with NGOs working in similar fields as well as the municipal directors of the budget, highlighted the fact that ambulances do not have their own budget and the sector of health in itself does not allocate funds to sub-subprograms. Thus, they claimed, it makes it hard to evaluate the work done on health of children in each municipality and even at the central level. It was also added that the level of cooperation of local health bodies and central ones is minimal and, often, dysfunctional, which makes prioritisation of children’s health hard to implement.

### 4.3. Protection

The concept of protection is rather wide when it refers to children’s rights. It does not involve solely protection from physical or psychological violence, but also includes a guarantee of a minimum standard of living, such as shelter, basic subsistence, etc.

#### Legislative framework

The Constitution of Kosovo, in Article 50 on the Rights of Children states that “Children enjoy the right to protection and care necessary for their wellbeing.” as well as “Every child enjoys the right to be protected from violence, maltreatment and exploitation.” The legislation in place targets mainly violence in family, protection of children without parents and protection of children from trafficking, and child abduction.

The law on protection from violence on the family intends to prevent this phenomena in all its forms from happening and it pays special focus to the children, elderly and persons with limited abilities<sup>46</sup>. It also regulates the procedures and punishments in case of a violent act being committed towards a child. Violent acts are defined rather broadly in this law and include physical as well as psychological violence, intercourse without consent, forced entry into lodgings without the permission of the other family member, causing fear and anxiety with one’s actions, etc. The municipality’s court is responsible for dealing with these accusations. Lastly, according to the law, the committer of violence acts will lose parenthood rights if approved guilty and the rearing of the child will be left to the appropriate next of kin.

Beyond violence in the family, for children without parental care, the Law on Family entitles them to special social care. According to this law, the family is responsible for providing the foundation of child’s protection, but the respective institutions can intervene if the parents or guardians are not acting at the child’s best interest.

46 Law on protection from violence in the family (2010/03-L-182)

*“[...] there should be better cooperation between the central and local level on children’s health. For instance, according to the Ministry of Health, local health departments do not report regularly on their annual services.” Participant in the discussion group with stakeholders, Pristina.*

Parents and guardians are obliged to support children until they turn 26 years old if they are in education. This law further states that children can work once they reach the age of 15 years old and they are expected to contribute to their maintenance financial costs if need be given that there are no educational costs due to free primary and secondary education in Kosovo.

The forms of social care protection provided by this law are: custodianship; family shelter; residential shelter and adoption. This law deals with protection of children under the family or its dissolution and places the municipality as the administrator of child protection institutions. Special attention is paid towards children of a very early age whereby the law stipulates that a partner cannot ask for divorce if the woman is pregnant and/or until the child is 1 year old. Moreover, the child’s interest is placed above the adults’ one in the family and, thus, divorce can be postponed if it is in the best interest of the child (i.e. child is sick, etc.); The extreme cases of trafficking in children are punished by the law on the prevention and fighting of trafficking in humans and the protection of trafficking victims<sup>47</sup>. According to this law, authorities for social care, health, education, non-governmental organizations, and representatives of civil society, are responsible for reporting suspicion of child abuse or trafficking. This law’s principles are in strict compliance with children’s rights as defined by the UN Convention of Children’s Rights and the Code of Justice for Minors in Kosovo.

Currently there is no separate law on protection of children from exploitative labour, but it is regulated in parts of other laws that were previously mentioned on child protection. Children above the age of 16 are allowed to work in adequate conditions and in a non-exploitative manner. However, the government has made further efforts on elimination of child labour by establishing the “Kosovo Committee for the Prevention and Eradication of Child Labour” in 2005 decision no. 5/166 of the Prime Minister of Kosovo. This committee is responsible coordinating and monitoring the body of programmes for the prevention and eradication of child labour which occurs in Kosovo.

Financial protection is provided to children living in families that are enduring hardships. This type of protection is regulated by the Law on Social Assistance which provides a monthly amount from €35 to €75 depending on the category of beneficiaries and the number of family members. This type of protection is dealt with in detail in the subchapter 3.4 that deals with the rights of adequate development for children. Kosovo’s institutions have recognised the need to have a specific law that is focused solely on the protection of children. The departments for Social Welfare and Health, which deal with protection of children at the municipal level, have confirmed that this law is in the process of drafting.

## **Strategies and Action Plans**

As with the other sectors, the protection rights of children are tackled in the National Strategy for Children’s Rights as well as some other sporadic strategies on sub-sections of protection, such as protection from child labour and trafficking, etc.

The protection of children is addressed in a more general way in the overall national strategy on children’s rights<sup>48</sup>. Among the central objectives are protection from hazardous labour, protection of abused children inside and outside their families, prevention of child trafficking and protection of children victims of trafficking. This strategy also mentions among the objectives the implementation, review and advancing of legislation that regulates the aspects of social welfare of children.

