



ROLE OF MEDIATORS IN THE INTEGRATION OF ROMA, ASHKALI AND EGYPTIAN COMMUNITIES IN THE EDUCATION SYSTEM

A study on education
mediators' work
throughout 2013.

Study report

Haxhere Zylfiu
Selim Mehmeti
Skender Mekolli

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Authors:

Haxhere Zylfiu, Team Leader
Selim Mehmeti, Professional Collaborator
Skender Mekolli, Professional Collaborator

Research team:

Zehrije Plakolli
Sahare Reçica
Ibadete Morina
Arbnesha Mexhuani

Lecturer:

Bekim Morina

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■ LIST OF ACRONYMS:

BSFK	Balkan Sunflowers Kosova
CoE	Council of Europe
CZDA	Czech Development Aid
ECMI	European Centre for Minority Issues
EIS	Education Inspection System
EMIS	Education Management Information System
CAA	Kosovo Accreditation Agency
KFOS	Kosovo Foundation for Open Society
KPI	Kosovo Pedagogical Institute
LC	Learning Centre
MED	Municipal Education Department
MEST	Ministry of Education, Science and Technology
MOCR	Municipal Office for Communities and Return
OSCE	Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe
PC	Parent Council
PRTAN	Prevention and Response Teams towards Abandonment and Non-registration in compulsory education
SC	Student Council
SSC	School Steering Council
TC	Teacher Council
TIP	The Ideas Partnership
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Emergency Fund
VoRAE	Voice of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians

■ I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The study on the *Role of Mediators in the Integration of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian Communities in the Education Systems* provides an analysis of the current state of education mediation and its results achieved between January and December 2013 in terms of facilitating communication among the main school stakeholders, central and local education institutions, and the partners supporting education, in a bid to ensure the improvement of school and prevention of school dropout among children of these communities.

This study was conducted by the Kosovo Pedagogical Institute, with the support of the Council of Europe (CoE) and Balkan Sunflowers Kosova (BSFK). The findings and recommendations contained here are intended to serve as guiding grounds for education policies that are relevant to the integration of the communities in education and to the activities planned by MEST, MED, schools, the Council of Europe, BSFK and other partners in order to support the integration of the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities in the education process in Kosovo, as part of various projects and, in particular, within the framework of the education mediation programme.

The study took place during the first half of 2014. The survey was conducted in four Kosovo municipalities: Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje, Obiliq/Obilić (including Plemetin), Gjakovë/Đakovica and Pejë/Peć, with a total of nine participating schools. The field survey sample was composed of 262 respondents (school directors, teachers, students, parents, and education officials at the central and local level, representatives of learning centres, education mediators and various partners supporting education in Kosovo).

The findings of the study have been summarised and grouped into the following four main sections and accompanying annexes.

The Introduction presents the reason, purpose and objectives of the study, the main research areas and applied methodology.

The second part deals with the context of the mediation programme and the findings resulting from the review of the legal framework and other papers/documents linked with the work of education mediators.

The third part of the report includes the results/findings with regard to: (i) the involvement, conducted activities and impact of mediation in the improvement of the education situation of the children of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities; and (ii) results and practices of cooperation of the education mediators with the interested parties in the framework of the mediation programme.

The conclusions and recommendations of the study are presented in the fourth part of the study.

The section of annexes includes detailed information on the research sample, with tables containing the specific results from analysis of the education mediators' database and the programme's supplementary materials.

The most important findings of this study on the *Role of Mediators in the Integration of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian Communities in the Education system in Kosovo* have been summarised in the following section.

1. The mediation programme context analysis indicates that the Education Mediation Programme in Kosovo and the mediators' involvement came as a result of the EU/CoE project on "Interculturalism and the Bologna Process", implemented in the period between 2008 and 2011, with the support of the Council of Europe, and in cooperation with MEST and the local and international institutions operating in Kosovo. BSFK has been the main programme-implementing organisation since 2010, while CoE has moved on with the implementation of other projects (such as the current ACCESS project) that involve education mediators in support of accomplishing goals and activities. The mediation programme carries out its assistance activities in two modalities: (i) activities in the learning centres, and (ii) mediation activities at school, in the family and community aimed at providing support to increase access to education for children of the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities through awareness raising on the importance of timely enrolment in school, improvement of attendance and prevention of school dropout.

Mediators involved in the programme come from these communities themselves, and have completed at least secondary education. Moreover they have a proven track record in actively contributing to their own communities, through prior engagement in programmes, activities and different projects with organisations supporting the education of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities, such as KFOS, Terre des Hommes, UNICEF, etc. Since the beginning of the BSFK mediation programme, the mediators have participated in different training sessions related to education mediation. In 2012 BSFK/OSCE compiled the training package for professional development of mediators and applied for licensing of the programme; however, licensing and accreditation by the respective institutions (MEST and the Kosovo Accreditation Agency) is still pending. The implementation of the programme complies with the basic principles of educational policies in Kosovo in respect of the right to education for all citizens living in Kosovo. The Law on Pre-University Education under Article 3 (*General Principles of the Pre-University Education*) states that "no person can be denied the right to education" (MEST, 2011). From the legislative aspect, the implementation of the education mediation programme and the engagement of mediators within this is still not regulated by any legislative document. Its implementation so far has been regulated through cooperation agreements between the BSFK and the municipalities involved in the programme, as well as through contracts with mediators, prepared by BSFK, based on the legislation in force. During 2013, the mediation programme covered nine municipalities in Kosovo: Shtime/Štimlje, Ferizaj/Uroševac (Dubravë/Dubrave village, an area with more Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian students), Podujevë/Podujevo, Pejë/Peć, Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje, Lipjan/Lipljan, Gjakovë/Đakovica, Gračanica/Gračanicë and Obiliq/Obilić (Plemetin village).

In order to turn education mediation into a sustainable mechanism that supports the integration of the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities into the education system of Kosovo, it is recommended that MEST issues an administrative instruction in future to regulate the position, role, tasks and responsibilities of the mediators, as well as to define the roles and tasks of MEST, MED and schools in order to provide to support and cooperation with education mediators. Additionally, it is recommended that, based on this document, MEST and MED institutionalise the profile of education mediators by incorporating them into the structure of school and municipal supporting staff.

In order to ensure a sustainable professional development programme for mediators, it is recommended that BSFK, together with the implementing partners, revise the education mediation training programme, complete it with good mediation practices in Kosovo's context that have produced measurable results in the integration of the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities, and reapply for accreditation to MEST.

- 2. The Education Mediation Client Database**, created by BSFK, is a good platform for the identification and promotion of the mediators' work, as a way of integrating the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities into Kosovo's education process.

