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Republika Kosova - Republic of Kosovo
Qeveria - Vlada - Government

**PROGRAM OF THE GOVERNMENT OF
THE REPUBLIC OF KOSOVO
2021 - 2025**

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GOALS OF THE GOVERNMENT PROGRAM

The Government Program is the basic document through which the Government communicates its vision to the citizens of the Republic of Kosovo with regard to its governance. The Government program reflects the approach and principles to be followed throughout the governance, and the basic priorities and initiatives that will be taken in all areas to improve the situation in the country.

We aim to focus on two basic and most urgent priorities. The first priority is focusing in managing the pandemic caused by the COVID-19 virus, aiming to minimize consequences on public health. The second priority is to focus on alleviating the economic and social consequences caused by the pandemic, which requires the mobilization of the entire potential of the state. Also, we will also focus on combating crime and corruption and economic and social transformation of the country, aiming to ensure social inclusion of all citizens of Kosovo.

This program reflects the general orientations of our governance with regard to the European integration agenda and foreign policy. It transmits the democratic and pluralistic spirit of the country, which ensures completion of the state-building process and full integration of the Republic of Kosovo within regional, European and international institutions.

The program is structured so as to presents governance priorities and sector plans, divided into policy areas and in sectors of public policy. During the drafting of Strategic and Operational Plans, strategic goals have been identified for each of the ministries. The table indicating the structure of the Program with responsibilities of the ministries and the Office of the Prime Minister for each strategic goal and the Legislative Program for 2021 is presented in the appendix.

1. Government Priorities

1.1 Management of Covid-19 pandemic

The COVID-19 pandemic, as a global level disease, in addition to health problems, has also brought about socio-economic damages to the Republic of Kosovo. Based on that, preventing, controlling and managing our country's pandemic situation remains a key priority.

While aiming to manage the pandemic, prevent the spread of infection, and treat and rehabilitate patients, we will undertake the following steps:

- ⇒ Ensure vaccines for 60% of citizens, for the age-groups of those that must be vaccinated by the end of 2021.
- ⇒ Immunization of citizens based on the state plan for anti-COVID-19 vaccination plan, which we will review continuously;
- ⇒ Drafting a new testing and tracking plan;
- ⇒ Reassessing the effectiveness of measures and their implementation, and performing an analysis of the epidemiological situation, and introduction of adequate and data-based measures to prevent the spread of infection;
- ⇒ Increasing and strengthening the state's supervisory capacities for implementation of measures imposed by the Government;
- ⇒ Continuous medical education, continuous vocational education for healthcare workers and education and promotion of citizens for the updating of anti-COVID-19 measures.
- ⇒ Information and education on vaccines through campaigns;
- ⇒ Drafting and implementation of guidelines and protocols for the treatment of patients with COVID-19, in order to clearly define the duties and responsibilities of healthcare professionals, providing clarification to citizens as to which level of healthcare they should address for healthcare services.
- ⇒ Costing and budgeting of the clinical guideline and protocols, in order to ensure anti-COVID-19 medicines and medicinal products, to prevent the impoverishment of citizens or out-of-pocket payments.
- ⇒ Building and strengthening infrastructure and human resource capacities, in order to enhance quality and safety of healthcare services for proper treatment of patients with COVID-19
- ⇒ Emergency financial support packages for clinical treatment of inpatients in clinics dedicated to the treatment of patients with COVID-19;
- ⇒ Building capacities and possibilities for monitoring patients post-COVID-19, with particular emphasis in their physical and mental health;
- ⇒ Direct assistance to families who have lost the head of household or the source of funding as a result of death caused by Pandemic.

All these measures will be based on factual data and analysis of the epidemiological situation. This scientific approach will continue as a task and as an obligation to take into account scientific data with regard to the pandemic.

The engagement of providing vaccines is a measure of high priority. In this context, it should be noted that during 2021, through various sources, we aim to vaccinate 60% of the citizens of Kosovo. This measure will be implemented in two aspects: through the cooperation with our international partners and their commitment under the Covax Alliance and the engagement of the Ministry of Health, as leader of the negotiations at Government level, to provide and deploy vaccines. We will make sure that the population will be continuously vaccinated in accordance with the National Vaccination Plan.

Our next key priority is to prevent and control the pandemic in the country, which we aim to achieve by taking adequate measures to curb the spread and prevent infection, thus preventing the risk posed to public health, and overcrowding of clinics. . In parallel to the application of measures, we will establish and strengthen oversight mechanisms for monitoring and implementation of measures, and increase the National Institute of Public Health's testing and tracking capacities. Also, we will increase and strengthen clinical capacities for treatment according to the inpatients clinical protocols in clinics dedicated to the treatment of patients with COVID-19.

We will prevent the imminent risk of health professionals being in contact with the virus while performing their duties through vaccination, according to the National Vaccination Plan. In the light of building hospital capacities, we will provide personal protective equipment, build human and infrastructural capacity, and standardize the treatment of inpatients in clinics dedicated for treatment of COVID-19 by developing and reviewing Protocols according to other countries' best standards and experiences.

For the purpose of preventing the spread of infection, we will organize awareness campaigns for citizens to protect themselves from contracting the disease. We will continuously communicate with citizens maintaining strict transparency and accountability, while the Ministry of Health will continuously develop communication strategies for more effective and concrete information to citizens, which will translate into campaigns, not only for the COVID-19 pandemic. This campaign will use all information resources so as to be completely based on scientific facts. Also, the campaign will provide proper information in the function of preventing fake news about the pandemic, by paying special attention to mental health.

For the sustainable funding of the healthcare sector, we will take concrete measures to coordinate technical assistance and donations, as an integral part of the review and consolidation of the budget of the Kosovo.

1.2. Economic recovery

We aim to achieve the increase of purchasing power through intervention with measures for increasing liquidity in households, and by supporting those who most need states aid. By raising the minimum wage to EUR 250 for 40 working hours per week, and raising the non-taxable wage threshold to the minimum wage level, we will ensure that those with lower wages have more money at the end of the month.

The conclusion of the pandemic situation is seen as a new opportunity to redirect our economy toward production and export, toward increasing dignified employment for all, and toward sustainable, environment-friendly employment for the next generations.

In this regard, we will engage to incite investments in new production and export capacities that create sustainable jobs through direct lending support to production businesses.

Aiming to increase competitiveness and quality of local production, we will provide support to businesses that invest in enhancing and standardizing quality, and we will support training of workers and building human capacities.

The pandemic has aggravated the situation of many businesses. They were forced to lay off some of their staff. However, upon recovery of economic activity, those workers will be needed again. Therefore, through intervention measures we will support the return of those workers who lost their jobs during the pandemic. We will support all those who were previously unemployed, and who now have found a job. The greatest support will be dedicated to young people entering the labour market for the first time. Under the guaranteed employment scheme for young people, we will pay the minimum wage for 1 year, for each young person who is employed for the first time.

To ensure the financing of the economic development plan, we will negotiate and sign international financial agreements and issue securities.

Our Diaspora is an integral and strong part of the sustainable economic development plan. By creating investment facilities, we will ensure that the capital of our Diaspora is channelled into investments that generate jobs. Therefore, starting from the first year, we will issue treasury bills dedicated to the Diaspora.

To support the economic empowerment of women and increase employment with a focus on doing business, active measures for women employment and measures that support liquidity will be implemented for women-run businesses.

For long-term economic development, by the end of the year, we will adopt the National Development Strategy, which will address challenges in all sectors of public policy. As a comprehensive document, the NDS will allow for liaison with the Sustainable Development Goals, the Green Agreement and the European integration agenda. The NDS will serve as the main tool of implementing country's priorities by setting development priorities, strategic objectives and outcomes to be attained. Also, structural reforms will be undertaken to improve business environment, invest in infrastructure and link skills to the labour market. Economic recovery also offers an opportunity to focus on a greener and more environmental friendly economy.

We will also engage to establish the Sovereign Fund. The Sovereign Fund will take ownership of strategic assets of the Republic of Kosovo, valorise them and allow for foreign investment and access to foreign capital market. Also, it will have exclusive responsibility for investments in increasing the value of Trepça, KEK, Telekom and the Post. Consequently, we will dissolve the Privatization Agency of Kosovo by transferring it into a Government agency.

We will also establish the Development Agency, as a mechanism to lead development policies between ministries and independent development agencies, in order to attain

development priorities defined under the National Development Strategy. Furthermore, the Agency will support both the private and the public sector in achieving strategic development goals by increasing local businesses' capacities, promoting and increasing foreign investments and by increasing export.

Also, we will establish the Development Bank of Kosovo. The Development Bank of Kosovo will serve as a mechanism to support the private sector and promote investment. It will be the lending component, financed by public money and sale of bonds, and will invest in certain branches of industry that create jobs and improve trade balance.

2. Government Plan

2.1. Public health and social protection

2.1.1 Health sector reform

Our vision for healthcare is to have a healthy population. We aim to achieve this by providing quality and safe health services for all citizens of the country. Our priority for the healthcare sector, in addition to the management of the COVID-19 pandemic, will also be to implement a comprehensive reform that allows for the development of the healthcare system. For this purpose, we will draft a new strategy for the healthcare sector.

Reorganization of the health sector

We will review the legal framework of the health sector, with special emphasis on the Law on Health, to undertake necessary reforms and follow contemporary developments. By reforming the healthcare sector, we will make the palliative care functional and strengthen inspection and monitoring capacities. Special attention will be given to the functionalization of the **unique and integrated health information system**, which regulates referral patient system at all levels of healthcare.

Quality of healthcare services

We will engage to continuously improve quality and safety of healthcare services. We will also take care of vulnerable groups in society, with a focus on increasing vaccination rate of children and advancing the concept of family medicine. To increase quality and services, we will create a network of Kosovar physicians in the Diaspora and liaise with health professionals' organizations and chambers through a professional exchange program. Also, we will strengthen capacities to fight communicable, non-communicable and rare diseases, and increase regional and international cooperation.

Public health insurance

One of the most important priorities of the health system is the amendment of the Law on Health Insurance, and strengthening the human and infrastructural administrative capacities in the Health Insurance Fund, as the condition for starting collection of contributions. This process will be started at the same time with the completion of the Health Information System and the drafting of the clinical guidelines. Also, for this purpose we will complete the secondary legislation for implementation of exemption from payment of premiums, co-payments and co-financing for health services, outpatient drug scheme, contracting of pharmacies, and out-patients medical treatment.

2.1.2 Social protection

Our vision is to increase well-being for all citizens, without any distinction. We aim to achieve this by supporting vulnerable groups and restructuring social assistance and pension schemes in order to reduce poverty and increase activity in the labour market.

Reducing poverty and increasing social welfare

Increasing social welfare and reducing poverty will be achieved by designing new social and pension schemes that include guaranteed seasonal employment schemes of one family member for all those benefiting from these schemes.