47 The law on the prevention and fighting of trafficking in humans and the protection of trafficking victims (2013/04-L-218)

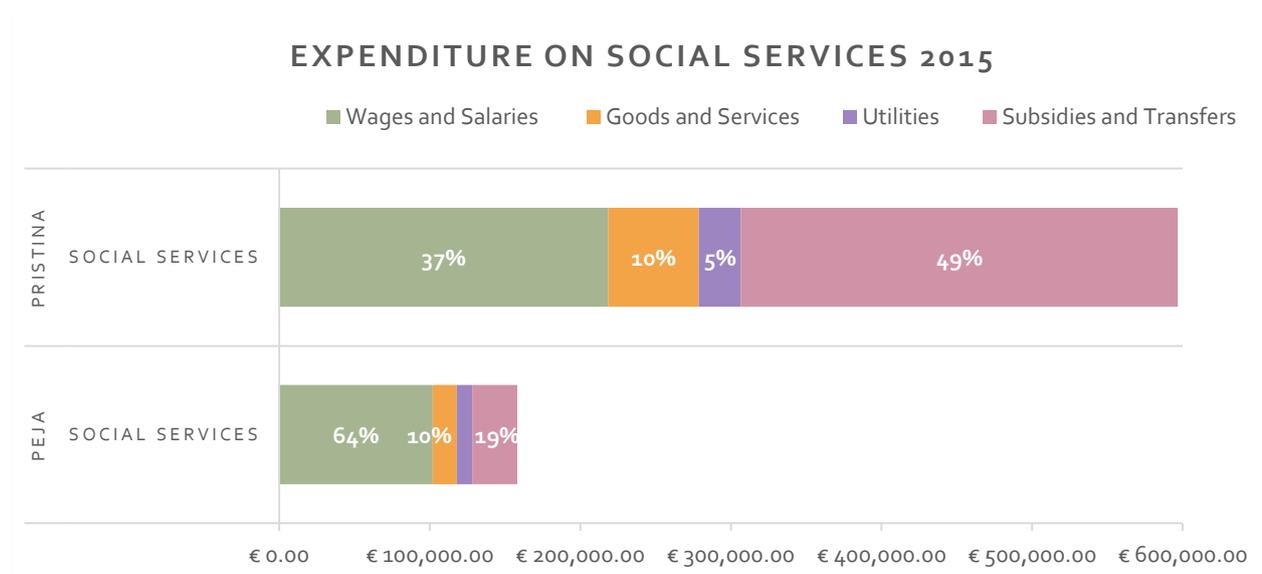
48 OGG (2011). Assessment of Progress for Children Strategy and National Action Plan on Children’s Rights in the Republic of Kosovo 2009-2013 Volume II. Office for Good Governance. Pristina. Accessed at: [http://kryeministri-ks.net/repository/docs/Progress\\_i\\_Raportit\\_ENG\\_01\\_web.pdf](http://kryeministri-ks.net/repository/docs/Progress_i_Raportit_ENG_01_web.pdf)

The National Strategy and the Action Plan against the Trafficking in Human Beings 2008-2011 consists of a separate part on Prevention of child trafficking and protection of trafficked children. It has an approach based on human rights, and is connected to their promotion and protection, and especially in the protection of the rights of victims of trafficking when these are children and females. Additionally, there is a National Strategy and Action Plan for the Prevention and Elimination of Child Labor in Kosovo (SAP) which mainly intends to target children who are affected by this issue and return them to education. There exist no strategy or action plan on protection of children at the municipal level despite the fact that the administration of social services is decentralized. The departments for health and wellbeing are the ones responsible for the Social Services Centres and, thus, the protection of children.

### The budget and protection 2015

Social services make up for a rather small percentage of these municipalities' budgets. In Pristina it is about 1 percent and in Peja about 0.8 percent. These figures are strikingly low considering the indicators on child protection and the feedback provided from the group discussions held with children to which we turn to in the next paragraphs. To make matters worse, the relatively low amount allocated in this direction is complemented with a high percentage of it going towards wages and salaries. The figure 9 below shows that the municipality of Pristina spent 37 percent of the budget on social services on wages and salaries in 2015. The municipality of Peja topped that amount with 27 percentage points, thus spending a total of 64% of the 2015 social services budget on paying employees. Subsidies and transfers account for almost half of the budget on social services in the municipality of Pristina and only about 20 percent in that of Peja.