Data from this statistical database shows that, out of the total number of municipalities involved, 980 individuals were supported from which 441 were supported on more than one occasion. These cases are flagged in the database as recurring cases. Including these recurring cases brings the total number of supported individuals for 2013 to 1421.

The largest number of assisted cases in the programme includes: (i) improvement in school attendance (475 assisted cases); (ii) students' return to school (321 assisted cases); and (iii) awareness-raising or assistance for enrolment in the intensive learning programme (134 assisted cases). Of the total number of cases in 2013, 1,217 (or about 86%) were assigned a *Closed* status within the programme, whereas 199 cases (or over 14%) are *Ongoing* and still subject to the programme's assistance.

Of the total number of cases that have been *Closed*, 946 (77.7%) are cases which have been successfully supported, whereas 269 (22.1%) have been closed without success. For 2 other cases (0.2%), information on the reason for the cases' *Closed* status is missing.

Of the 268 cases recorded in the BSFK database as school dropouts in 2013 (268), 243 (90.7%) of these cases were marked as *Closed*, while 25 are *Ongoing* and support has been extended into 2014 as well. 131 of the *Closed* cases (53.9%) reflect successes of the mediators in their efforts to achieve student re-integration into the learning process. In order to succeed, the mediators also cooperated with central and local institutions, NGOs, learning centres and other supporting mechanisms, such as MED, the Municipal Office for Communities and Returns (MOCR), representatives of the communities, the Red Cross, police, TIP, VoRAE, schools, PRTANs, etc.

With respect to promoting the role and results of the mediators, it is recommended that BSFK, the municipalities and schools that have benefited from the mediation programme publish the results of the activities carried out by the mediators through various campaigns, news articles in local and central media, periodical reports and special publications. This approach may have an impact in raising the awareness of institutions, the community and supporting partners about the importance of the role of mediators and the manner in which they can assure additional support to the mediation programme.

- 3. The analysis of research results/outcomes with school stakeholders** (school directors, teachers, students and parents) in terms of their cooperation with education mediators indicates that the majority of actors at the school level are aware of mediators operating in their schools and of their role, and their feedback with regard to such commitment is positive. Results show that the support and assistance of mediators to the school has mainly focused on children's enrolment, improvement of attendance, improvement of students' behaviour at school, establishment of better family-school communication, prevention of school dropout, return to school of dropout students, enrolment and attendance of intensive learning classes, and promotion of enrolment to schools among girls.

In terms of improving school attendance and reducing the dropout rate among the children of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities, each of the schools involved in the mediation programme is supposed to apply a cooperation strategy with education mediators whereby: (i) conditions and room for action shall be ensured for mediators, making it easier for them to carry out their specific mediation tasks at school level; (ii) the role and responsibilities of education mediators in terms of their inclusion in the school's organisational and management structures, such as the School Steering Council and PRTANs, are clearly defined; (iii) involvement of education mediators in professional training is made possible, on issues related to more specific mediation tasks in order to improve school attendance and reduction of the dropout rate; and (iv) mechanisms shall be established to promote the mediator's role among the school staff and the community as a collaborator and supporter of education processes in the community and at school.

- 4. The analysis of the research results involving representatives of local and central institutions**, in terms of their cooperation with education mediators, indicates that the work carried out by the latter has supplied both local and central institutions with more comprehensive information on the cases of children from the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities who have dropped out of school and their needs, and also of the assistance provided by the education mediators in this regard. Compared to the central level, local institutions have cooperated more with the education mediators, reiterating the need for the institutionalisation of the role of education mediators, although local institutions themselves did not succeed to undertake any significant step in this direction within the scope of their competences.

In order to ensure a sustainable mediation programme and to develop institutional cooperation with education mediators, it is advised that the recommendations enlisted under Section 1 of this summary are addressed in a timely fashion and that all central and local entities dealing with the integration of the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities design and implement action plans that would actively involve education mediators, who are a key part of this programme.

- 5. Research findings on the cooperation of education mediators with other organisations and partners supporting education in Kosovo** indicate that the former have been relying on and cooperating with various actors in Kosovo, in particular with the OSCE Policy Office for the Communities and Returnees in Kosovo, UNICEF and KFOS. The support to education provided by these partners in Kosovo has enabled the coordination of activities in the schools and municipalities covered by the mediation programme, in order to improve attendance and prevent school dropout among the children of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities, as well as awareness-raising or assistance for enrolment in the intensive learning programme.

In order to strengthen cooperation of education mediators with the organisations and partners supporting education in Kosovo, the following should be undertaken: (i) positive actions in support of the practices for the integration of the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian in education and other areas of life should be pursued further; (ii) the education mediation programme should be extended to include other municipalities in Kosovo; and (iii) a network that will enable the exchange of positive practices among different European countries, including Kosovo, should be established.

■ II. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this report is to provide to Kosovo's education institutions, the Council of Europe, Balkan Sunflowers Kosova and other partners supporting the integration of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities in the education process in Kosovo, information regarding: (i) the activities carried out by education mediators and the results attained in improving school attendance and reducing the dropout rate; (ii) recommendations on intensifying cooperation at various levels, including learning from the experiences of other European countries, for better incorporation of education mediation in Kosovo's legislation and education practices.

1.1. Reason for the study

The Government of Kosovo, the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, the Council of Europe and other partners supporting the integration of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities in the education process in Kosovo have so far developed various strategic plans, training programmes and other supporting activities targeting this issue. It is through this endeavour that the education mediation programme started its implementation, with a lot of assistance and cooperation activities taking place with different stakeholders to improve school attendance among children of the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities.

Conducting this study was considered a necessity, since there has been no assessment - neither qualitative nor quantitative - of the activities carried out by education mediators and the results in improving support and cooperation and their consequent impact on the integration of the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities in the education process in Kosovo.

1.2. Purpose and goals of the study

The overall purpose of this study was to provide easily accessible and understandable information on the current work and potential role of education mediators with regard to the situation of children from the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities, in terms of school dropout, repatriation, discrimination, segregation, as well as the cooperation of interested parties in these aspects. The specific goals looked at by this study are as follows:

- Provide crucial information on the background of the education mediation programme;
- Describe the role, activities and work modalities of education mediators;
- Offer testimonies on the impact of the work of mediators on school attendance and dropout reduction;
- Reflect the viewpoints of stakeholders in relation to the results and practices of cooperation with the mediators in school attendance and dropout reduction;
- Issue recommendations on the possibilities to advance the role, support and cooperation of education mediators in order to enhance the education position of the children of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities in the future.