For this purpose, we will reimburse all low-income families, depending on the annual income that these families receive. We will start implementing the allowance program for children. Children under the age of 2 years old will receive a monthly allowance in the amount of EUR 20, while children under the age of 16 years old will receive EUR 10 per month. We will change the maternity and parental leave, so that both parents can benefit. Unemployed mothers will receive a minimum salary of EUR 250 for the six months of maternity leave. Also, we will review and restructure existing social and pension schemes, by clearing the list of beneficiaries.

Among others, we will also review the legal framework for social assistance and pension schemes, including social and family services, state-funded pension schemes, social assistance, assessment and recognition of status, benefits and services for persons with disabilities. We will review the legal framework for the public funding of NGOs, and the grant for social and family services. In order to avoid double beneficiaries and misuses, we will link all data bases on different social and pension schemes.

Protection of workers' rights

Protection of workers' rights and improvement of working conditions is one of the priorities of our governance. We aim to achieve this by reviewing the legal framework on workers' rights and safety at work. In order to improve working conditions, we will strengthen law enforcement mechanisms. We will increase the number of labour inspectors, enhance the capacities of the Employment Agency, increase minimum salary, recognize practical experience as work experience, we will build capacities to review workers' complaints and regulate maternity and paternity leave, as emphasised above.

2.2. Rule of Law

Our vision is to have an independent, unbiased, efficient and professional justice system. We aim to achieve this by strengthening the justice system and increasing citizens' trust in.

Rule of law is a fundamental principles based on which the Government will be working to protect and guarantee citizens' rights and freedoms. For this purpose, we will fight, without compromises, against organized crime, corruption, economic crimes, domestic violence, and human trafficking, and will engage toward ensuring adherence of human rights guaranteed by the Constitution and international conventions.

2.2.1 Improving the integrity of justice institutions

In order to improve the integrity of justice institutions and increase citizens' trust in justice, we will complete the necessary legal framework for completing the vetting process. For this purpose, we will undertake steps to commence and develop the judicial and prosecutorial vetting process, starting from the highest hierarchical levels. The vetting process shall be a key instrument for verifying the integrity, professionalism, and property of those subjected to vetting. The vetting process will be fair, comprehensive, and will be done in broad consultations with field experts, civil society, the academic world and international partners.

Among other things, according to the findings of the Functional Review of the Justice System, an initiative of the Government of Kosovo conducted in close cooperation with international partners and other key stakeholders of the justice system, we will adopt the Rule of Law Strategy, which will focus on matters of justice.

Also, in order to increase integrity, we will reform the justice system administration, through new policies and necessary amendments to the legal framework, and will restructure the Ministry of Justice, in accordance with legal requirements and so that it better serves to the achievement of the mission and vision.

2.2.2 Reform of the criminal, civil and administrative justice system

We will continuously engage in the reforming of the criminal, civil and administrative justice, which we intend to achieve by making necessary changes to respective policies and legal framework.

For the purpose of further advancing the fight against corruption, we will adopt the Law on Agency for Prevention of Corruption, which contains amendments in terms of the organisation and functioning of the Agency, as an institution mainly engaged toward prevention of corruption, handling of conflict of interest cases, handling cases of the declaration of assets by senior public officials, including the control and

origin of property, and whistleblower cases. Furthermore, we will take action to raise public awareness on the importance of the law for protection of whistleblowers.

We will finalize the drafting of the Criminal Procedure Code, which will include legal provisions that will allow for an easier approach to combating organized crime and corruption. The new amendments to the Code, will allow for suspension of public officials in cases of criminal offence indictments. Also, we will include additional mechanisms for the protection of freedom and constitutional rights of suspected persons.

To advance the fight against organized crime and corruption, we will draft the legal framework on issues of unjustified property, which aims to confiscate property acquired in an unjustified manner, by transferring the burden of proof to the suspected person.

Also, we will undertake steps to build human and functional capacities to guarantee full and professional investigation of organized crime and corruption cases. For this purpose, we will establish a special mechanism to combat organized crime and high-level corruption.

To reform the civil justice system, we will develop the judicial reform in the field of commercial justice, pursuant to recommendations emerging from the Functional Review of the Justice System. Special attention will be attached to the establishment of the Commercial Court. In order to render the Commercial Court functional, we will increase the number of judges specialized in the field of commercial justice. In addition, we will promote and strengthen the use of alternative mechanisms for settling legal disputes.

With regard to the administrative justice system reforms, we will complete the legal framework for administrative conflicts to ensure easier access to justice and increase efficiency of the administrative justice system. Among other things, during this mandate we will work towards establishment of the Administrative Court and Labour Court.

In order to prevent and combat organized crime and cross-border corruption, we will create legal mechanisms between the Republic of Kosovo and other states and relevant international institutions, to facilitate international cooperation. For this purpose, we will draft the Law on International Legal Cooperation in Criminal Matters and the Law on International Cooperation in Civil Matters.

Also, we will draft the relevant legislation required for completing and amending policies, including criminal procedure, disciplinary liability, state prosecutor, criminal records, declaration of assets, execution of criminal sanctions, correctional and probationary service, civil code, contested procedure, property rights, free legal

aid, state bar, administrative disputes and forensic medicine. In the light of the reform, we will *inter alia* complete the legal framework for international legal cooperation and conclude agreements with other countries for cooperation in criminal and civil matters, transfers and extradition.

2.2.3 Addressing genocide and war crimes and values protected by international law

In order to address serious human rights violations, war crimes and crimes against humanity, we will increase the professional capacity of the Special Prosecution, establish the Institute for War Crimes Committed in Kosovo, and develop transitional justice policies and a legal framework for missing persons.

We will strengthen the professional capacity of the Special Prosecution to address war crimes and violations of values protected by international law and to provide justice to the victims of these crimes. We will establish the Institute for Crimes Committed in Kosovo, in order to find the facts about crimes committed during the war in Kosovo, and document and archive them. At the same time, we will prepare a lawsuit against Serbia in the International Court of Justice. We will also engage in drafting transitional justice policies. Employing a comprehensive approach, we will identify and promote various processes that will guarantee victims of crime the right to justice and the truth. We will develop, among others, a reparations platform, which will aim at calculating human and material damage caused during the war.

2.2.4 Improving the services of free legal professions and the digitalization of the justice system

In order to create a more conducive environment for doing business, as well as providing services to citizens, we will engage in strengthening the role of free professions and increasing oversight of the legality of their work. We will also engage to facilitate access to state databases for notaries and private bailiffs, in order to increase efficiency in their work. We will improve the services of free legal professions by functionalizing and restructuring the state advocacy, completing the legal framework concerning free professions and building capacities in this regard.

Among others, we will intensify the use of modern technology in the justice system, in order to provide better services and transparency to the public.

2.2.5 Prevention and addressing of domestic violence, violence against women and gender-based violence

Domestic violence, violence against women and gender-based violence are one of the most acute problems in the country, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. In order to prevent and address such violence, we will draft anti-violence policies,

operationalize anti-violence mechanisms, and organize public awareness campaigns to prevent it.

To this end, we will draft policies to prevent the phenomenon of domestic violence, coordinate the actions of all participating parties to protect, treat, rehabilitate and integrate victims of domestic violence, punish and bring the perpetrators of violence to justice, harmonize the domestic and international legislation, as well as review the standards concerning services for victims of domestic violence. The Standard Operation Procedures for Protection from Domestic Violence stand as a policy of the government which defines the roles and responsibilities of the relevant institutions as well as the concrete steps that each institution should take to improve coordination between other institutions that deal with cases of domestic violence. To this end, we will increase the capacity of responsible officials in dealing with cases of domestic violence.

To avoid financial problems of shelters that provide sheltering services, we will undertake concrete actions to include the line for Basic Services for Shelters as a permanent line in the Law on Budget of Kosovo and we will amend the legal framework for free legal aid, in order to recognize the category of victims of domestic violence and gender-based violence as a special category. These categories, regardless of income and wealth, will be able to benefit from free legal aid in court representation, as well as in family and inheritance disputes.

2.3. Public order and security

Our vision is to guarantee a safe environment and provide quality services for all citizens, without distinction. We aim to achieve this through increased professionalism, independence and accountability, strengthening the institutional integrity and restoring civic trust.

2.3.1 Preventing and combating crime

In order to prevent and combat crime, we will increase the human, analytical and investigative capacities of law enforcement and security mechanisms, complete and amend the strategic and legal framework, as well as increase the interoperability with other institutions. To this end, we will rationalize the strategic framework in order to create a consolidated state strategy against crime, which responds to real risks and improves inter-institutional coordination. We will also commit to increasing international cooperation in the fight against cross-border crime and increasing border control capacities by implementing integrated border management.

2.3.2 Enhancing and maintaining public safety

In order to enhance and maintain public safety, we will develop security policies and identify and categorize critical state infrastructure. As cyber security is a growing problem, we will engage in professional capacity building to prevent cyber attacks, complete the legal framework, and modernize cyber defence equipment. We will also modernize civil registration services, in order to provide better services to citizens and personal data protection. Among other things, in cooperation with the municipalities, local security mechanisms will be strengthened in function of community security.

2.3.3 Strengthening the integrity of law and order institutions

To improve the integrity of law and order institutions, we will develop policies and a legal framework for vetting. For this purpose, administrative inspection policies will be developed and integrity plans for public administration will be improved. In order to increase civic trust, we will strengthen and build the capacities of the Police, with a special emphasis on internal investigations, the Police Inspectorate and other agencies. This will improve the management of staff and other resources efficiently, effectively and honestly. We will also reorganize the Ministry of Internal Affairs, in accordance with the legal requirements and the way it will serve to achieve its goals.

2.4. Governance

2.4.1. Integrated planning

We will develop an integrated system of policy planning and utilization of financial resources, aiming at increasing institutional liability and strengthening accountability and transparency. This will be done by establishing the typology and hierarchy of strategic documents. To strengthen planning, the National Development Strategy will be drafted and a clear definition of policy sectors related to budgeting plans and processes will be established. Planning documents will contain sector performance indicators related to the evaluation of the individual performance of public servants, which will be monitored and measured periodically as part of a transparent system of internal accountability. To advance the monitoring and evaluation system, we will create an index of local development indicators.

2.4.2 European Integration Agenda

The Government will engage in strengthening and advancing contractual relations with the EU through the implementation of the Stabilization and Association Agreement (SAA) and the priority reforms that bring the country closer to the EU and contribute to its institutional consolidation and socio-economic development. The European Reform Agenda will focus on strengthening the rule of law and good governance, improving competitiveness of the economy and investment climate, and strengthening the education system and employment. Under this agenda, we will work on reducing the economic and social effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, in close cooperation and coordination with the EU. We will be committed to membership in regional initiatives by implementing the country's obligations, especially those in the framework of the Berlin Process. In order to enable better planning of the integration process, during our governance we will conduct:

- Detailed evaluation of the implementation of the SAA so far. In accordance with the findings, we will undertake appropriate measures to enable the acceleration of its implementation;
- Better planning of the integration process, with the aim of changing the legal and administrative framework by concluding the cycle of EU-agreed reforms within the European Reform Agenda (ERA 2);
- Better coordination of state departments by intensifying the work of inter-institutional coordination structures for the European integration process; and
- Drafting a clear institutional framework for accession negotiations, consisting of two main pillars: negotiating structures, organized into working groups according to negotiation chapters and a roadmap for the adoption of EU

legislation (*acquis*) in national legislation, with the aim that within the first term of government, Kosovo be ready to receive the candidate status.