**Figure 9:** Expenditure on Social Services 2015



The progress report on the strategy for the Rights of Children<sup>49</sup> finds that in terms of the legislative part, the legal stipulation of social protection provided to children in compliance with European standards and principles of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. It also notices mild forms of progress in adjusting and advancing the legal framework of specific social services for protection of children with social needs. However, it evaluates that there has been no major progress in ensuring the actual protection for children. Lack of reliable data, cooperation and serious initiatives on behalf of the children are serious obstacles to increase the level of protection. The protection in the form of financial assistance is also extremely low to be effective. The average amount that the typical family in need obtains from the social assistance scheme is €75, which does not even cover the basic needs for 7 days considering the price level. What is worse, due to lack of budget the additional extremely low amounts €5 per child per month have not been fully disbursed to these families.

49 OGG (2011). Assessment of Progress for Children Strategy and National Action Plan on Children's Rights in the Republic of Kosovo 2009-2013 Volume II. Office for Good Governance. Pristina. Accessed at: [http://kryeministri-ks.net/repository/docs/Progresi\\_i\\_Raportit\\_ENG\\_01\\_web.pdf](http://kryeministri-ks.net/repository/docs/Progresi_i_Raportit_ENG_01_web.pdf)

Kosovo's institutions have made moderate advancements in 2014 for elimination of the worst forms of child labour. These advancements can be seen in the efforts to compile sustainable strategies on this matter as well as the issuing of two decisions that determine the role and responsibility of educational institutions and agriculture sector employees in preventing and eliminating child labour. Despite the slight progress, children of Kosovo are still susceptible to hazardous forms of labour which also include commercial sexual exploitation<sup>50</sup>. The children from RAE communities are especially vulnerable with regard to child labour as they also face barriers to education. Moreover, this report also stresses the lack of physical and human capacities of Kosovo Police's Directorate of Trafficking in Human Being to collect data, enforce legislation and implement policies to prevent and stop child labour and trafficking.

Some of the MICS indicators provided in the table below grouped under the protection rights of children confirm the findings above. The data from 2014 show rather worrying trends which lead us to believe that the legislation in place in Kosovo, which was summarised above, is not being enforced in reality. About 10.7 and 16.6 percent of children aged from 5 to 17 years old from Albanian and RAE communities respectively are engaged in child labour. What is worse, the majority of children in Kosovo aged from 1 to 14 years old experienced psychological aggression or physical punishment during the last month.

**Table 5:** MICS Protection Indicators 2014

MICS Indicator	Indicator Name	Description	Total	RAE
8.1	Birth registration	Percentage of children under age 5 whose births are reported registered	88.1	92.9
8.2	Child labour	Percentage of children age 5-17 years who are involved in child labour	10.7	16.6
8.3	Violent discipline	Percentage of children age 1-14 years who experienced psychological aggression or physical punishment during the last one month	61.4	71.2

### Feedback from fieldwork

It was highlighted in the discussion group with stakeholders both in the municipality of Peja and that of Pristina that more needs to be done in the field of protection for children. While there have been infrastructure investments and attempts to address security concerns by parents and children alike, the public spaces are still not sufficiently safe for children. In addition, in the municipality of Peja there have been several informal groups and workshops regarding violence in the family and at school that try to raise awareness and address the problems that arise. Municipal representatives from Pristina stated that there are no serious and significant efforts to address protection of children and elimination of child labour, especially those for children of RAE communities neither at the municipal nor at the local level despite the establishment of Local Community Action groups for this specific issue. While indeed Centres for Social services work extensively in this regard, there have not been any significant improvements to date.

*"I think that more needs to be done about the protection of children. Some of the schools are protected relatively well while the rest not so much,"*  
*Participant in the discussion group with stakeholders, Peja.*

50 OGG (2011). Assessment of Progress for Children Strategy and National Action Plan on Children's Rights in the Republic of Kosovo 2009-2013 Volume II. Office for Good Governance. Pristina. Accessed at: [http://kryeministri-ks.net/repository/docs/Progresi\\_i\\_Raportit\\_ENG\\_01\\_web.pdf](http://kryeministri-ks.net/repository/docs/Progresi_i_Raportit_ENG_01_web.pdf)

Children also expressed concern on the level of safety at school. It is rather common that their parents pay an amount, usually around €5 per year, for a hired security company that protects the school with CCTV and guards.

This has substantially reduced the number of violence occurrences at school but does not protect them outside school territory according to them. Violent confrontations seem to be quite common and are often mentioned with a nonchalance by children, showing the widespread normalisation of violence in the society. An additional issue that worries children of various ages is potential attack by stray dogs in the public spaces of their cities. Stray dogs have been a persistent problem all over Kosovo and there has been no effective solution to this date.

#### 4.4. Development

This section is devoted to any legislation, strategy and expenditure that targets the development of children. The basis for this sector was mainly taken from the children's rights in the UNCRC grouped under the term development and which refer to rights on leisure, cultural activities, access to information, and freedom of thought, conscience and religion.