1.3. Main research areas

The main research areas are closely intertwined with the specific goals of this study. They consist of: (i) the education mediation programme, including the context of operation and legal status of mediators; (ii) work modalities of education mediators; (iii) education mediators' database in the respective municipalities; and (iv) the viewpoints of respondents on the role of education mediators in the integration of the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities in the education process in Kosovo.

1.4. Research methodology

The research methodology consists of a combined qualitative and quantitative approach that involves both desk and field research. Desk research included the review of relevant documents, study reports, BSFK existing data, the Education Mediation Client Database and associated materials/documents. Field research consisted of study tools and techniques, including a survey questionnaire and the organisation of focus groups.

Applied methods and techniques

This study was based on combined techniques, both desk and field research.

Desk research included the review of the legal framework addressing the integration of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities in the education process *vis-à-vis* the programme of education mediators, in terms of the mediators' legal status, terms of reference and the memoranda of cooperation with municipalities.

Analysis of BSFK's Education Mediation Client Database consisted of data analysis and case management in 35 schools covered by the BSFK mediation programme for 2013.

Surveys were conducted by means of questionnaires distributed in schools to directors, teachers and students. For the purpose of this study, nine questionnaires targeting school directors, 76 questionnaires for teachers and 102 questionnaires for students were distributed. These questionnaires enabled researchers to collect data on the cooperation of school stakeholders with mediators.

Interviews were conducted with 20 interviewees/participants in the study, who were representative of MEST, MEDs, MOCR, CoE, BSFK, LCs, and of various organisations working in support of the integration of the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities in the education process in Kosovo.

Focus groups were used in four meetings organised with parents (Table 2, Annex 1 of the report), aimed at collecting data on the support and assistance provided by education mediators to parents and the community with respect to their children's integration in education. Additionally, the same method was applied in another meeting with education mediators (Table 2, Annex 1 of the report) to discuss the study's main findings at its preliminary stages and to identify the possibilities to support mediators in the future, parts of which have been incorporated in the recommendations of this study.

Population and sample

The survey population is composed of students, teachers, school directors, parents, education mediators, representatives of central and local education institutions, as well as representatives of various organisations. The sample included respondents from four municipalities: Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje, Obiliq/Obilić (including Plemetin), Gjakovë/Đakovica and Pejë/Peć, and 9 schools within these municipalities. The sample containing all population categories is composed of 262 respondents. The size of the sample according to the population is described below:

- Sample of school directors, vice directors: total 9;
- Sample of teachers: total 76;

- Sample of students: total 102;
- Sample of parents: total 44;
- Sample of mediators: total 11;
- Sample of municipal representatives: total 11;
- Sample of MEST representatives and partners supporting education in Kosovo: total 7;
- Sample of LC representatives: total 2.

For more detailed information regarding the sample used in the study, see Tables 1 and 2 in Annex 1 of the report.

Description of sample selection criteria

In terms of school selection, the applied criteria was that of including elementary and lower secondary schools, schools with a significant number of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities, schools where mediators have been operating for the last two years, Serbian-language schools, schools with repatriated students and with students who have been involved in BSFK's education mediation programme.

Criteria to select the sample of students in schools meeting the above-mentioned criteria was that they be children of the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities, attending the fifth or seventh/eighth grade, repatriated students, students attending Serbian-language schools or students involved in the BSFK education mediation programme. In those cases where the schools included in the study had more than 5 students who met the criteria, a random sampling method was applied in order to select a maximum of 5 students (depending on their number, selecting every second or third student).

The selection criterion for the teachers' sample was to include those teachers working with students from Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities, especially head teachers or teachers engaged in school mechanisms, such as the School Steering Council, PRTANs, Teachers' Council, etc.

All education mediators engaged through the BSFK mediation programme were involved in the study.

As a selection criterion for parents in the focus group, it was important to involve a maximum of 20 parents per group, who had had activities and cooperation with mediators in their respective locations. In cases where more than 20 parents fulfilled this criterion, 20 parents were selected randomly, depending on their number, meaning every second or third parent.

Survey Organisation

The field research was conducted between March and April 2014 and took place during working and school days, depending on the requirements of each school selected. The questionnaires were filled out in the presence of the researchers and took an average of 30 minutes. Prior to the interviews, a list with data about the respondents to be included in the survey was compiled. They were further contacted via telephone and e-mail to set the date and venue for the interviews.

The parents' focus group meeting was organised with the assistance of the education mediators of the respective municipalities. Discussions took place in BSFK's learning centres or at the schools attended by their children. In the meantime, work with the education mediators' focus

group took place in the premises of MEST, where the main findings of the study's preliminary stage were discussed, and a series of dilemmas relating to this were addressed. Moreover, possibilities for the advancement of the mediation activities and support in the future were identified.

Data analysis

The findings which emerged from the initial analysis were identified, reviewed and discussed with the research team, after which issues key to education mediation were outlined and incorporated into the report.

Qualitative data was extracted from the interviews according to a model based on the queries/questions of the interview and study topics, in order to come up with common conclusions on specific issues and to highlight existing differences when reflecting on the viewpoints of the respondents involved in the survey.

Quantitative data was analysed by SPSS software, a statistical programme used in social sciences, the results of which have been summarised and reported in the form of numerical records and percentages.

Ethical issues

Ethical issues have been taken into consideration throughout the entire study. All respondents were informed of the scope and goals of the survey, of confidentiality aspects and the use of findings/results. Before the administration of the questionnaire, all the respondents were asked whether they consented to be part of the study and were told they could withdraw from the process at any time.

■ III. BACKGROUND OF THE EDUCATION MEDIATION PROGRAMME

This chapter looks at the background data of the mediation programme's initiation, a chronology of progress, scope and status of the programme, the current programme structure, and the legal framework on education mediation. In this respect, the findings of this study have been based on the review of education policy documents in Kosovo, the reports of institutions and various organisations relevant to the topic of this study, on the interviews conducted with representatives of the Council of Europe Office in Prishtinë/Priština and BSFK (for more information on the sample used for the interview, see Table 2 in Annex 1), as well as the information obtained through documents and relevant materials, and from the official website of the involved institutions.

3.1. Education situation of the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian Communities and the Initiation of the Education Mediation Programme

The education mediation programme in Kosovo and the mediators' involvement within it came about as the result of a clear need for support and improvement of the education situation of the the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities in Kosovo.

At the beginning of this programme (2008/2009), the education situation of these communities indicated a dissatisfactory level of achievement.

"The Kosovo Strategy for Integration of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian Communities' Integration Strategy 2009-2015" (Government of Kosovo, Prime Minister's Office 2009), in its section describing the state of education (Point 2.2, "Education"), indicates that there is a poor attendance rate of compulsory education among the children of these communities. Data from the *"Kosovo Human Development Report, 2004"* (UNDP, 2004), presented through the Kosovo integration strategy, reports that the rate of illiteracy among these communities lies at 16%.