In the context of the most important reforms in the country's integration process, more special attention will be paid to:

- Improving the performance of public enterprises, depoliticizing and removing political control over public enterprises;
- Implementation of the SAA and European standards in ensuring free and fair competition in the market;
- Progressive reduction of the informal economy;
- Reforming the education system and social protection system.
- Good and transparent governance; and
- Departization of public administration.

Visa liberalization

The Government of Kosovo aims visa liberalization for the citizens of the Republic of Kosovo and will ensure that necessary steps are undertaken to meet this goal. Our goal is to turn the visa liberalization process from a politicized process into a technical process. The integrity, credibility and normal functioning of the justice system, which produces results in the fight against corruption and organized crime, are essential for Kosovo to liberalize the free movement of citizens. Therefore, in this regard, we will undertake the following initiatives:

- The first basic step and precondition for normal functioning of the justice system is to avoid political influence on the administration of justice. The government commits and ensures respect for the principles of separation of powers, as a fundamental value of the democratic order and rule of law.
- In the short term, we will complete the policy framework for the justice system, in line with European and international standards and best practices.
- In the medium term, we will conduct the vetting process for the justice system and public order and security institutions, in close cooperation with international partners and friendly countries, in order to ensure the integrity and credibility of the process.

As Kosovo remains the only country in the Western Balkans that does not enjoy free movement in the Schengen Area, we aim to develop a comprehensive strategy for public communication, integration processes and visa liberalization.

Development cooperation

EU financial assistance is implemented through the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA). Kosovo will benefit from IPA III for the period 2021-2027, which in total will provide over EUR 14 billion for all countries in the region. From IPA II (2014-2020) the EU had originally planned to allocate EUR 645 million to Kosovo, but it allocated only EUR 602 million in 2018 due to the country's poor performance. In 2019, Kosovo lost another EUR 12 million. Poor performance has cost Kosovo around EUR 60 million.

Given that IPA III funds will not be allocated to the countries of the region, but will be distributed based on successful project applications, we will intensify the preparation to increase the benefits from IPA III funds and EU Programs, to which Kosovo will have access in the next period 2021-2027. In order to respond to the EU initiative for the Economic and Investment Plan for the Western Balkans, we will draft and approve the Single Project Pipeline in Infrastructure, which will be a comprehensive document that will identify Kosovo's key infrastructure projects to benefit from the EU funds, combined with loans provided by international financial institutions. Furthermore, in order to harmonize the external funding provided to Kosovo with its priorities, we will hold a structured dialogue with our development partners, in order for proposed projects to be prepared based on government documents and policies. Special attention will be attached to challenges for the successful implementation of projects and for this purpose we will strengthen the human capacity of the responsible structures within the Office of the Prime Minister and the ministries, which are charged to identify, prepare and apply for projects, such as and implementing and monitoring their implementation.

2.4.3 Efficient governance

Better regulation

In order to ensure better regulation, we will improve the way the Government works, organizes and functions, by drafting, updating and harmonizing the legal framework.

To enable good data-driven policy planning, we will apply the concept of better regulation by conducting environmental, social and economic impact assessment, and other assessments to measure the outcome of policies undertaken. We will also intensify application of *ex-post* evaluation of legislation. We will pay special attention to building institutional capacity for the development of reliable statistics, in line with European and international practices and standards.

Reducing the administrative burden for businesses and citizens

We will reduce the administrative burden by eliminating the excessive red tape, especially through the simplification of permits and licenses, the time for obtaining them, as well as the time and cost for other services for citizens, in order to accelerate the economic development. We will also harmonize the special administrative procedures with the general administrative procedure. Among other things, we will support the advancement of the consolidation function of legal acts.

Communication and policy consultation

Our governance will be open and transparent to citizens, media and civil society organizations. Government initiatives and decisions will be accessible to the public and will be consulted with all stakeholders. The legal framework will be supplemented to improve transparency and accountability of the financing of political entities and the management of the protection of classified information.

2.4.4 Modernization of public administration

Modernization of public administration

A key priority of the Government of Kosovo is the reform of public administration aiming to profoundly change the quality of services to citizens, businesses and institutions and create a modern administration capable of successfully finalizing the integration of the Republic of Kosovo into the European Union.

The policy framework in the framework of public administration reform will be finalized in accordance with European principles, standards and best practices. A single harmonized cross-sector strategy for public administration reform will be adopted, in line with the integrated planning concept, which will rationalize financial and human resources and capacities.

Also, the legal framework of public administration reform will be finalized by fully harmonizing the Law on Salaries and the Law on Public Officials with the recommendations of the Constitutional Court, establishing a fair salary system that ensures equal pay for equal work. The process of reorganizing the state administration in accordance with the new legislation will also be finalized.

Strengthening institutional integrity, accountability and capacity building

The Government will develop a credible and transparent system of capacity building in the civil service, which ensures a merit-based recruitment and promotions and which offers equal opportunities to all citizens. Furthermore, the Government will implement best practices for recruitment in senior management positions in the civil service, ensuring the integrity of the recruitment process for these positions. In this regard, the Government will advance the performance appraisal system and develop

the system of inspections in the civil service in order to increase accountability and delivery of results.

Among other things, the Government will continue to develop specific civil service professionalization schemes, continuing to recruit graduates from the Young Professionals Scheme, and we will commit to developing other training schemes for public administration and other sectors, based on good experiences with development partners. At the same time, the Government will develop incentive policies for the retention of specialized staff, build capacities and enable career development through quality education and training.

In close cooperation with the Assembly of the Republic of Kosovo, we will complete the process of rationalization of independent agencies and bodies through the completion, approval and implementation of the relevant legal framework. This process will ensure clear lines of accountability, transparency and effectiveness of service providers.

2.4.5 Digitalization for better services

We will increase the application of e-government so as to increase the capacity, accessibility and efficiency of service delivery. In order to increase institutional interoperability, the standards for interconnection of systems will be improved and investments in the necessary information technology infrastructure will be made so as to gradually interconnect different registers and systems. The e-Kosova portal will become operational as a point of contact, where citizens and the administration can receive information, apply for services and receive services online without the need of physical presence.

In order to reduce time and cost for citizens, businesses and administration through institutional interoperability, the "once only", "personalization" and "digital by default" principles will be followed. Among other things, internal recruitment and promotion processes and forms of payments in public administration will be provided online, through e-testing, electronic signature and e-payment. To this end, the capacities of Information Society Agency will be increased, the Electronic Data Recovery Centre will be established, and capacities of the state's computer network, including wireless (wifi) network, will be expanded and enhanced, as well as the continuity of digital services in emergencies will be ensured.

To enable and facilitate access and use of data, the Government will establish multifunctional centres for citizens. The Government will also provide inter-institutional coordination to develop and implement digital governance policies. In this regard, we will work on making strategic, legal, institutional and technical frameworks on electronic services fully operational. The main strategic documents that will be developed in the field of digitization, will include concrete measures

regarding the security of electronic services. Additionally, the Government will prepare the Kosovo Digital Agenda, which will contain objectives aimed at developing e-government, not only in public administration but also in other sectors.

2.4.6 Public finance and public procurement reforms

The public financial management reform will be advanced through the adoption of a new Strategy in this area. Also, the legal framework for public financial management and legal framework for fiscal policy will be reviewed in order to increase transparency and accountability, as well as to maintain macro-fiscal sustainability.

Through reforms in the public procurement system, we aim to make the spending of public funds efficient and transparent. Also, the legal framework for public procurement will be reviewed in order to be aligned with the EU acquis and standards. E-procurement and interconnection with KFMIS will also be strengthened to ensure accountable budgeting and spending. In the context of public procurement reforms, the Contract Management Module will become operational through the electronic procurement system and the module for evaluating the performance of economic operators in the functional e-procurement system for all types of contracts.

2.4.7 Commercially viable public enterprises with quality services

We will improve the corporate governance of public enterprises by improving their performance and quality of services for citizens and businesses. To achieve this, professional boards will be engaged and an effective results-based mechanism for evaluating the governance performance of public enterprises will be established. Also, the legal framework will be reviewed and the draft law on public enterprises will be drafted.

The Government will also support the necessary investments in relevant public enterprises based on preliminary studies.

2.4.8 Local Governance

Our vision is to create a sustainable, open and accessible local government for all, which we aim to achieve by increasing local autonomy and strengthening the capacity of municipalities for better services.

Advancing local self-government policies and legal framework

In order to ensure a developed local level, the system of local self-government will be subject to a functional review through the amendment of the Law on Local Self-Government, Local Government Finances and Local Elections. In order to have a more integrated society, human rights at the local level will have to be promoted, with a special emphasis on marginalized groups, and to support the economic development of municipalities, the Law on the Fourth Government Grant and the

Law on the Performance Management System and the Municipal Performance Grant Scheme will be drafted.

Fourth Grant for Municipalities

Through the Fourth Grant, we will provide autonomy for capital investments to municipalities. The legal framework will be drafted, which will establish professional criteria that enable municipalities to compete with their ideas and projects for comprehensive development, in sectors such as: rural tourism, innovation, sports, cultural heritage, arts, public infrastructure, district heating systems, drinking water supply, breeding and regeneration of damaged areas and wastewater treatment for providing the best possible services to citizens. To achieve this, the Law on the Fourth Grant will be drafted.

Sustainable socio-economic development of municipalities

Identifying and addressing the problems caused by the COVID-19 pandemic at the institutional, economic, social, educational, cultural level at the municipal level will be among our priorities. To this end, municipalities will be supported in achieving sustainable and long-term development by providing increased socio-economic opportunities for businesses and marginalized youth in municipalities.

Improving inter-municipal and cross-border cooperation

We will engage in the implementation of EU-supported cross-border cooperation programs through the establishment and enhancement of structures for the implementation of funds under IPA as well as increasing municipal performance through measurement, evaluation and financial support to municipalities.

Increasing transparency, accountability and improving services

The promotion of open governance will increase institutional transparency and accountability, while the improvement of services will be aimed through the digitalization of services such as the development of the state platform E-MUNICIPALITIES and the development of municipal capacities for a specific sector of planning, evaluation and monitoring within of projects within the MLGA.

2.5. Human rights and gender equality

Promotion and protection of human rights

We will work for a society of diversity and inclusion with opportunities for all. This commitment will be aimed at strengthening the role of women in society, economy and inheritance, improving the quality of life of children, guaranteeing and protecting the rights of people with disabilities and improving the situation of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities promoting and respecting diversity and equality.