##### Legislative framework

There is no specific law on development as such as the nature of this sector touches many aspects of children's lives. There are, however, some relevant laws which target specific parts of the development of children. They range from ensuring adequate financial subsistence for families in need up to providing the institutional mechanisms for the freedom of speech of children and their active participation in legislation and policymaking that concerns them

A solid economic situation greatly facilitates the sound upbringing of children. In the previous section the social assistance scheme was briefly touched upon. The Law on Social Assistance Scheme, which has recently been modified for additional provision for children, regulates the criteria, sum and administration of the social assistance scheme<sup>51</sup>. There are two categories of beneficiaries as defined by this law.

- The first category includes family with adult members not able to work and children up to 14 years old and/or children 14-18 continuing education; single parents with children up to 15 years old ; disabled people.
- The second category includes families with one member able to work and at least one child younger than 5 years old or families taking care of an orphan of up to 15 years old.

This scheme is means-tested and its amount ranges from €35 to €75 euros per month based on the number of household members. The family can claim this benefit for 6 months with the right of reapplication once this period terminates. The new provisions for children under this scheme are an additional 5 euros per child per month, which has not been fully implemented yet due to lack of budget<sup>52 53</sup>. Financial provision for children with special needs is regulated by the law on children with special needs<sup>54</sup>. It entitles the family to claim an amount of €100 euros per child if the child has special needs and limited abilities.

Spending quality time with parents and having their presence while growing up is essential for ensuring a better childhood. The law on labour<sup>55</sup> has some facilitation when it comes to parents' time spent with children. First and foremost, pregnant women are allowed a total of 12 months of maternity leave, 6 of which are paid by the employer at a rate of 70% of their salary paid. The remainder half is paid by the public funds at a rate of 50 percent and another 3 months can be taken as unpaid leave.

51 Law on Social Assistance Scheme (2003/15)

52 Law on the change and complementation of law no. 2003/15 on the social assistance scheme in Kosovo (2011/04-L-096)

53 OGG (2011). Assessment of Progress for Children Strategy and National Action Plan on Children's Rights in the Republic of Kosovo 2009-2013 Volume II. Office for Good Governance. Pristina. Accessed at: [http://kryeministri-ks.net/repository/docs/Progresi\\_i\\_Raportit\\_ENG\\_01\\_web.pdf](http://kryeministri-ks.net/repository/docs/Progresi_i_Raportit_ENG_01_web.pdf)

54 Law on the support of families with children with permanent limited (2008/03-L-022 )

55 Law on Labour (2010/03-L-212)

The latter half can be used by the father upon agreement. Paternity leave under this law amounts to only two paid work days when the child is born and an additional two weeks off to be used up until child is 3 years old.

Additional articles in this law pay special attention to employees with children. For example, the employer cannot move the employee's job place without their agreement if certain categories of employees such as pregnant ones, single and all parents with young or disabled children, and employee younger than 18 years old. Longer working hours are not allowed for pregnant women, single earning parent with child younger than 3 years old or handicapped child. It is forbidden by law to fire an employee during maternity leave or pregnancy.

Other essential parts of a child's development, such as freedom of speech and beliefs and civic engagement, are regulated for an older category of children (15-18) within the law of empowerment and participation of youth<sup>56</sup>. This law grants children of that age with the right to form groups and organizations that undertake activities that promote their wellbeing. According to this law, public institutions are obliged to inform on youth policy and programs available and are also obliged to increase the capacities for inclusiveness of youth and marginalized groups of youth. They should additionally facilitate the formal institutional procedures in order to engage the youth to with the central and local municipalities. They should provide financial and human resources to implement youth program, secure the public space for youth activities in consultation with Councils of Local Youth Action, develop municipal youth policies in consultation with Councils of Local Youth Action and maintain transparency within Youth Centres. The Councils of Local Youth Action are unions of youth related NGOs for each municipality that voice the needs and opinions of this category at respective institutions at the central and international level. Lastly, the public institutions are responsible for guaranteeing youth involvement in policymaking in these sectors: education, labour, health, social issues, culture, sports and recreation, civic education and democracy, environment, urban and rural planning.

### **Strategies and Action Plans**

At the central level, the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports is responsible for the rightful and comprehensive development and promotion of skills and ideas of children through a variety of activities in the area of culture and recreation (i.e. theatre, music, museums, sports, etc.). Cross-sectional objectives that intersect with children's development are included in the National strategy for Children's rights. These objectives include the improvement of poor children's life, the creation of infrastructure, safe spaces and playgrounds for children as well as the creation of effective system for collection of data that cover the issue of children's rights. A separate objective exists for participation of children in the decision making process and raising of awareness of the civil society with regard to the rights of child.