Additionally, the document *"Strategy for Integration of Roma, Ashkali, Egyptian communities in Kosovo, its education component 2007-2017"* (MEST, 2007) provides data obtained by EMIS-MEST for the 2005/06 school year, according to which only 1.1% of the children of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities attend education from pre-school to upper secondary level in comparison with the rest of the school age population¹.

Findings from the survey *"Situation of Roma, Ashkali, Egyptian communities in Kosovo"*, published by KFOS in 2009, involving 867 respondents from the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities, indicate that 19.93% of the respondents had no education whatsoever (illiterate), whereas 96% had not even completed compulsory education, as provided by the applicable law².

Concurrently, the results of the study *"Intensive learning programme 2004-2008 and integration of children of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities into the mainstream education"*³, conducted by KPI, indicate that out of a total of 899 individuals attending intensive learning classes within the period between 2004 and 2008, only 17.2% had been successfully integrated into the regular learning process (14.2% in mandatory education), as per the main goal of this programme. Of these, 10.80% dropped out of the regular education process shortly after integration (usually in the first month).

¹ MEST: Strategy for Integration of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian Communities in Kosovo, education component 2007-2017, Prishtinë/Priština, 2007, p. 14

² KFOS: Situation of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian Communities in Kosovo, Prishtinë/Priština, 2009, p. 32

³ Zylfiu, Haxhere 'Intensive learning programme 2004-2008 and integration of children of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities into the mainstream education' Prishtinë/Priština: Publication of Kosovo Pedagogical Institute.

SMIA's⁴ statistical data for the period between 2004 and 2007 does not provide a very favourable overview since, compared to the total number of the students in the municipalities reported by EMIS, enrolment in compulsory education is a mere 1.5% for the three communities (Figure 1).

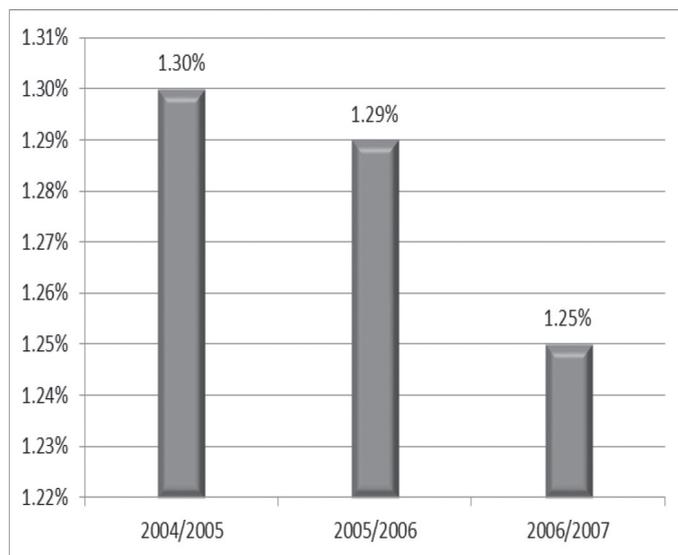


Figure 1. EMIS/MEST: Percentage of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities' students in the obligatory education compared to the total number of students in Kosovo, period 2004/2007

As a result of this situation, Kosovo's central institutions and the supporting partners introduced specific measures and activities in the strategic documents aimed at supporting the education advancement of these communities in the future. The use of incentives and involvement of successful personalities from these communities to motivate children and parents for regular school attendance⁵ is one of the modalities offered by the strategy as part of the educational support provided, as the basis of sustaining the initiation of the education mediation programme in Kosovo. In this sense, the Advisory Committee of the Framework Convention for National Minorities agrees "that meaningful progress has been made in important areas related to the promotion and protection of minority communities (...) and the particular needs of the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities. While this progress is commendable, it remains sporadic and based on the commitment and initiative of some municipal authorities, individuals or civil society. Moreover, initiatives are often reliant on the international community, as concerted central coordination, guidance, and support from the authorities to expand and institutionalise accomplishments are still lacking."⁶

⁴ Since 2004, the World Bank has initiated and supported the Education Management Information System (EMIS), managed and coordinated by MEST. The system is intended to collect, process, report, monitor evaluate and distribute statistical data and education-related indicators. This information is available for 33 Kosovo municipalities. There are difficulties in the cooperation between MEST and the schools of the Serb community that have successfully implemented this programme. (<http://www.masht-gov.net>)

⁵ Government of Kosovo: The Strategy for the Integration of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities, 2009- 2015, Prishtinë/ Priština 2008, p. 24

⁶ Council of Europe: Secretariat of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities, Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities: Third Opinion on Kosovo adopted on 6 March 2013, 9 2013, ACFC/OP/III(2013)002

3.2. Historical overview of mediation programme in Kosovo

The engagement of education mediators to assist children of the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities, to facilitate communication between school, family and community, as well as to raise awareness among communities of the importance of education, was introduced for the first time through the *Interculturalism and the Bologna Process Project (IBP)*, co-funded by the European Commission and the Council of Europe and implemented by CoE.

The employment of education mediators in Kosovo, initiated in the framework of IBP project, was based on the previous work of the CoE on this matter, particularly reflected in documents of the project *Education of Roma Children in Europe (2003-2009)*. These documents include the reports of two seminars and the *European Guide of School Mediator*.

The work done by the CoE since 2011 in the framework of the ROMED programme also influenced the evolution of the educational mediation in Kosovo. Representatives of BSFK attended several European meetings of the ROMED programme and got information about the activities done in this field in various countries. However, despite this strong European connection, particular attention was paid to the adjustment of the European references to fit the Kosovo context.

According to the interview with a CoE representative, the IBP practices brought into the component for *Quality Education for Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian Community* (one of the six pillars of this project) were specifically aimed at initiating and supporting the education mediation programme in Kosovo. The focus of CoE's implementation was cooperation with the country's institutions (at the central and local level), such as MEST, MED, MLSW, municipalities etc, as well as with the local and international organisations operating in Kosovo, such as BSFK, OSCE, KFOS, UNICEF, etc.

Sustaining its role in initiating the Kosovo mediation programme, CoE offered the model, expertise and support to programmatic field implementation. Particular focus was given to local capacity building of mediators, teachers and NGOs, in order to enable them to take on responsibility for the programme's implementation in future. In the context of IBP, the training package "*Quality education for Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians in Kosovo*" was developed in 2010, on which a joint training session for teachers and education mediators was based and organised. The training content was meant to kick-start communication and cooperation between these two groups and to prepare them for their role communicating with a larger number of stakeholders at the local level, including MED, other representatives of the local administration, Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian NGOs, community learning centres etc (under 1.1. in the document: Target groups).