Ensuring gender equality through women's empowerment

We will engage in completing the legal framework for protection from domestic violence and gender-based violence. In coordination with the responsible rule of law institutions, the government will be committed to building the capacity of institutional mechanisms for dealing with cases of domestic violence. Also, the analysis of the situation and the creation of the economic cost model will be undertaken to increase the functional efficiency of the shelters for protection from domestic violence.

The new policies to be drafted will also be subject to gender impact assessment in order to have an informed decision-making regarding the advancement of gender policies, as well as the gender budgeting policy will be advanced. Also, we will engage in the economic empowerment of women in society and the economy through financial support, and affirmative action measures such as property registration. More specifically, affirmative action measures will be implemented in cooperation with property registration and municipalities to raise public awareness on the registration of joint property in the name of both spouses. Also, new initiatives that strengthen the position of women in society through subsidizing NGOs and individual initiatives will be supported.

2.6. Promoting and protecting the rights of communities

The Government will work for a just, equal society, for the creation of conditions for a decent life, integration and development of each and every community.

There will be no room in our government for discrimination in employment, education or support to entrepreneurs, non-majority communities. The government will ensure to open all avenues and opportunities to all non-majority communities for them to feel and be, not only equal to every other citizen, but also co-owners of our progress in the economy and society. The government will be committed to the education and training of all levels of children and young people from the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities. Among other things, we will increase the number of teachers from the ranks of vulnerable communities.

Improving community policies

The legal and strategic framework will be completed through the drafting of the Strategy for the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Communities and their Members, the concept document for displaced persons, the drafting of the Law on Displaced Persons, on the principles of fundamental rights and without exclusion of any community whatsoever.

Social inclusion and general stabilization of communities in Kosovo

Communities will be supported towards economic development and cultural and social integration through projects that are aimed at the return, reintegration and stabilization of communities, as well as the financial support to civil society in order to create mutual trust between communities, through the "EC Community Stabilization Program IV" project for creating income generation and employment opportunities among minority communities in all regions, and social inclusion and overall stabilization of communities in Kosovo.

Return of displaced persons and sustainable solutions

Through the reconstruction and renovation of houses of all communities, the development of infrastructure projects in cooperation between the central and local level and the establishment of an Information Management System for displaced persons, the Government aims to provide assistance to the citizens of the Republic of Kosovo, interested in returning to their homes, displaced persons living in collective centers, private homes and the return of Albanians to North Mitrovica.

2.7. Comprehensive economic growth

Our vision is to build a sustainable system of public finances in accordance with the highest international standards, which ensures economic growth and development, as well as better welfare for all citizens. This will be achieved by redesigning fiscal policies and the financial system that ensures accountability.

2.7.1 Ensuring the sustainability of public finances

To ensure the sustainability of public finances, we will engage to increase accountability and efficiency, enhance transparency on public debt and strengthen e-procurement and linkage with the information system to ensure responsible budgeting and spending. The Government will review and complete the legal framework on fiscal policies aimed at governing public finances, state aid, local government finances, customs and taxes. The government will also complete the legal framework in the financial sector concerning microfinance and non-bank financial institutions, compulsory auto liability insurance, deposit insurance for financial institutions, bill of exchange and promissory notes, and banks.

2.7.2 Economic Recovery - job creation and economic development

Promoting sustainable employment is a long-term goal of our governance, which is aimed to be achieved by designing a return- to- work scheme for persons who have lost their jobs during the pandemic. We will support new employees for the economic recovery period as well as create a guaranteed employment scheme for young people. Furthermore, we will work to link the labour market and vocational education, including the establishment of a labour market information system, the expansion of employment and vocational training services with new services, and cooperation with trade unions. The Government will also work to increase women's employment, focusing on doing business, creating favorable conditions for doing business and simplifying of export and import procedures.

To secure the financing of the economic development plan, we will engage in the negotiation and signing of international financial agreements and the issuance of securities.

2.7.3 Redesigning of fiscal policies

To ensure sustainable economic growth, the Government will redesign fiscal policies. This is aimed to be achieved by reviewing current fiscal policies and implementing new policies. This includes tax system analysis, reviewing of the tax forms for small and medium-size businesses, changing the personal income tax return form, and making annual declaration of Personal Income Tax compulsory.

2.7.4 Formalization of the economy

To combat the informal economy, we will engage in improving the rule of law and economic governance in Kosovo, in order to increase tax revenues and formalize employment. To this end, the Government will review the Action Plan for the implementation of the Strategy of Combating Informal Economy, Prevention of Money Laundering and Terrorist Financing 2019-2023.

The situation created in Kosovo by the COVID-19 pandemic, which outbreaked in March 2020, caused the closure of most businesses for a period of two to three months, and the consequences of the pandemics are still felt in the country's economy such as: continuous loss of jobs, decline in economic activity and consequently increased poverty rate, which is largely characterized by a decrease in purchasing power, and consequently a decrease in turnover and budget revenues.

In order to combat the informal economy, we will improve tax inspectors' capacities as well as investigative and intelligence-related capacities; enhance coordination between institutions in charge of preventing and ending undeclared work.

2.8. Industry, entrepreneurship and trade

Our vision is to improve the enterprises' competitiveness by advancing policies in the sector of industry, entrepreneurship and trade and improving services in quality infrastructure so that our enterprises become competitive in the region and beyond. These will be achieved in accordance with Kosovo's obligations to implement the Stabilization and Association Agreement.

2.8.1 Improving the doing business environment

To improve the business environment and develop competitiveness, the Government will advance the legal framework on competition, business organisations and improve business registers to enable efficient tax administration, effective compliance management and provision of necessary statistics and corporate governance code. The Government will finalize the general inspection reform by adopting the law on inspections, which among other things includes the development of a digital inspection platform, review of the functional organization of inspection units, including interconnection of the database and the increase in the number of inspectors.

The Government will also control the trade of strategic goods and finalize and operationalize the database, licensing and electronic registration of operators trading strategic goods. For the purpose of improving performance in support of the private sector and enterprise development, the Government will also build the capacities of relevant agencies for promotion of investments. In this regard, the interoperability of

information management systems and restructuring of grant schemes to support SME will be enabled.

The Government will support businesses in purchasing production and processing machinery, aiming at the digitalization of the processing process and the increase of processing and production capacities, the increase of human capacities. It will also help businesses find export markets.

Manufacturing businesses with the potential for export and job creation, advancement of production and processing technology, including digital transformation, will be supported to enable the increase of product value, with special treatment of women-owned businesses.

2.8.2. Sustainable development through tourism

In order to advance tourism policies, the Government will adopt a Tourism Development Strategy and review the law on tourism. To use tourism as a potential for economic development, the Government of Kosovo will engage in integration of cultural heritage, culture and sports in the new central and local tourism policies. With these policies we aim to increase the contribution of cultural and sports tourism to Kosovo's GDP.

To exploit the potentials of natural and cultural tourism as keys to sustainable economic development, we will develop the tourism offer and value chain with a focus on cultural heritage, rural tourism, agritourism including viticulture and handicrafts. Particular focus will be on mountain tourism, including skiing, increasing accommodation and human capacity, and improving the relevant infrastructure.

Among other things, the Government will work on the digitalization of tourist destinations. In order to promote cultural heritage, we will operationalize monuments for functions related to the tourism industry, design cross-sectoral plans for areas of special interest, revitalize restored monuments and open them for use.

2.8.3. Development of entrepreneurship and innovation

The Government will further develop policies and the legal framework for innovation and entrepreneurship. We will build structured cooperation between government actors, industry and education and vocational training, in order to approximate education and training programs with market needs.

Stimulation of entrepreneurship and innovation, as a government's priority, will be done by restructuring existing programs to create the "Innovation and Entrepreneurship Fund". The Government will support the increase of the capacities of the incubation space and the provision of opportunities for the youth, in order for the incubators to support the development of start-ups, which will attract domestic

and foreign investors, resulting in job creation and economic growth. The government will allocate grants to attract more innovative ideas with export potential and create employment. Special attention will be paid to the efficient use of the Innovation and Training Park in Prizren and the Centre for Innovation and Entrepreneurship at the Faculty of Mechanical Engineering, funded by the government budget.

At the same time, the Government will explore the possibility of including entrepreneurship subjects in lower secondary education and will build additional laboratories to support students in internships.

2.8.4. Investment promotion and support

To promote investment, we will take measures to create a unified and structured government approach (process), through the development of a national policy with clear principles and criteria for attracting investment. The Government will review the legal framework for strategic investments, economic zones and foreign investments. In addition to the institutional reform and policy-making for investment promotion, as part of the requirement of the European Reform Agenda, we will establish the follow-up investment care program.

We will make an analysis on the functioning of economic zones, and investments in economic zones will be done in close coordination with businesses. New economic zones will be created as needed for the sole purpose of establishing technology-transfer centres and technology parks. In this context, special attention will be paid to the involvement of the Diaspora in investments by organizing outreach sessions and creating and strengthening business networks with potential investors through the Diaspora by researching and identifying countries with potential to promote investment opportunities.

2.8.5. Development of industrial and trade policies

The Government will improve industrial policies, through improved public-private dialogue and value chain analysis for key industrial sectors. Structured cooperation with the business community and analysis of industrial sectors will help develop evidence-based industrial policy for sectors with potential for industrial development, job creation and export growth.

In the context of trade, the Government will advance the legal framework for domestic, foreign trade and e-commerce. We will also improve and adopt the legal framework that regulates the oil market and enables the creation of a mandatory oil reserve, in line with EU directives.

In the framework of regional trade integration and the obligations that Kosovo has vis-à-vis various initiatives, work will be done on the harmonization of additional

protocols V and VI of CEFTA and additional protocol VII will be negotiated. The government will review the current agreements by further negotiating and liberalizing the services market. The Government aims to increase institutional capacity in order to improve representation in the region and international aspect, the functioning of the single point of contact for services under the Services Directive. Application and negotiation for membership in the World Trade Organization.

2.8.6 Improving quality infrastructure, including consumer protection

Among other things, the Government will align policies and legislation with EU directives on quality infrastructure, consumer protection and overall product safety. Also, the Government will improve the accreditation and metrology legislation and strengthen the metrology, accreditation and standardization capacities. These reforms will be achieved through the improvement of the work infrastructure, digitalization, increase of human capacities, as well as the increase of the number of laboratories, their accreditation, as well as through the membership in international organizations.

As part of the improvement of policies and legal framework, the law on trade secrets, the law on patents, industrial design and trademarks will be reviewed. We will also work on capacity building in order to protect industrial property by training officials, including those of the IPAK, Judges, Prosecutors and Police in the field of industrial property.

2.9. Development of ICT infrastructure and capacities

The Government aims to develop ICT infrastructure and capacities as potential for economic development by developing the digital economy and building human capital. Also, the new Digital Agenda of Kosovo will be drafted, following the best international practices and trends.