The last objective is the responsibility of the youth department within Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports. They do indeed compile a strategy on Youth where among other specification a special part dedicated to this issue. Increasing youth participation in decision and policy making processes is expected to have a direct impact on their well-being as their feedback and involvement will ensure more effective laws and policies to be drafted. This participation is expected to come from a consolidated network of the Councils for Local Youth Action. The strategy also states that supporting youth programs is seen as especially crucial for the civic engagement of this age group at the municipal level.

### **The budget and development 2015**

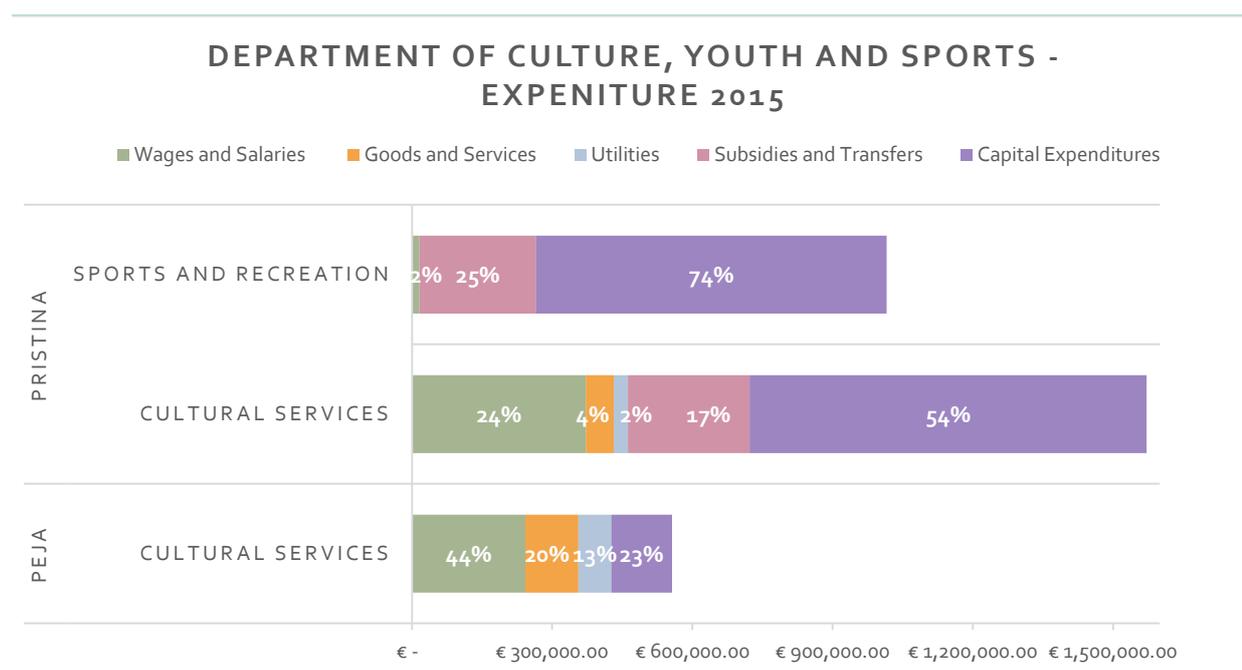
The funds for activities that help and promote child development are typically extracted from the department of Culture, Youth and Sports. The municipalities of Peja and Pristina allocated 2.6 and 4.2 percent of their 2015 budgets to their Departments of Culture, Youth and Sports. The figure below represents the breakdown of expenditures within this department. Capital expenditures make up for the majority of expenditures in the municipality of Pristina.

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56 Law of empowerment and participation of youth (2009/03-L-145)

The list of these expenses includes mostly infrastructure building such as conservation and restoration of cultural heritage objects, construction and renovation of sports facilities as well as supplying of the municipality's libraries with books and organising cultural and sport events. A targeted investment at the amount of €300,000 was allocated towards the construction of playgrounds and sport fields for children. In the municipality of Pristina, subsidies and transfers make up for 25 percent of the budget on Sports and Recreation and 17 percent in of that on Cultural Services. The Department of Culture, Youth and Sports in the municipality of Peja spent only 23 percent of its budget on capital expenditures for 2015. This amount is mostly allocated for the construction and renovation of infrastructure, such as libraries, youth centres and culture houses. An amount of €30,000 was allocated towards construction of playgrounds for children. A substantial amount is spent towards wages and salaries for this department.

**Figure 10:** Department of Culture, Youth and Sports Expenditure 2015



A study conducted by UNICEF regarding the progress on CRC implementation in Kosovo showed that the promotion of including children's viewpoints in the decision and policy making processes has improved<sup>57</sup>. Nevertheless, according to this study, more needs to be done in this direction especially towards the inclusion of children in the legislation and ensuring that their viewpoints are taken seriously by local and central institutions rather than accepting them to be represented by corresponding adults. Thus, Kosovo still suffers from a lack of adequate representation of children's viewpoints both in terms of drafting and implementing legislation or policies at central and local level.