Education mediation in Kosovo was further developed through subsequent projects. During 2012-2013, the EU SIMRAES Project (*EU Support for the Implementation of the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian Strategy*) was financed by the EU and implemented by KFOS. The main purpose of the project was to support local institutions in the implementation of the 2009-2015 Strategy, with the mediation programme making up one of the key pillars⁸.

⁷ The ROMED project is now in its second stage of implementation. Participants in the project are 10 EU member states. There were 16 countries in the first phase of ROMED. There are now over 20 countries involved. There are 10 EU countries involved in ROMACT, which is another joint EU/CoE programme on Roma inclusion, targeting local authorities. ROMACT complements ROMED2. See also www.coe-romed.org/

⁸ Information downloaded from KFOS official website: <http://kfos.org/programs/minority-and-roma/eu-simraes> (downloaded on:02.04.2014)

CoE established good cooperation with BSFK in the area of education mediation and transferred the implementation of the programme from the IPB project. According to an interview with a BSFK representative⁹, the organisation has implemented mediation activities since 2010 in nine municipalities, with continuous support from CoE and in cooperation with local and international institutions and NGOs working in Kosovo. After the initial support phase by CoE, the training manual (BSFK/OSCE 2012) was drafted, based on which ongoing training for mediators has been held.

In 2014, an EC/CoE Joint Programme *“Supporting Access to Education and Intercultural Understanding: EU/Council of Europe support in the field of education to forced returnees and to Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities in Kosovo (ACCESS)”* was launched. The project is aimed directly at building the capacities of local institutions in such a way that schools, local authorities and civil society would be able to expand their assistance and education services for the integration of repatriated children and the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities in schools.

With reference to EMIS data for the period between 2007 and 2013, a trend of slightly increasing integration among the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities in compulsory education (grade 1-9) is reported, in the municipalities covered by the programme (except for Gračanica/Graçanicë and Obiliq/Obilić/Plemetin¹⁰). Such a trend is obviously a consequence of all the mechanisms that have contributed to this result, the mediation programme. In particular, the engagement of education mediators and their contribution in the field can be considered one of the elements having notable impact on the process (Figure 2). The information on this trend of integration for each municipality can be found in Table 3 in Annex 1 of the report.

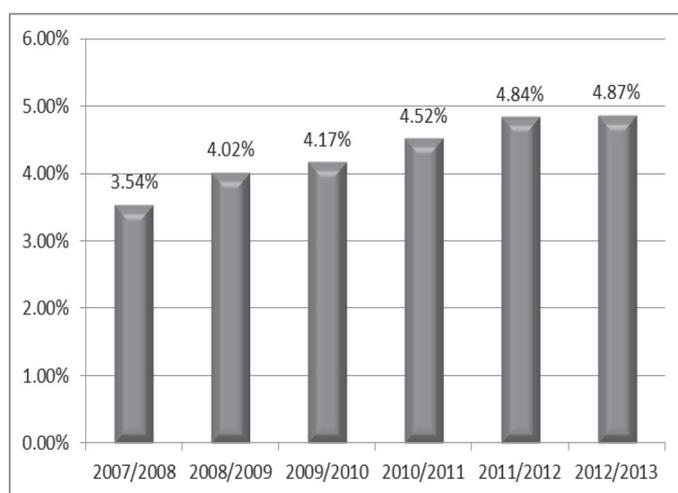


Figure 2.EMIS/MEST: Total percentage of students from Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities attending compulsory education in seven out of the nine municipalities covered by the school mediation programme, compared to the total number of students in these municipalities, 2007-2013

⁹ Interview with Kushtrim Visoka, Mediation Programme Coordinator, BSFK (date:05.05.2014)

¹⁰There is no information from EMIS on Gračanica/Graçanicë and Plemetin (Obiliq/Obilić municipality). Without data on Plemetin, we have considered the information on Obiliq/Obilić municipality as incomplete, thus, leaving it out of data comparisons.

3.3. Purpose of the education mediation programme, mediators' role and responsibilities

The purpose and idea behind the mediation programme, as well as the scope of work of the mediators, are provided in the training manual for education mediators in Kosovo (BSFK/OSCE 2012). According to this document, "[a] 'mediator', in the traditional context, does not belong to, or come from either side of a 'conflict'. For example, a mediator would neither represent a school community nor a family. In our context, however, the mediator does in fact belong to the community he or she is assisting. In our programme, the work of a mediator focuses mainly on facilitating communication and contact between school(s), municipal education departments, families, local Roma, Ashkali, and Egyptian communities, and the learning centre, if there is a learning centre in the town."

The purpose of the education mediation programme is to provide support aimed at increasing access to education for the children of the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities, while ensuring timely enrolment in school and preventing school dropout of these children.

The education mediators involved in the programme come from these communities and have been engaged in mediation activities in previous projects run by different organisations. They have at least a high school education and take part in continuous professional development. Their specific tasks are set out in the *Terms of Reference and the Employment Contract* for the recruitment of mediators, based on the Kosovo Labour Law No.03/L –212.

Generally, the education mediators involved in the programme have the following (main) duties:

- Inform communities about the school access facilitation measures;
- Inform communities about the activities initiated by the school to enhance the education of their children;
- Raise communities' awareness over the importance of regular school attendance and continuation of higher education for both genders;
- Maintain contacts, cooperation and information exchange between the school and the learning centre;
- Inform the schools and learning centres over the needs, opinions and concerns of the parents from Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities;
- Provide immediate response in the case of attendance interruption and school dropout by students of these communities and take measures for them to return to school;
- Mediate to foster cooperation among different parties with direct or indirect impact on the education of the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities;
- Contact children and repatriated families in Kosovo, in order to involve children in school or establish contacts with the respective authorities supporting the education of these children;
- Active participation in PRTAN, both at the municipal and school level;
- Organisation of meetings with parents at school or other potential venues;
- Report and attend meetings, training sessions and activities organised by the employer;

(For more comprehensive information on the specific tasks of education mediators, please see the document on the Terms of Reference of BSFK Education Mediators, attached in Annex 2 of the report).

3.4. Current education mediation programme structure

The education mediation programme is currently being implemented within the framework of programmes of Balkan Sunflowers Kosova, managed and coordinated by their management/coordination team. BSFK benefits from continuous CoE assistance to implement mediation activities and has established close cooperation with the education institutions and local and international NGOs dealing with education-related issues in Kosovo. Financially, the programme was also widely supported in 2013 by other international donors in Kosovo such as Czech Development Aid (CZDA), the Norwegian Embassy in Kosovo, the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Kosovo, while in 2014 additional funding has been provided by the Norwegian Embassy and the Embassy of Luxembourg.