We will also work on fixed broadband and 5G mobile infrastructure. We will enable electronic identification and trusted services in electronic transactions and will develop the Electronic Identification system for citizens and businesses. We will pay special attention to the training of young people in the field of information technology and their access to employment opportunities also in the online form.

Among other things, we will promote public-private cooperation, through capital projects such as the Digital Technology Park in Bernica and the functioning of the Centre for Digital Excellence, in the Park for Innovation and Training in Prizren.

2.10. Agriculture, forestry and rural development

Our vision is agricultural development that improves rural life and builds a sustainable economy through reform and by fostering competition, innovation and new investment.

2.10.1 Comprehensive institutional and sectorial reforms for more efficient services

The Government will make comprehensive reforms in the agricultural sector by eliminating mismanagement and misuse to date. Also, the Government will reorganize the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Rural Development, restructure and advance the Kosovo Agricultural Institute (KAI), the Kosovo Forest Agency and the Agency for Agricultural Development, including the accreditation of the latter. Moreover, the Government will reform and develop the system for managing grants and subsidies, develop the control system at KAI, upgrade the register and control of agricultural products, and unify the farm identification number (FIN) with the statistics agency as well as food and veterinary agency. Transparency and accountability will be strengthened through the empowerment and creation of appropriate mechanisms as well as implementation of auditor recommendations.

2.10.2. Increased competition in the agro-food sector

To increase competition in the agro-food sector, the Government will undertake deep reforms through the drafting of the Program and Strategy for Agriculture and Rural Development in accordance with the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). The Government will also review the legislation on agriculture and rural development, food, and registration of agriculture. In order to reduce the administrative burden, namely simplify permits and licenses in this sector, the relevant legislation will be reviewed.

As part of these reforms, the Government will support the development of new businesses and the promotion of agricultural products by organizing the common market for agricultural products (Ensuring minimum prices for agricultural products) and the functionalization of the agricultural insurance fund. The agro-food sector will develop in parallel with the need for skills in the food industry by developing professional standards.

2.10.3 Sustainable management of natural resources (agricultural land, forests and water for irrigation)

For sustainable management of natural resources, the law on agricultural land, on the regulation of agricultural land and the law on forests will be reviewed. Considering that we have a highly fragmented agricultural land, the inventory of agricultural lands will be done as well. The strategy for the forestry sector will be

adopted, and institutional mechanisms for forest protection and development will be strengthened.

In terms of agricultural infrastructure, the Government will focus on agricultural land irrigation systems by rehabilitating and expanding irrigation systems and at the same time preserving the environment. This includes undertaking feasibility studies for irrigation projects based on the Plan for Irrigation of Agricultural Lands.

2.10.4 Support to businesses in developing rural areas

To support the development of rural areas, the Government envisages the preparation of measures for the diversification of farms and the development of business in these areas. The Government will also support businesses in the development of rural tourism, processing of agricultural products in households, development of aquaculture in rural areas and craft activities.

2.10.5 Food safety

The Government aims to advance food safety policies and align them with EU standards which aim to ensure a high level of food safety, animal health, animal welfare and plant health. In this regard, priority will be given to drafting the legal framework on combating and preventing animal diseases, the circulation of live animals, and products of animal origin, as well as completing the legal framework on the production, marketing, control, registration of producers and indicators of seeds and the legal framework on the production, marketing, control, registration of producers and indicators of planting material.

Also, the legal framework on determining the health rules for animal by-products and their derivatives, which are not intended for human consumption, will be completed. The Government will also commit to functionalizing the factory for the treatment of animal by-products.

2.11. Regional development

Our vision is to build balanced and sustainable regional development, with increased socio-economic and territorial cohesion. We will achieve this through the development of regional development policies and programs, and stimulation of interregional and transnational cooperation with the aim of reducing regional disparities.

➤ *Completion of policies for regional socio-economic development*

The Government will complete policies for regional socio-economic development and will define the areas of regional development, investment needs and coordination, work and functioning of mechanisms, which will serve for a balanced regional socio-economic development. The Government will also undertake the necessary actions and procedures for the drafting of the law on regional development, the establishment of institutional mechanisms for regional development, as well as the analysis on the evaluation of the necessary areas for investments with regional impact will be implemented.

➤ *Reduction of regional disparities*

Reducing the differences in terms of socio-economic development and improving the quality of life in development regions cannot be achieved without building the capacity of the regions in order to have a genuine interregional competition. For this, the Government will take measures to set priorities based on assessments for the socio-economic development of regions, creating a database for inventory of natural, economic and cultural resources by development regions, and the analysis of the distribution of grants in the private sector by the central level in regions in order to achieve higher levels of productivity and employment.

➤ *Expansion of interregional and transnational cooperation*

The Government will strengthen interregional cooperation as well as participation in transnational initiatives and enable the involvement in various EU programs related to regional development, such as BALKANMED, ADRION, DANUB.

2.12. Environment and Spatial Planning

Our vision is planning and quality investments in view of sustainable development and integrated infrastructure in line with a clean environment, well-being and mobility.

2.12.1 Improvement of air quality

The Government will commit to improving air and natural resources by completing the legal framework and reviewing the strategic framework. As part of the improvement of the strategic framework, the law on air protection from pollution as well as the administrative instruction on the rules and norms of discharges on air by the stationary sources of pollution will be adopted. The national air quality portal will also be prepared and launched. In order to take anti-pollution measures, assessments will be carried out to identify the sources of air pollution for the entire territory of the country. Also, with the adoption of the Strategy for Sustainable Environmental Development, the strategic framework will be completed. To address air pollution in certain areas, air control measures will be developed for Prishtina, for other important areas of the agglomerates and for sensitive areas.

2.12.2 Integrated waste management

The Government will adopt the Strategy for integrated waste management, through which it aims at sustainable planning and development and promotion of the values and practices of a circular economy at the country level. This approach will enable integrated and sustainable development, which is necessary for the public health, social and economic development of the country.

We will also supplement the legal framework on waste, by including the law on waste from the Mineral Extraction Industry. Among other things, the Government will work on improving the physical infrastructure for waste, through the expansion of landfills, the consolidation of public companies for waste collection, construction of transfer and recycling centres, construction of wastewater treatment plants and functionalization of groundwater monitoring wells. To this end, the Government will strengthen inspection mechanisms through the training of inspectors, prohibition of illegal activities for the exploitation of mineral resources and will monitor the situation of hazardous waste.

2.12.3 Water management and infrastructure construction

Effective management of water resources is a prerequisite for providing water in sufficient quantities, in the right quality and at the right time and place, for the needs of the population and economic development. Consequently, the effective management of water resources is of fundamental importance for the social welfare and sustainable development of any country. In order to achieve the basic objectives regarding the management of water resources, which are water protection,

protection from harmful water actions and efficient use of water, we will improve the legal framework of water, which includes the revision of the law on water or drafting a new law, completing the bylaws required for law enforcement, especially on concessions, and drafting a law on financing water resources management. We will also draft river basin management plans, feasibility studies for catchment areas, and assess the safety of existing dams.

Among other things, we will engage in the protection of existing water resources from overuse, exploitation, industrial pollution, we will establish rules in the granting of water rights, and we will consolidate institutions for water management.

2.12.4 Nature and biodiversity protection

We will be committed to nature protection through the review of the legal framework and the strategic framework. As part of this review, the law on nature protection, the law on climate change, the law on national parks and the strategy for environmental protection will be drafted. The Government will also work on preparing a calendar for the approximation of legislation with the EU *Acquis* and will prepare the inventory for greenhouse gas emissions.

2.12.5 Sustainable spatial planning

For a sustainable development planning, the Government will draft the Kosovo Spatial Plan and the zonal map. For the protection of national parks, spatial plans will be drafted for the national parks "Sharri" and "Bjeshkët e Nemuna" and the capacities of the Institute for Spatial Planning will be built. Among other things, the Government will commit to advancing the legal framework in the field of cadastre, land administration and expropriation and will do aerial photography of the territory of Kosovo, redesign the geoportal, update spatial data and develop the application for the management of expropriation data.

2.12.5 Social housing and affordable housing

The government will also pay special attention to social housing. To this end, we will draft the Law on Social Housing and policies and plans in line with the assessment of the existing housing situation at the national level and the assessment of the state of the legalization process and updating of illegal buildings. For this, we will finalize the Feasibility Study for the Social Housing Program in Kosovo. In this context, we will provide a progressive approach. By leaving no one behind, leaving no one out, we will ensure a dignified, individual and social life for all. For the elderly, who are waiting for our help, we will build 5 more houses with care services for them.

Among other things, we will provide affordable housing for 4 thousand families. We aim to achieve this through the program "120 × 120" and "150 × 150", where the beneficiary families will become owners of apartments with monthly instalments of

only 120 and 150 euros respectively, for a period of not more than 150 months. The annual cost of this project is about 22 million euros, but this amount is gradually returned to the institution, which will be established and charged with the implementation of the project.

2.13 Infrastructure

We will be committed to creating an integrated system for road, rail and air transport, for the purpose of economic development. For this, we will review the Multimodal Transport Strategy and the sectoral legal framework. Also, we will continue the implementation of road and railway projects of state importance and will plan new projects for better interconnection of the regions of Kosovo and neighbouring countries. Among other things, to improve traffic safety, road maintenance and improve services, we will review the legal framework and install the intelligent transport system (ITS).

2.13.1 Integrated road infrastructure

Establishment of an integrated road transport system enables better and faster connection between regions within the country and abroad. In this regard, the Government will complete existing infrastructure projects such as the construction of the Besi-Merdare motorway segment and the Prishtina-Gjilan motorway, expansion of the existing road network Prishtina-Mitrovica, and the Kiev-Zahaj motorway and new projects such as the expansion of national roads Istog-Peja-Deçan-Gjakova-Prizren, including circular roads, rehabilitation of national roads Qafë Duhël-Shtime-Ferizaj, which is connected to the Prishtina-Skopje motorway, as well as the construction of the border roads Deçan-Plavë, Prizren-Tetovo and Gjilan-Kumanovo.

We will also pay special attention to the rehabilitation of the existing network as well as the construction of new roads, and the construction of the outer ring road of Prishtina.

2.13.2 Railway infrastructure for economic development

We will work for the modernization and development of railway infrastructure, in order to provide more sustainable services. To this end, we will pay special attention to the harmonization of the legal framework with the EU on the railway market, in particular, the harmonization of the Law on Railways and infrastructure projects, such as the rehabilitation and modernization of the 10th railway line (Fushë-Kosovë-Hani i Elezit and Fushë-Kosovë-Mitrovica-Leshak), feasibility study for the Kosovo-Albania, Prishtina-Prishtina Airport railway line and application for Kosovo's membership in international rail transport organizations (UIC, RNE, ERA, CIM).