The table below provides the statistics on a few indicators that represent the level of early child development in Kosovo's ethnically Albanian and RAE children. The percentage of children that attend early childhood education is extremely low at 13.9 and 16.1 percent for Albanian and RAE children respectively. The support for learning provided to children of age 36-59 months is somewhat better for children of Albanian than RAE communities, where 66.3 percent of Albanian children as opposed to 41 percent of RAE have had an adult engage with them in four or more activities to promote learning and school readiness in the last 3 days. The support for learning is almost fully skewed towards the mother, and the father barely participates in this process. Availability of tools for development is also at a low level for both communities but books are significantly absent in the RAE communities. Overall, the early childhood index shows that the percentage of children age 36-59 months who are developmentally on track in at least three of the following four domains: literacy-numeracy, physical, social-emotional, and learning is 83.4 and 77.2 percent of Albanian and RAE communities respectively.

57 - OGG (2011). Assessment of Progress for Children Strategy and National Action Plan on Children's Rights in the Republic of Kosovo 2009-2013 Volume II. Office for Good Governance. Pristina. Accessed at: [http://kryeministri-ks.net/repository/docs/Progresi\\_i\\_Raportit\\_ENG\\_01\\_web.pdf](http://kryeministri-ks.net/repository/docs/Progresi_i_Raportit_ENG_01_web.pdf)

**Table 6:** MICS Development Indicators 2014

MICS Indicator	Indicator Name	Description	Total	RAE
6.1	Attendance to early childhood education	Percentage of children age 36-59 months who are attending an early childhood education programme	13.9	16.1
6.2	Support for learning	Percentage of children age 36-59 months with whom an adult has engaged in four or more activities to promote learning and school readiness in the last 3 days	66.3	40.7
6.3	Father's support for learning	Percentage of children age 36-59 months whose biological father has engaged in four or more activities to promote learning and school readiness in the last 3 days	6	7.0
6.4	Mother's support for learning	Percentage of children age 36-59 months whose biological mother has engaged in four or more activities to promote learning and school readiness in the last 3 days	42.8	20.5
-6.5	Availability of children's books	Percentage of children under age 5 who have three or more children's books	31.1	6.0
6.6	Availability of playthings	Percentage of children under age 5 who play with two or more types of playthings	66.6	68.6
6.7	Inadequate care	Percentage of children under age 5 left alone or in the care of another child younger than 10 years of age for more than one hour at least once in the last week	5.9	12.5
6.8	Early child development index	Percentage of children age 36-59 months who are developmentally on track in at least three of the following four domains: literacy-numeracy, physical, social-emotional, and learning	83.4	77.2

The data presented from the table and the not-so-well performing indicators correspond to the scarcity of efforts from an institutional viewpoint towards early childhood development.

### Feedback from fieldwork

The discussion held with stakeholders discussed the activities and actions initiated by the departments of culture for different spheres that touch the children's development. The municipal representatives stated that with the limited budget they have they are trying to undertake projects attractive and educational for children. Their priorities seem to be oriented towards building of youth centres and safe public spaces for children. Municipal representatives from Peja highlighted that undertaking "soft" projects is to some extent not appealing for the local bodies as their results is not directly seen in a physical form as building of infrastructure is.

While the results can be seen in the long term, often these projects cannot be “sold” to the electorate, which makes certain projects hard to fund from central budget. Municipal representatives from Pristina emphasised once again the absence of a budgeting code for children; even at the level of directorate for culture, youth and sports, there is no specific budget solely dedicated to youth. This makes allocation and transparency in child-related expenditure especially troublesome.

It should also be noted that child inclusion in budgeting processes and in general decision making agenda was not mentioned by municipal representatives and even considered as inappropriate at times. This, not only goes against the law for empowerment and participation of youth, but it also highlights one of the key factors of inefficient expenditure toward children at the local level. The children participating in the discussion on the other hand expressed substantial interest in being more involved in the policy making process when such policies concern them directly.

*“We would like to be involved in the policy making process when it concerns children as the outcomes are very important for us.”*

*Participants in the group discussion with children, Peja.*

Other issues that were acknowledged by the stakeholders and especially stressed for children is the engagement with new technologies. The use of internet and social media is widely spread among the children. However, these platforms are underused by local bodies and not well integrated in their planned projects and programs. This was further confirmed by the discussion held with children, in which some expressed interest in having more recreational activities, but they stated that the best way to reach them is through the internet. This perhaps should be kept in mind once the local assemblies for children become fully functional in order to reach and integrate a larger pool of children among their planned activities.