The programme's supporting activities take place in two work modalities: (i) supporting activities conducted by BSFK's learning centres¹¹, and (ii) assisting activities of the education mediators mainly conducted in the field.

Currently, the programme covers nine Kosovo municipalities: Shtime/Štimlje, Ferizaj/Uroševac, Podujevë/Podujevo, Pejë/Peć Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje, Lipjan/Lipljan, Obiliq/Obilić (including Plemetin), Gjakovë/Đakovica and Gračanica/Gračanicë. The total number of education mediators working in each municipality covered by the programme is 12 (the municipalities of Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje, Obiliq/Obilić and Gjakovë/Đakovica are covered by two mediators each¹²). Additionally, there are 35 elementary and high schools in Kosovo that cooperate in the framework of the programme, including Serbian-language schools (Gračanica/Gračanicë and Plemetin).

The work of field mediators is assessed by BSFK through regular meetings, weekly work reports submitted by mediators to the BSFK programme coordinator, field monitoring of the work and through the electronic database platform.

The database, specifically tailored to this programme, was developed by BSFK during 2012 and 2013 (under implementation from 2013) and has been subject to continuous adjustments in line with the needs of the programme. The database serves to identify the work done and the assisted cases, and at the same time serves as a source for reporting to donors and providing information to institutions on specific cases. The database offers general information on the individuals involved in the education mediation programme, including personal data, reasons for support, type and duration of assistance, the final case status, etc. The collection and distribution of data in this platform is governed by fundamental principle of data protection and protection of the identity of cases.

¹¹BSFK has established five Learning Centres (Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje, Shtime/Štimlje, Gračanica/Gračanicë and two centres in Plemetin). These centres serve as venues for a variety of learning and education activities with the children of the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities. In cooperation with the mediators, students' problems with certain school subjects or contents are identified, for which the centres develop and conduct supplementary learning with the pupils in order to overcome these difficulties. In addition, the centres provide language courses, computer courses, socialising activities for repatriated children, creative activities, meetings with parents and communities, etc. The centre has employed a manager and other employees from the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities, while the education mediators closely cooperate with the centres in terms of information distribution, case identification and maintaining contacts with institutions, schools, the community, etc.

¹²As there are two mediators in these three municipalities, statistics refer to the work of the individual mediator. Therefore Gjakovë/Đakovica, Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje, Obiliq/Obilić are presented twice in each table.

In order to preserve this principle, the database is managed by assigned personnel in the programme, in this case by the BSFK Programme Coordinator for education mediation. Only the BSFK Programme Coordinator and the mediators have access to data (relating solely to cases they support). Access to the database from external sources (institutions, other organisations) can be given only with the authorisation of BSFK. For purpose of this study conducted by KPI, personal data (name, surname and other basic information) of supported cases was codified.

Mediators undergo continuous professional development, based on the training programme developed by BSFK/OSCE in 2012, which is also supplemented with other supporting training sessions, depending on the needs and field work.

3.5. Legal Framework on Mediation

The right to inclusion and access to quality education for every citizen of Kosovo, regardless of gender, age, and ethnic, cultural, religious or group origin, is an inherent part of Kosovo's education policies that are aligned with international norms governing this area. The law on Pre-University Education relies on the principle of inclusion to education, according to which no individual shall be denied the right to education. The general pre-university education principles in Kosovo refer to the respect and advancement of the rights of communities and the rights of their members. Article 3 of this Law sets out the obligations of the Ministry, municipalities, education institutions and all the other authorities involved in providing pre-university education, which intend to provide efficient, effective, flexible, inclusive and professional services that are designed to offer all children equal rights to education, in line with their specific needs and capacity, as well as to advance their social and educational development¹³.

In addition, the 2009 – 2015 *Strategy on Integration of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian Communities* foresees the involvement of local government education institutions, schools and NGOs in joint activities aimed at improving attendance (increasing the rate of enrolment in pre-school and elementary education, improvement of daily class attendance, and reduction of the dropout rate)¹⁴. In this respect, the application of incentives and the use of successful personalities from the communities to motivate children and their parents to ensure regular school attendance is one of the measures set out in the document with regard to the educational integration of these communities (Section 2.2. Education).

Moreover in its latest opinion the Advisory Committee of the Framework Convention for National Minorities specifically recommended that "the authorities to intensify their efforts to promote the enrolment and attainment of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian children, and particularly girls, in school. Local achievements in this regard must be supported through enhanced central coordination and direction, such as related to institutionalisation of school mediators"¹⁵.

¹³Assembly of Kosovo, Law on Pre-university Education in Kosovo, Prishtinë/Priština, 2011, p. 4

¹⁴Government of Kosovo: Strategy on Integration of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian Communities in Kosovo 2009- 2015, Prishtinë/Priština, 2008, p. 24

¹⁵Council of Europe: Secretariat of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities, Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities: Third Opinion on Kosovo adopted on 6 March 2013, 9 2013, ACFC/OP/III(2013)002

Although Kosovo's education mediation programme was initiated and is applied on the basis of the principle of inclusion pursued by education policies, and on the modalities of assistance to fulfil the right for an education of the children of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities, it has not yet been incorporated into the legislation and implementing acts governing the education component in Kosovo.

The education mediation programme in Kosovo is still implemented mainly on the basis of projects offered by international organisations operating in Kosovo (IBP project, EU SIMRAES and, recently, ACCESS), while there are specific cooperation activities that are initiated together with the local government education institutions, schools, NGOs, the community, etc.

In its capacity as the key host organisation for the education mediation programme in Kosovo, BSKF signed Memoranda of Understanding in 2013 with five MEDs of the municipalities involved in the programme (Ferizaj/Uroševac, Obiliq/Obilić, Lipjan/Lipljan, Podujevë/Podujevo, Shtime/Štimlje). These Memoranda currently serve as a reference point for the mediators' field work, allowing them greater access to information and to the education institutions in the respective municipalities. The development of Memoranda of Understanding is called for in the *Strategy for the Inclusion of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian Communities*, the education component 2009-2015 (MEST, 2008) and lays the groundwork for the institutionalisation of the education mediation programme in Kosovo.

As a document, the Memorandum regulates important aspects of the bilateral cooperation, such as:

- Scope of memorandum;
- Terms and conditions;
- Responsibilities of the parties to the memorandum;
- Mediation requirements;
- Points of cooperation with schools;
- General provisions/conditions of the memorandum;
- Signatures, dates and place;

For further information please refer to the template of the memorandum, which can be found in Annex 3 of the report.