2.13.3 Civil aviation policies

As part of civil aviation policies, we will continue to support the authorities in the construction and development of low airspace, the opening of traffic flows in new corridors in low airspace and in the construction and development of infrastructure and human resources, for independence in providing air services in high space of

Kosovo, from Prishtina. For this, we will pay special attention to the integration of low airspace in systems with neighbours, with special emphasis on Albania, Macedonia and Montenegro, as assistance towards the automation of the air traffic management system, the return of control of the airspace of the Republic of Kosovo, which affects the development of the civil aviation industry and application for membership of Kosovo in international aviation organizations (ICAO, EASA, EUROCONTROL, ECAC).

We will also coordinate transition planning, involving and integrating Kosovo Air Traffic Controllers into the provision of air navigation services in Kosovo's upper airspace, which facilitates the need for certification of operations and services provided. In terms of infrastructure investments, we will cover the cost of infrastructure investments, in accordance with European rules, policies and practices.

2.13.4 Road safety and maintenance

We will pay special attention to the low level of road safety, through the establishment of the intelligent transport system (ITS), maintenance and signalling of national and regional roads of Kosovo, professional capacity building in the field of road safety inspection and functionalization of structures for road traffic safety. We will establish mobile centres for control of vehicles on the road to control the emission of gases from vehicles, improve the data system for road accidents and the identification of high-risk road axes.

Also, we will supplement the legal framework for determining the conditions and procedures for homologation of road vehicles, for vehicles and driver's license, for the management of road infrastructure safety, for the conditions of road participation of vehicles, licensing of road transport operators of goods, and for the licensing of drivers.

2.14 Energy and mining

Our vision is to create the conditions for sustainable economic development, which we aim to achieve through clean and affordable technology and energy.

2.14.1 Creating conditions for sustainable energy supply

We will be committed to creating favourable conditions for sustainable and affordable energy supply, for all citizens and enterprises of Kosovo, taking into account the impact on the environment. In this regard, increasing energy efficiency and increasing the diversity of energy sources play a key role. Based on the data, we will review the Energy Strategy, in order to harmonize with the energy requirements in the country, as well as with the efforts to improve the environment in which we live. We will also draft the National Energy and Climate Plan and review the legal framework, to be in full compliance with the new energy strategy.

Among other things, we will work on improving the management of existing energy capacities, as a basis for the security of energy supply and the right path during the transition of energy decarbonization. We will implement environmental measures in the Kosovo B power plant and decommission the non-functional assets of Kosovo A. We will pay special attention to examining the feasibility of all opportunities for the development of the natural gas system, as well as the creation of a more competitive energy market. Through the Energy Efficiency Fund (EE), which will be financially sustainable, we will implement EE measures, with the aim of extending financial schemes to support the private sector and households.

2.14.2 Improving the performance of the mining sector

We will be committed to the optimal use of mineral resources. We will advance the legal framework and analyse the situation of Trepça and other mines in Kosovo, in order to increase their performance and identify the potential for increasing production capacity. We will support all interventions in this sector in reasonable economic, technological, social and environmental alternatives.

2.15 Education and science

Education is a great opportunity and a very important resource for the sustainable economic and social development of Kosovo. To take advantage of this opportunity, we plan 6 necessary areas of transformation: preschool education, new textbooks, vocational education, scholarship system, free higher education and the establishment of a fund for scientific research. The implementation of the preschool education project in each municipality will be preceded by an important step, which is the provision of preferential payment terms or the abolition of the kindergarten fee for certain categories of the population. By improving the quality of new textbooks, we will advance pre-university education and start planning for digital schools. We will revitalize and modernize upper secondary vocational schools with tools, curricula, textbooks and teaching materials, profiles and especially with the internship program. We will plan their expansion and growth according to the development strategy in exchange for the requirements of entrepreneurship. We will empower and support with priority the girls, through 1000 student scholarships, with priority those who choose to study technical and natural sciences. We will commit to free public higher education and empower universities towards scientific research.

2.15.1 Quality, comprehensive and digitalized education

We will be committed to quality education through stabilizing the situation in schools after the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition, quality assurance in pre-university education institutions, improving teaching and learning as well as educational work in institutions, are part of our main goals for this level of education. Improving access to and inclusion in early childhood education will be achieved through the construction of new kindergartens, the redefinition of school facilities for this level as well as the provision of preferential payment or exemption conditions for families in need. We will radically change the paradigm in primary education, considering the possibility of replacing differential assessment for grades 1 to 4 and replacing it with formative assessment. In pre-university education, language logic, mathematical logic and critical thinking will be part of teaching practices at all levels. We will offer free meals throughout the country for all students from first to fifth grade. A prerequisite for increasing the quality of education is the support of teachers in the continuous professional development of teachers. We will create teacher libraries by equipping them with relevant and up-to-date literature. We will also offer housing for teachers, at affordable costs. In collaboration with teachers, we will provide a model of performance appraisal and reward.

We will increase the credibility of national test results and design data-driven education policies. We will also work for inclusion in education for children from marginalized groups, through the provision of equal opportunities, the creation of safe and child-friendly environments in schools. We will cooperate with the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Albania and its subordinate institutions. We will also be committed to improving the infrastructure and effective use of digital technologies in the learning process.

2.15.2 Harmonization of vocational education and training with the labour market demand

We will be committed to the harmonization of vocational education and training with the labour market, through the interconnection of curricula with the labour market. For this purpose, we will advance the profiles of vocational high schools with professions, for which there is a demand for the development of the country's economy. Vocational schools will be equipped with workshops for practical work. To achieve this, we will operationalize and increase the capacity of the Agency for Vocational Education and Training and Adult Education, continuing with the finalization of the core curriculum and the revision of VET curricula, the development of NQF/EQF level 5 programs and professional standards, and we will develop a one-year master program for VET teachers. We will also be committed to creating conditions for the development of practical work and professional practice (internships in the workplace), as well as improving career guidance and counselling by developing a model of career guidance and counselling in VET and conducting tracer studies.

2.15.3 Effective management of the education system at all levels

We will be committed to effective management of education through the reorganization of the Ministry and review of the roles of its subordinate agencies, advancing policies and legal framework in the field of education, building an effective system for school management, through strengthening the managerial capacity of schools, review of the methodology and formula of financing pre-university education and decision-making in education based on data.

2.15.4 Higher education with quality and integrity, in line with international standards

We will be committed to quality and integrity in higher education, through the implementation of the accreditation process in accordance with international quality standards, which will enable the return of the Kosovo Accreditation Agency to ENQA and EQAR. We will also maintain the professional and functional independence of the State Quality Council and provide support for their human and

budgetary resource requirements. Among other things, we will work to institutionalize anti-plagiarism control, increase transparency in higher education, improve conditions for students, link higher education programs with the labour market, and organize internships for students in public institutions. and private. We will facilitate student voluntary engagement procedures and recognize this engagement as work experience. We are for free public education. In public institutions, the fees for the payment of the semester will be removed. We will work on providing access to contemporary literature, as well as providing scholarships for students at home and abroad.

2.15.5 Improvement of the research and innovation environment

We will achieve the improvement of the environment for scientific research by providing funding for scientific research activity in accordance with applicable law, as well as the integration of Kosovo in the European research area by gaining associate status in Horizon Europe. We will establish a Research Fund dedicated to researchers, lecturers, professors and medical specialists, where this research will be used as evidence for policymaking. We will establish the Innovation Council and apply for membership in the European Innovation Scoreboard. We will produce statistics in accordance with international standards in this field and will link research work in universities with industry, through the approach of smart specializations. We will draft the Strategy for Smart Specialization, which will be one of the main measures, and we will functionalize the Training and Innovation Park in Prizren, through which we will ensure that the talent, knowledge and work of the youth will be optimized. We will achieve this by supporting businesses in order to stimulate entrepreneurship and innovation.

2.16 Culture, Youth and Sports

2.16.1 Art and culture as essential contributors to social and economic well-being

National cultural institutions and independent cultural scene will be the focus of cultural policy and reform. We will be committed to the administrative reform of national cultural institutions to ensure their financial autonomy and institutional sustainability. To achieve this goal, we will review the legal framework and acts regulating the internal organization and systematization of job positions. Opening bank accounts, budget codes and restructuring financial officers are actions to strengthen the financial and managerial autonomy of institutions. We will pay special attention to the selection of proven professionals at the helm of national cultural institutions, along with the provision of sustainable financial support.

The government will be committed to improving the physical and legal infrastructure of national cultural institutions to consolidate working conditions and artistic activity. At the initial stage, emergency renovation interventions will be undertaken in the buildings of the National Theater, the National Ballet, the National Library and the State Archive, while the renovation interventions in the buildings of other institutions will be carried out according to need and evaluation. At the same time, we will project and establish new national cultural institutions (Opera and Ballet Theater, the new National Theater, Museum of Contemporary Art, Kosovo Cinema Network).

The government aims at developing the book by publishing, purchasing, translating and promoting reading. We will support special programs of the National Library and municipal libraries, while we plan to increase support for authors and publishers (publishing, purchasing and translating books). Of particular interest to the government is the development and implementation of programs to promote reading. The Book Council will have a central role in advancing book policy, while cooperation with Albania will be among the priorities in this field.

The government will be committed to the artistic education of young people and the development of professional staff in the field of culture. Among the initiatives of special interest in the field of artistic education is the implementation of the school program for increased and regular participation of students in cultural events. While, through the increase of cooperation between national and local cultural institutions, we aim to make artistic creativity more accessible to young people throughout Kosovo. The government will invest in human capacity development in deficient areas, with a particular focus on cultural documentation and cultural management.

The institutions and creators of the independent cultural scene will be considered as strategic partners for the development of culture and the development of the

country. Specifically, we will be committed to legal recognition and increased financial support for the strengthening of the independent cultural scene. In cooperation with the members of the independent cultural scene, we will establish the Cultural Fund as the most efficient instrument for increasing the financial support and development of the independent scene. The government will take care of defining the status of the artists (creators). The development of the Register of cultural institutions and professionals (public and independent) will be among the concrete actions to be taken.

The government will support programs and initiatives that enable the expansion of cultural spaces mainly through the transformation of unused public spaces (and buildings) into cultural spaces that are managed in a sustainable manner. We will also work to develop cultural diplomacy to promote our state identity worldwide. Specifically, we will support the international promotion of Kosovo's art and culture, as well as strengthen Kosovo's cultural centers in the diaspora. The government will pay particular attention to improving copyright protection practices through the implementation of the retransmission fee and cooperation with the World Intellectual Property Organization.

Cultural cooperation with Albania will be an integral and natural part of the government's work. Initially, the implementation of the existing cultural agreements between Kosovo and Albania will be intensified. In addition to increasing artistic and cultural mobility between our two countries, the Government of Albania will actively work on joint cultural presentation at the international level. Cultural cooperation with Albania will also focus on joint financing of cultural events, joint organization of important cultural events and increasing cooperation between sister national institutions of culture.