## 5. Conclusion

This budget analysis aimed to map out the situation of and expenditure on children in the municipality of Pristina and Peja for 2015. It focused on the availability of laws, strategies and action plans that prioritise children at both central and municipal level and, more importantly, on the amount spent on programs that directly touch children. Through this analysis we aimed to answer two questions. The first one is estimating the extent of allocations and spending on children in the two municipalities separately. The second question is mainly on the autonomy and desire of relevant institutions to spend and target children in their policymaking process.

Regarding the formal framework, the legislation is to a wide extent in line with international standards. However, often child-friendly approaches are missing and, especially, more needs to be done in the legal framework for child protection. Going beyond the formal framework, prioritisation of children is absent especially at the local level. Most strategies, attempts, programs and expenditure happen in a sporadic way rather than being formalised in the rules of procedure. Even where strategies exist, the existence of independent evaluation and monitoring of the expenditure on those strategies are absent or non-transparent.

Although the education and health departments of the municipality of Peja and Pristina take up among the largest share of the budget for 2015, the majority of these funds is spent on wages and salaries. There is no sufficient consultation with children, the public in general, and relevant stakeholders when funds are being allocated to programs and projects. Thus, often, expenditure is inefficient and indicators for children's wellbeing in each sector perform poorly or do not progress further. Another detrimental problem with expenditure on children is the lack of a budgeting code dedicated toward them. The way the budgeting process is done in Kosovo makes it impossible to track precisely how much money is allocated directly at children, excluding programs which may benefit children as well as other age groups.

Lastly, the inclusion of children is still seen as secondary by the representative of institution. The children themselves, on the other hand, seem ever more prepared to raise their voices and demand their rights. Nevertheless, child involvement in the budgeting and decision making process has still a long way to go in the municipalities of Peja and Pristina.

## 6. Recommendations

1. The quintessential recommendations, which would pave the way for improvements and increased funding in every field that touches children, is to have each relevant institution at local and central level list and identify fulfilling children's needs as their priorities. One way to achieve this is to compile thorough child-focused small scale strategies or municipal work plans that touch upon children's lives. More importantly, these documents should be prepared after close collaboration primarily with children and secondarily with relevant stakeholders. Inclusion of children can be done in a number of ways, through public discussions, surveys at schools, joint meetings, activities that will highlight their needs and worries, etc.
2. Secondly, there should be independent monitoring and evaluation of the undertaken projects. These processes will ensure that the quality is adequate and the projects are duly completed. Once projects deliver results, the likelihood of attracting further funding will increase as will the possibility for replicating the model.
3. With respect to education, much more effort should be put towards the improvement of quality of education focusing on learning as an interactive process and updating methodologies to best fit the children's needs. Equitable access should be strengthened given that the legislation as well as strategies emphasise this aspect, but little to no programs exist to address it leaving, thus, children of poor economic background and from Roma Ashkali and Egyptians communities particularly vulnerable.
4. The departments of education should aim to be in more frequent contact with children (through field work and meetings with them), take children's opinions into account and mould programs based on their field work findings.
5. The training and testing of teachers should be better monitored in order to ensure that the organised programs are successful in achieving their goals of increasing teaching capabilities. In addition, the amount allocated towards wages and salaries should be more tightly linked to the education performance of children serving, thus, as an incentive mechanism to improve children's achievements as well as the efficiency of education expenditure.
6. While the group discussion lead us to believe that children understand the importance of mental and physical health, more should be done for children, parents and institutions to be proactive about addressing their health issues. Better cooperation between municipalities the ministry of health and social welfare and schools would ensure comprehensive programs that guarantee children's health and nutrition. School cafeterias with nutritional healthy menu and adequate physical education are but a few examples that would help in optimizing children's wellbeing.
7. The various child labour working groups and institutional bodies should become fully functional. Their focus should be on working directly with the affected children on the ground. There are scarcely any programs on preventing and eliminating child labour and there is, thus, an urgent need for such programs to prevent and eliminate forced child labour practices.
8. The local governing bodies should put a serious effort to reduce the high administrative burdens placed on Social Services Centres as well as increase the division's funding in order to provide adequate services to all those in need, especially children.
9. 9. With respect to development of children, balancing education and schoolwork with recreational activities should be among the priorities listed for each school – therefore schools should create their plans and draft priorities accordingly.
10. The local structures should ensure to allocate funding towards the child led municipal assemblies and should ensure their participation in the planning of municipal action plans that concern children. They should also support creation of novelty informational platforms to reach a broader range of children.
11. Lastly, reforms in the budgeting process are vital in order to have a budgeting code dedicated to children. Local governing bodies as well as relevant stakeholders should further push for the initiation of these reforms as this would allow for better monitoring of expenditures therefore increasing transparency and accountability.