Another step towards ensuring the institutionalisation of the mediation programme is the development of the training package for the professional development of involved staff. Designed by BSKF/OSCE, the programme was submitted to MEST for licensing in 2012, which is still in process.

According to the MEST representative interviewed, a key factor contributing to non-institutionalisation of the mediation programme and of the role of mediators is that among the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities there are no qualified persons able to be recruited as MEST staff, because "mediators do not fulfil criteria to be in the list of MEST salaried employee, they have no university degrees/professional training". With regards to the accreditation of the training programme, the MEST representative explained that the programme had been presented to the respective office in the Ministry for accreditation, but a likely reason that it has not yet been accredited might be that the programme does not fulfil the required criteria¹⁶.

¹⁶Council of Europe: Secretariat of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities, Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities: Third Opinion on Kosovo adopted on 6 March 2013, 9 2013, ACFC/OP/III(2013)002

The Law on Pre-University Education (MEST 2011), in Article 5 on “Organisation and management of education and pre-university training”, defines in general terms the tasks of MEST for the development of policies, the drafting and implementation of policies and pre-university training in Kosovo. According to this law, it can be concluded that it is MEST’s responsibility to draft and implement relevant legislation, supporting aspects of the education mediation programme and define the role of the mediators, while the MEDs and schools should be responsible for facilitating cooperation with the education mediation programme.

Summary: A review of education policies and associated documents, of the results of studies related to the context of education mediation programme in Kosovo, and the interviews with CoE and BSFK, indicate the following findings:

- ▶ Education policies in Kosovo promote and support the right to inclusion and access to quality education for every citizen of Kosovo, regardless of gender, age, ethnicity, cultural background or religion.
- ▶ The Law on Pre-University Education (MEST 2011) supports the principle of inclusion in education, according to which no one should be denied the right to education.
- ▶ Under Article 5 of the Law on Pre-University Education, the tasks of MEST are defined for policy development, drafting and implementation of legislation for development of education and pre-university education in Kosovo.
- ▶ Education mediation in Kosovo as a programme is based on the practices of other European countries, and was introduced in Kosovo through EU and CoE supported projects.
- ▶ The purpose of the education mediation programme in Kosovo is to provide assistance that will increase access to education for the children of the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities, by encouraging enrolment and preventing school dropout,
- ▶ BSFK is the key implementing organisation for the mediation programme and, in cooperation with Kosovo’s institutions and NGOs operating within this, has extended the programme since 2010 to cover nine municipalities through four Learning Centres and 12 mediators recruited in the respective municipalities.
- ▶ BSFK developed a description of the education mediators’ responsibilities (Terms of Reference), regulated their recruitment through regular work contracts, designed a training programme with the recruited mediators, developed a statistical database of the cases addressed by the education mediation programme (Education Mediation Client Database), and has reached cooperation agreements with five of the municipalities covered by the programme, as a basis for access to information and to the education institutions in the respective municipalities.
- ▶ The MEST EMIS data for the period between 2008 and 2013 indicate an upward trend in the enrolment in compulsory education of the children from Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities in the municipalities covered by the programme. Such growth could be seen to reflect the impact of the work of mediators in those municipalities.
- ▶ Although entirely based on the underlying education policies’ principle of inclusiveness and the respect of the right to education for all citizens living in Kosovo, the programme has not yet been recognised and institutionalised within such instruments and by the executive institutions.
- ▶ A challenge for the successful implementation of the programme remains the establishment and recognition of the profile of the education mediator as an occupation, as well as of their professional development programme.
- ▶ A challenge for the continuous professional development component of the programme remains the development of training programmes in full compliance with the MEST requirements for quality and sustainability of programmes.

■ IV. SURVEY RESULTS/FINDINGS

This section of the report looks at the results of the BSFK database analysis and the results of the field survey, in relation to the role of education mediators in the integration of the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities in Kosovo's education system, with particular focus on the improvement of school attendance and reduction of the dropout rate. Findings under this section are drawn from the BSFK database analysis covering the period between January-December 2013, the survey conducted in schools, the work in the parents' focus group and the mediators' focus group, as well as from interviews conducted with respondents from different entities.

4.1. Specific assistance traits in BSFK education mediation programme

Results of the BSFK database analysis (Education Mediation Client Database)

BSFK's Education Mediation Client Database is an electronic template/platform in the EXCEL format developed by the organisation and used since 2013 to store evidence and manage the cases with which the programme mediators work. With a well-layered structure, the database is easy to fill out with case records, and allows chronological ordering of case progress until finalisation. The database enables easy and accurate case processing, allows comparisons of aspects within one case and between cases, permits cross-verification, disaggregation and comparison of data through the use of formula and diagrams/charts and, as such, it facilitates the process of case transfer, reporting and management in statistical terms. After assistance is provided in the field, mediators have the possibility to enter the data into the platform via the Dropbox application or e-mail. The data is further integrated in a common database and arranged into the platform's three key fields:

1. Personal data: first name, last name, sex, age, school and grade of the assisted case;
2. Basic data/information on the cases: opening date, type of problem (key problem, description of the problem, purpose of the assistance offered), case status and resolution;
3. Extended/detailed description of each type of assistance, including the date and time of when it was provided and a detailed description of the contacts made through the provision of assistance.

The data arranged in this way allowed the analysis and processing of case information in relation to geographic spread, time, and extent of the offered support, the activities carried out to provide assistance, reporting on cases, and assessment of the impact of mediation on the improvement of attendance and reduction of school dropout among the individuals included in the programme.

4.1.1. Coverage and support extent of BSFK education mediation programme

Data processing and analysis take account of the BSFK education mediation programme in nine municipalities in Kosovo between January and December 2013: Shtime/Štimlje, Ferizaj/Uroševac, Podujevë/Podujevo, Pejë/Peć, Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje, Lipjan/Lipljan, Gjakovë/Đakovica, Gračanica/Gračanicë, and Obiliq/Obilić (including Plemetin). Referring to data from this period, the programme counted a total of 980 involved individuals/supported persons¹⁷.

¹⁷ 'Individual/supported cases' in this report refers to all children/students/persons who have benefited from the mediation programme support

In those cases where those individuals faced more than one problem and, thus needed more support in terms of schooling (e.g. the same individual was faced with social issues, school performance, non-regular attendance or school dropout), assistance has been repeated (support has varied depending on their needs) and these have been reflected as recurring cases in the database. In total, both the number of involved individuals (980) and the recurring cases (441) bring the number of assistance interventions by education mediators during 2013 up to 1,421 supported cases.