2.16.2 Cultural heritage for the promotion of values and economic growth

The Government will be committed to reviewing and supplementing the legal framework (primary and secondary) for the protection and management of cultural heritage in accordance with European Conventions and International Charters. In parallel, we will work on functionalizing the mechanisms for systematic management and monitoring of the condition of cultural heritage monuments. In this context, the evaluation of the implementation of the existing strategy for cultural heritage, the drafting and approval of guidelines for asset management, the drafting and approval of management plans and the establishment of mechanisms for systematic monitoring of cultural heritage monuments will be carried out.

The government will empower the Cultural Heritage Inspectorate with resources and staff to ensure effective oversight and timely prevention of all activities that affect cultural heritage assets. We will start the process of licensing professional

entities (companies and individuals) for restorations to prevent restoration work from being performed by non-professional companies. In addition to strengthening the state system for the protection and management of heritage, the government will be committed to Kosovo's accession to international cultural heritage organizations.

We will pay special attention to regulating the status of permanent legal protection for all categories of cultural heritage. This will be achieved through the development of mechanisms (relevant forms) for permanent protection, preparation and implementation of the process of proposing assets for permanent protection (process developed in four phases) and the drafting and publication of the Inventory of Cultural Heritage of Kosovo (for all legal categories). In addition to legal protection, the government will be engaged in improving the physical condition of endangered cultural heritage monuments and their functionalization. The drafting of the Emergency Measures/Preventive Measures program and the establishment of the emergency intervention fund are initial phase actions. The priority list of restoration interventions in cultural heritage assets will also be drawn up, to continue with restoration projects and revitalization of the respective assets (according to the priority list). The restored monuments will be revitalized through the method of adaptive reuse by integrating the criterion of financial sustainability in the management of cultural heritage assets. The Government will be committed to the effective protection and sustainable development of all cultural heritage assets, with a particular emphasis on non-majority communities.

The government will also draft detailed regulatory plans for historic centers and special protected zones, to continue with restoration and revitalization interventions in Kosovo's historic centers. The government will prioritize integrated planning of special protected zones and other areas of special interest at the central and local level. We will start with the evaluation of the Strategic Document for Integrated Conservation (2011). With special dedication, we will address the definition of protected areas of cultural heritage assets and their inclusion in spatial planning documents (Zonal Map of Kosovo). The government will establish a separate inter-institutional unit for integrated planning and management.

The promotion of spiritual heritage will serve as a means of raising awareness and educating new generations. The state inventory of spiritual heritage will be created in accordance with international standards. We will also be committed to developing the capacity of Kosovo museums, along with the establishment of new museums. As an initial step, we will create the state inventory of movable objects which are found in the existing museums of Kosovo, in accordance with international standards. We will conduct a feasibility study in the existing museum sector in Kosovo (national, regional and local level) to move to the development phase of new national and

municipal museum projects. We aim at dynamizing the works for the completion of the Museum of the former prison of Prishtina and the Museum of Natural History.

The government will be committed to building professional capacity to increase the efficiency of civil servants in the protection of cultural heritage and financial support of cultural heritage institutions. Along with the subordinate cultural heritage institutions, we will work on reviewing the organizational scheme, developing procedural capacities and increasing financial support. We will also develop and implement formal and non-formal education programs about cultural heritage and diversity. We will be committed to the inclusion of cultural and natural heritage in the curriculum of primary and secondary schools and the use of various creative methods of non-formal education on cultural heritage. We will organize restoration camps for cultural heritage sites targeting young people, craftsmen and owners.

2.16.3 Sport as developer of state image and social welfare

The government aims to consolidate national sports policies to bring them in line with the standards of intergovernmental and global sports organizations. In this context, the drafting of the national sports strategy, the development of sports diplomacy policies, the review of sports laws and bylaws and the functionalization of mechanisms for systematic monitoring of data in the field of sports will be done. We will be committed to combating abuse/manipulation in the sports system, protecting the integrity of the sport through the application of the principles of good governance. Drafting and approving the code of good sports governance, establishing mechanisms for monitoring the governance of sports organizations, supporting programs and projects to promote the principles of good governance in the sports system are necessary actions. We will also develop the necessary mechanisms to monitor and protect sporting activity, including the establishment of the Kosovo Anti-Doping Agency and the strengthening of programs and projects focused on promoting sporting values and protecting sporting integrity.

The government will engage in the development of human capacity and staff with professional knowledge for sports management and administration. We aim to strengthen local programs and training to develop the capacity of sports administrators. In particular, we will develop the professional capacities of sports doctors, while we will start building support platforms for providing the necessary equipment in sports medicine laboratories.

Priority will be given to strengthening physical education as an integral part of the education system through school sports and university sports. The role and quality of physical education at all levels of the education system in Kosovo will be strengthened. In this context, the government will make a substantial supplement to the physical education literature, drafting information/educational materials for

teacher preparation and developing the professional capacities of teachers and other actors involved in formal and non-formal physical education. Also, the Institute for scientific research in the field of sports will be established.

We will be committed to the active involvement of the community in recreational and health sports activities. The government will support programs and projects that promote and encourage physical activity in the community, the social integration of underrepresented groups, the physical activity of people with disabilities, and the promotion of sports for girls and women. The focus of government support will also be on programs to promote the benefits of physical activity to our physical, social, emotional, and mental well-being, as well as to promote and increase volunteering in sport.

The government will prioritize the development of elite sports and increase the culminating sports success in the international arena. Among the long-term goals is the development and implementation of a program for the identification and systematic development of sports talents. We will review the existing ones and draft new programs for the continuous support of elite athletes during their careers. The government will take care to support athletes during their sports careers (scholarships for athletes) and will develop support platforms for athletes after their competitive careers.

In addition to increasing support for sports organizations for the development of their activities, the government will draft criteria for prioritizing support for the activities and projects of sports organizations. Priority will also be given to supporting the organization of international sports competitions successful in the international arena. We will design and support programs for the continuous development of coaches in sports.

The government will be committed to developing public sports infrastructure capacities in line with international standards. In the first phase we will focus on assessing and improving the physical condition of the existing sports infrastructure and finalizing sports capital projects that are under construction. We will continue with the initiation of new infrastructure projects, especially for sports that lack training and competition facilities, ensuring the strengthening of mechanisms for continuous monitoring of the physical condition of sports infrastructure. The government aims to adapt sports infrastructure for people with disabilities in sports activities. We will also be committed to planning the management and sustainable maintenance of sports infrastructure and supporting initiatives for the provision of sports technology systems and equipment.

Regulating the flexible use of existing sports facilities in schools will provide easy access to the community for engaging in physical activity. The promotion of projects

to raise awareness for the preservation of sports facilities by users is of particular interest. The government will also be committed to promoting and supporting the development of the sports industry, by encouraging cooperation between the private sector and the public sector in the field of sports.

2.16.4 Empowerment of youth in the economic and social life of the country

The government aims to increase youth involvement in the labor market through non-formal education, active policies, the provision of employment services, and facilitating access to finance for entrepreneurship. In this context, the government will be committed to Establishing the Fund for Young Entrepreneurs, subsidizing wages for young people, building entrepreneurship laboratories for Technology, Innovation, Art (TIA Lab), direct financial support for youth enterprises and strengthening cooperation with the business sector, especially in the field of non-formal education in youth centers. The government will promote voluntary work in activities beneficial to society by providing various incentives for volunteerism providers and users. To achieve this goal, we have foreseen the establishment of the Kosovo Diaspora Corpus, the promotion of volunteerism among young people, the inclusion of volunteerism in teaching activities and enabling voluntary work outside Kosovo.

The government will create opportunities to strengthen cooperation between young people in Kosovo and those in the diaspora by supporting joint cultural, sports and entrepreneurial initiatives. In this context, activities will be organized between young people in Kosovo and young people in the diaspora, subsidy schemes for young people in the diaspora that bring new ideas and innovation, meetings between young people returning from emigration and studies abroad, with young people who work and study in Kosovo, as well as summer camps on the cultural heritage and culture of Kosovo for young people in the diaspora.

We will support youth programs in underrepresented groups focusing on girls, minority communities and people with disabilities. The government will be committed to promoting the self-employment of girls/young women from rural areas, building a Rehabilitation Center for young people, promoting volunteerism in underrepresented groups, and providing support through summer programs and non-formal education for underrepresented groups. Whereas, the increase of active involvement of young people in public decision-making at central and local level will be achieved through the empowerment of youth action councils, the functionalization of the Central Council, the organization of National Youth Conversation, financial support for youth mechanisms and organizations and the promotion of the right to participate in decision-making.

The Government will be committed to raising awareness and access to information on the rights, freedoms and opportunities of young people in Kosovo and the Diaspora. We will develop and launch the state portal for youth, while in parallel we will systematically monitor the needs of young people. We also plan the implementation of the Youth Media program that aims to strengthen media capacity on youth-related issues. The government will support the development of human and professional capacities of youth organizations and centers and the establishment of new centers. In this context, the renovation and construction of youth centers, training of leaders of youth organizations and the use of school facilities in rural areas for youth activities are envisaged.

The government will support international exchange activities through membership in the programs of world organizations and direct funding. Of particular interest to the government is membership in international forums and organizations and the implementation of educational and cultural exchange programs.

We aim to supplement the legal framework for the youth sector in line with the policies of the European Union, and its full implementation by the responsible institutions. We will draft the concept document for the youth sector and strengthen the implementation of the obligations arising from the Law on Youth at the central and local level. We will also be committed to drafting and implementing the Strategy and Action Plan for Youth through proper inter-institutional coordination. In the first phase we will evaluate the Youth Strategy 2019-2023, to see the impact so far and the challenges in its implementation. We will continue with the drafting of the new strategy document, while with special priority we will address the coordination of actions between the ministries that implement youth policies and programs in Kosovo.

2.17 Foreign policy and Diaspora

Foreign policy has an effect on the daily lives of citizens in different ways. For this purpose, the main priority of the Government is to strengthen the international subjectivity of the Republic of Kosovo, through the integration of membership in international organizations, improving the foreign service, lobbying strategy and diplomatic, cultural and economic promotion.

2.17.1 Legitimate democratic state aimed at EU and NATO integration

With the beginning of the work of the new government of the Republic of Kosovo, our new state, as a legitimate democratic and European state, has become one of the most important stable and democratic pillars of our region.

With a constant orientation towards the modern European legitimate state, relying strongly on our political foundation in the community of liberal democracies, in close cooperation with the US, and with a clear position against authoritarian tendencies and states, Kosovo stands firmly as a stable and strategic partner alongside friends and allies in the EU, NATO and beyond.

The Government of the Republic of Kosovo will give with great energy and determination its contribution within the transatlantic community of democracies and legitimate states. We will submit the application for Kosovo's membership in the EU and NATO and we will join the Adriatic Charter.