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## 7. Appendix

### A.1. Capital Investments

<b>Municipality of Pristina - 2015</b>	
<b>Capital Expenditures</b>	<b>Total</b>
Treatment of stray dogs	€ 120,000.00
Renovation and maintenance of children`s playground and sports fields	€ 30,000.00
Promoting youth employment - training in entrepreneurship through the inter	€ 90,000.00
Disinfection and deracination of health and educational facilities	€ 60,000.00
Supplying of books	€ 50,000.00
Cultural and sports events, and organizing	€ 150,000.00
Decorating the town for the holidays	€ 100,000.00
Art in public space	€ 50,000.00
Construction of the edges of toys and sports fields in the Municipality of Pris	€ 300,000.00
Construction of the nursery	€ 430,000.00
Construciton of the School in Kalabria area	€ 200,000.00
Tthe construction of school in Sofali	€ 100,000.00
Construction of school in Veternik	€ 300,000.00
Construction of school in neighbourhoud Mat I	€ 400,000.00
Setting security cameras	€ 50,000.00
The device of some schools with sports equipment	€ 150,000.00
Supplying of school libraries	€ 100,000.00
Placing water reservoirs in schools	€ 50,000.00
Digitalization school diaries	€ 20,000.00
Science museum for children	€ 200,000.00
The construction of school infrastructure (Complete Music School, construction of new cla0ssroom2s5,0 e,0tc0.0)	€ 250,000.00
Building sports hall for some schools	€ 300,000.00
Bulinding sports fieleds for some schools	€ 100,000.00
Landscaping the school fence	€ 100,000.00
Reconstruction of schools and Whitewashing	€ 300,000.00
Installations and heating renovations	€ 250,000.00
Equipping schools with some cabinets	€ 200,000.00
Total Capital Expenditures for Children	€ 4,450,000.00
Other Capital Expenditures	€ 19,818,351.00
Total Capital Expenditures	€ 24,268,351.00
Total Budget 2015	€ 62,114,156.00
Total Capital Expenditures for Children as Percentage of Total Capital Expenditures	18.34%
Other Capital Expenditures as Percentage of Total Capital Expenditures	81.66%
<b>Total Capital Expenditures for Children as Percentage of Total Budget</b>	<b>7.16%</b>

<b>Municipality of Peja - 2015</b>	
<b>Capital Expenditures</b>	<b>Total</b>
Beautifying the city for holidays	€ 10,000.00
Community Projects	€ 100,000.00
Construction of library - Phase I	€ -
Angles of toys for children	€ 30,000.00
Building the Culture House - Jabllanice e Madhe	€ 30,000.00
Regulation of fences and sports fields	€ 40,000.00
Peja Youth Center Renovation	€ 15,000.00
Renovation of primary and secondary schools	€ 300,000.00
Technical equipment for school Cabinets and visual aids	€ 55,000.00
Construction of the sports hall and the League of Prizren and Baran first phase	€ 300,000.00
Construction of sports hall first phase	€ -
Construction of kindergarten children near City Archives	€ 150,000.00
Total Capital Expenditures for Children	€ 1,030,000.00
Other Capital Expenditures	€ 4,161,898.00
Total Capital Expenditures	€ 5,191,898.00
Total Budget 2015	€ 21,125,278.00
As Percentage of Total Capital Expenditures	19.84%
Other Capital Expenditures as Percentage of Total Capital Expenditures	80.16%
<b>As Percentage of Total Budget</b>	<b>4.88%</b>

**A.2. Group Discussions**

## Participants

	Type	Location	Participants	Date
1.	Children	Pristina (UBO Consutling)	7 Selected Children aged 15-18	9-13 November
2.		Peja (Municipality Assembly)	7 Selected Children aged 15-18	9-13 November
3.	Stakeholders	Pristina (UBO Consutling)	3-4 Municipal representatives: Budget Director Department for Culture, Youth and Sports Department for Education Department for Health and Social Welfare Office for Good Governance – (Participants in drafting Strategy on Children Rights) Ministry of Finance – Director for Municipality Budget 3-4 Local Child related NGOs: KOMF PEN Keshilli I Veprimit Lokal Rinor Qendra Rinore Levizja Fol Other Suggestions by STC	9-13 November
4.		Peja (Municipality Assembly)	3-4 Municipal representatives: Budget Director Department for Culture, Youth and Sports Department for Education Department for Health and Social Welfare Other Suggestions by STC Local Child related NGOs: Keshilli I Veprimit Lokal Rinor Qendra Rinore "Atë Lorenc Mazreku (ALM) Qendra Rinore Publike "Peja" Asambleja e Fëmijëve Other Suggestions by STC	9-13 November



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