2.17.2 Deepening cooperation with countries of strategic interest and bilateral relations

The Republic of Kosovo will strengthen its international subjectivity. This applies to the efforts for recognition and mutual diplomatic relations, membership in international organizations, economic cooperation, cultural exchanges, as well as to the whole spectrum of bilateral and multilateral cooperation.

Partnership with countries of strategic interest, in addition to the common liberal economic positioning, will also contain the geopolitical dimension of cultivating bilateral relations and advancing mutual interests. The priority of our foreign policy will be the expenditure of the partnership with the US in various aspects, in addition to political partnership we will deepen the cooperation in the field of security, economic development, education and public diplomacy. Particular attention will be paid to establishing relations with non-recognizing states.

Of particular importance for the Republic of Kosovo is membership in international organizations and the cultivation of good neighbourliness. The Government will be committed to expanding the range of organizations in which it is a member, advancing the status of equal member within organizations and advancing state interests within the institutional framework of organizations, as well as

strengthening its role as a contributor to peace, security and international development. The deepening of cooperation with NATO will be achieved through the intensification of the dialogue with NATO and the inclusion in the Partnership for Peace and the Adriatic Charter.

2.17.3 With independence and a clear profile in regional cooperation

The Government of the Republic of Kosovo will represent the national interests of the country and its citizens with a clear and independent profile in various formats of regional cooperation. Our contribution will be constructive and we will aim, at the same time, to respect the international norms.

The Republic of Kosovo wants regional cooperation. But cooperation without discrimination is needed. This applies from the recognition of our state documents to the representation of our country. Just as Kosovo is recognized by the vast majority of EU and NATO member states, we also expect full respect for our sovereignty by the countries of the region.

2.17.4 Deepening cooperation with Albania

This cooperation will be expressed in common mechanisms for the national interest and the common good. The Government of Kosovo will be committed to a structured and institutionalized approach to inter-Albanian cooperation and integration. In this regard, in cooperation with the Government of Albania, relations will be deepened in various fields to implement the previously reached agreements, such as: trade, finance, education and science, security, and in particular the harmonization of foreign policy.

2.17.5 Increasing the role of the diaspora in the development and promotion of the country

The involvement of the diaspora in the political, economic, cultural and social processes of Kosovo is one of the important priorities of the Government. Special attention will be paid to the networking of professionals in the diaspora, the establishment of mechanisms for the transfer of knowledge, expertise, resources and the establishment of mechanisms for active involvement in development policies. The government will engage in preserving and developing the identity of members of the diaspora by empowering the development of complementary education in the diaspora and in facilitating consular services in diplomatic missions, as well as creating opportunities for voting in diplomatic missions. The law on the diaspora will be amended to reflect institutional changes.

The government will also engage in improving inter-institutional coordination and cooperation at home and abroad by engaging the diaspora in cultural, digital economic diplomacy in order to work for promoting Kosovo. In this regard, we will build a partnership strategy where we value the diaspora as a factor that will exert

its influence in the homeland and vice versa through the involvement and engagement of the diaspora in the drafting of development and strategic policies, direct engagement in important sectors in the implementation of policies, priorities in investments and co-investments with local businesses. In order to coordinate efforts with the diaspora, the private sector and third sector partners, the government will build a bilateral dialogue that includes the voices of all stakeholders, which should be extended to all spheres.

Foreign economic policy will be one of the main pillars of our foreign policy. Kosovo's foreign economic policy will not be characterized by bureaucracy, but by a sound legal basis, prompt administrative service and strict oversight of the rule of law, the rights of businesses and employees. To achieve this goal, a strategy is being drafted, which does not aim at short-term effects but long-term success and in the first place the creation of new jobs.

We will address especially those countries in which our diaspora live. If our partners start to create a positive experience with their investments in Kosovo, with our diaspora, i.e., those hundreds of thousands of ambassadors, diligent workers and honest professionals, one of the best for our country, with our hospitality and without corruption, then it will be possible for Kosovo to experience a small economic miracle. Intensive work has already begun in this regard.

We will put an end to the current phenomenon of ignoring and manipulating the diaspora vote. Practical opportunities will be created to facilitate voting by enabling it in consulates and embassies, in accordance with what we mean when we talk about democracy, equal rights for all and based on the practices of other European countries. The times of blockade or misuse of the diaspora by state institutions will finally be a thing of the past.

2.17.6 External service reform

Regarding Foreign Policy, it is important to make a recapitulation and analysis of challenges, successes and the current situation as well as a functional review of the foreign service as a whole. Therefore, Kosovo's foreign service will be gradually transformed in order to be effective, starting with the improvement of the legal basis, the establishment of a proper diplomatic academy, the establishment of economic and cultural diplomacy as priorities of the work of the embassies of the Republic of Kosovo to the selection of diplomats based on measurable criteria of professionalism and integrity. Kosovo's foreign service reform will provide better service to citizens abroad, transparency, higher reputation of diplomacy and more dignified representation of the Republic of Kosovo in the international arena.

2.17.7 Advancing economic diplomacy and public diplomacy

The foreign policy aims at increasingly identifying Kosovo with its culture, as well as promoting the opportunities for economic cooperation of the Republic of Kosovo with foreign investors. Public diplomacy includes various activities, the composition of which may vary depending on the specifics of the state with which it aims to expand economic and cultural relations. Defining orientations for economic diplomacy and advancing public diplomacy will be used so that art, culture and sport can be used as an instrument of cultural and sports diplomacy to build trust. The establishment of links between countries in various economic forms will be achieved through the intensification of bilateral relations and joint bilateral economic commissions in order to promote and facilitate the export of products of the Republic of Kosovo to foreign markets.

2.17.8 Visa liberalization

Kosovo has met all the conditions required for visa liberalization. The vast majority of EU member states, the EU Commission and the European Parliament support the desire of the people of Kosovo not to remain the only isolated country in the Balkans. There are some governments of EU member states that are still hesitant.

The Government of the Republic of Kosovo will not make the mistakes of the past by giving wrong dates. With the help of our international partners, we will work with governments of states that are still sceptical to achieve visa liberalization for our citizens as soon as possible. At the same time, we will ask these states that the citizens of our Republic do not become hostages of their domestic policy debates. At stake is not only the freedom of movement of Kosovo citizens, but also the credibility of the EU institutions. Trust is needed, not discrimination.

2.17.9 Relations with Serbia

The Government of the Republic of Kosovo is ready to recognize the Republic of Serbia internationally if the latter recognizes the Republic of Kosovo and in its actions and statements distances itself from the threat of the Republic of Kosovo and other neighbours in the region with political interventions and nationalist rhetoric, which is also often racist.

With its American and European partners, the Republic of Kosovo will make every effort to achieve mutual recognition between the Republic of Kosovo and Serbia, maintain normal relations based on the sound principle of reciprocity, and make an important contribution for peace, security and long-term stabilization of the region.

The Government of Kosovo shall engage in the dialogue with Serbia with the aim of the final normalization of bilateral relations. The dialogue with Serbia takes place to address interstate issues and good neighbourliness, and focuses on the benefits of

citizens from the results of the dialogue between the two countries. The final targeted agreement will include all unresolved issues since the succession of the former Yugoslav Federation in which Kosovo was a constituent element.

Agreements to date will be addressed to see the extent of their compliance and their impact. We will talk regularly with the opposition to build a national consensus in general on foreign policy, and in particular on the relationship with Serbia.

The Government of Kosovo will participate in the dialogue with Serbia with clear principles and with the aim that the final agreement, in addition to interstate issues, will include mutual recognition between the states, recognition by the remaining five EU countries and the guarantee for UN membership. In addition to the mediating role of the European Union, the Government of Kosovo sees as very important the close coordination with the United States of America. The Government of Kosovo considers that participation in the dialogue should be based on sound preparation and mutual agreement on the topics to be discussed. For this process, we will cooperate with international partners and invite all political parties, as well as engage well-known experts to contribute in this regard.

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A country's foreign policy is smart when it is consistent in principles but flexible in achieving goals.

The foreign policy of the Republic of Kosovo aims to strengthen the international subjectivity of the Republic and for achieving this goal, it will be independent, serious, predictable and courageous, as well as cooperative with our allies and friends - the US and EU countries. With its clear political orientation for the establishment of the rule of law, the government of the Republic of Kosovo will open new doors. This orientation and massive trust of the citizens have created wide sympathy and support among Kosovo's international partners and friends, as a new basis on which Kosovo's foreign policy will achieve its concrete goals.

2.18 Defense policies

Our vision is to have a force ready to defend the country and to contribute to global peace and security. We aim to achieve this priority through the development of defense skills and capabilities through education, training and modernization of the force up to NATO standards.

2.18.1 Capacity building for the protection of sovereignty and territorial integrity

In order to develop the capability of the Force, we will establish second-phase priority units and modernize and standardize defense based on the Table of Organization and Equipment (TOE) and Defense Programs. Among other things, the Government will maintain and enhance operational readiness under the Initial Operational Capability (IOC) and Full Operational Capability (FOC). The Government will also engage in procurement of military equipment and construction of physical infrastructure according to NATO standards.

2.18.2 Maintain existing capacity for military support of civilian authorities

The Government will build professional capacity for military support of civilian authorities through maintenance, education, training and exercises programs. To this end, we will develop plans for demining operations, inspection of hazardous materials, engineering operations, search and rescue operations and inter-institutional coordination operations.

2.18.3 Strengthen civil democratic oversight and increase accountability and transparency

We will complete the legal and strategic framework in the field of defense, including *inter alia* on the military intelligence agency, military police, humanitarian demining and deployment of KSF troops abroad. We will also develop guidelines on the allocation of Ministry scholarships, the establishment of professional military specialties and the career advancement of the civilian staff in the Ministry and the KSF. In addition, a long-term development plan will be drafted, while the medium-term plan and the cyber security strategy of the Ministry will be reviewed.

2.18.4 Membership in organizations, cooperation with other countries and participation in international operations

We will work in continuity to expand the bilateral cooperation map and increase partnership with other countries in international operations under NATO supervision. We will also engage in military diplomacy for the purpose of membership in international organizations, with a special focus on membership in the Adriatic Charter. Among other things, we will advance cooperation with other

states to achieve inter-state and international access to military equipment and purchases from the field of security and defense.

3. Prioritization and monitoring of the Government Program implementation

We will monitor the economic situation and the implementation of the priorities set out in this four-year Government Program, and we will respond depending on the economic situation. These priorities will be implemented within budget limits. Therefore, we will review the Program at the beginning of each financial year, through the Medium-Term Expenditure Framework, in order to update it with new challenges and opportunities in line with government policy.

Prioritization of the Program will be done through the Medium-Term Expenditure Framework, assessing the need for interventions in priority areas and depending on developments with the pandemic situation.

Further operationalization of the Government's priorities will be done initially by reviewing the budget this year, as a need to reflect the institutional structure. The monitoring and reporting framework will enable performance measurement and presentation of Government results to the public.

Annex 1: Legislative program for 2021