The extent of support by the mediation programme differs from one municipality to the next and from one school to the next. By municipality, the highest number of assisted cases is recorded in Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje with 226 individuals, Obiliq/Obilić (including Plemetin) with 236 cases (167 individuals), and Ferizaj/Uroševac with 126 cases (117 individuals). Table 4 in Annex 1 of the report provides information on the respective municipalities with regard to the individuals and recurring cases assisted.

In terms of gender structure (which, according to the data, was identified based on the name of the individual or the extended assistance description¹⁸), it appears that the participation of male pupils is slightly higher with 583 (59.5%), compared to the number of females (397 individuals, or 40.5%). In terms of age group, results show that there is a higher participation of individuals in the programme among the 8-11 years age group (270) and 14-16 years age group (151), compared to a lower participation of individuals who are five years old (pre-school pre-elementary level) and over 18 years of age. Figure 3 reflects the ratio of involvement of individuals in the mediation programme by age group. Table 5 in Annex 1 of the report presents detailed data on this, disaggregated by municipality.

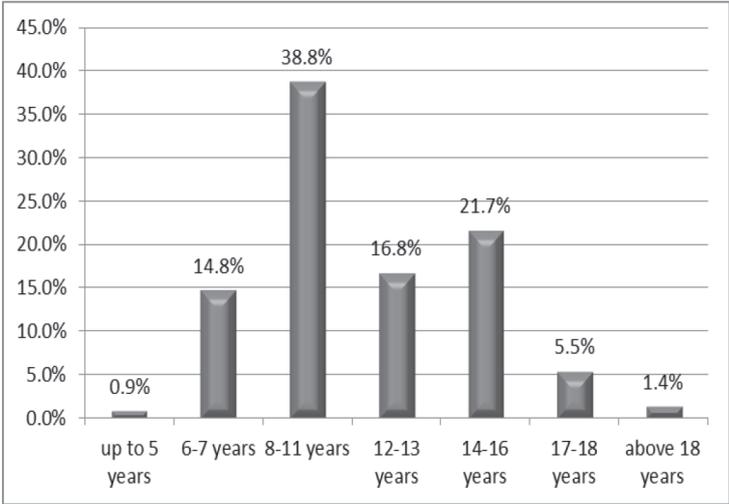


Figure 3. Involvement in the programme by age group, in percentage

¹⁸ There are cases where the name of the individual is not sufficiently indicative of his/her gender. In the case where names were fitting for both genders (male and female), such as Nermin, Sheriban etc, and in order to identify the gender accurately, the detailed action description had to be consulted, where the mediator provides an extended description of the visit/assistance of the case, such as: "I visited the girl's family," or "I visited the son's teacher," etc. This provided sufficient information to overcome gender-related ambiguities.

There are cases where the database does not provide information on the age of individuals involved in mediation activities. In the discussions taking place during focus groups, mediators indicated that there is still a problem obtaining data from the field. On occasions neither the child nor his parents know the child's exact date of birth, frequently lacking a copy of birth certificates or similar documents (they submit birth certificates/attestations in the municipality to benefit from social assistance). In such cases, the mediators visited the Municipal Office for Social Welfare¹⁹ to obtain the missing information, although they were not successful in acquiring records for all cases.

Statistical analysis of the programme is extended to the school and grade where the assisted individuals attend (or should be attending) lessons. According to programme data, there are a total of 35 schools, with the highest number of pupils benefiting from the mediation programme (a total of 621) being in grades 1-5. Mediators report that the reason for greater child involvement in education at this level in the programme is that it is during this age group when problems most recur and the need for assistance arises. This includes, for example, the need to develop awareness raising campaigns for parents and the community to enrol children in first grade, supporting parents to prepare documentation required for children's enrolment, making contact with schools, municipalities and NGOs, providing lists of pupils to be enrolled in first grade, providing transport for the children of this age group in particular, and undertaking prevention and response actions in the case of school dropouts.

When it comes to the educational grade the individuals should attend, information is occasionally scarce. According to mediators, there are cases of enrolment in the intensive learning programme among individuals who dropped out of school several years ago and who are currently unaware of (or not willing to provide information on) the grade at which they dropped out. It is unknown at what grade these individuals will be enrolled following completion of the intensive learning programme. There are other cases of children returned from abroad (from the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia), in which the nostrification of documents and the identification of the grade into which they should enrol have been an ongoing process. For more details on the school and grade of the involved individuals, please see Table 6 in Annex 1 of this report.

4.1.2. Activities carried out by education mediators and modalities of their work with the cases addressed by the programme

In addition to the database analysis on the involvement and coverage of the BSFK education mediation programme, this study also includes data on the purpose of case assistance²⁰, the nature/type of the activities carried out by the mediator, duration of assistance, covered dropout cases, final status and success of assistance for these cases.

The main problem/reason for inclusion in the programme and purposes of assistance for the majority of cases are related to non-regular school attendance, poor school performance, problems within families, poor awareness of the importance of education, early marriage, forced labour, etc.

²⁰In order to benefit from social assistance, the respective municipality office requires beneficiaries to provide identification data, including a birth certificate, for all the members of the family.

Data on the age, sex, school and grade refers to the number of individuals involved in the programme (980), whereas the information on the activities and modalities of support refer to the number of the cases assisted within the programme (1421), including recurring cases.

A predominant issue leading to involvement in the mediation programme and provision of assistance in almost all the municipalities has been non-regular attendance (741), issues with the success of school performance (219) and social issues (177). Full information on the issues/reasons of involvement in the programme, disaggregated by municipality, can be obtained from Table 7 included in Annex 1 of this report.

The purpose of assistance for the cases in the programme was linked with the nature of the incoming cases. Data indicates that improvement of school attendance, prevention of school dropout, improvement in school performance and discipline, improvement of the school-family relationship, enrolment of dropout pupils in the intensive learning programme, students' school enrolment, collection of documents, parents' awareness, etc., were the aspects guiding the purposes of assistance and support activities. In the majority of cases, the purpose of assistance was to improve school attendance (475), to facilitate students' return to school (321) and to obtain information or support to be enrolled in the intensive learning programme (134). For full information on the reasons of support for each municipality, see Table 8 in Annex 1 of this report.

The duration of assistance has been varied and intrinsically related to the nature of the problem and purpose of the assistance. In this context, the duration of each assisting measure has differed on a case-by-case basis, ranging from one day to 12 months. The largest number of assisted cases within the programme had a duration of up to one-month (474), followed by one-day assistance (223) and cases with a duration of up to 2 months (156). By municipality, assistance with the longest duration is noted in Pejë/Peć and Gjakovë/Đakovica ²¹ (up to 12 months), whereas the shortest duration is reported in Shtime/Štimlje municipality (up to 4 months). Full information on the duration of assistance can be found in Table 9 in Annex 1 of this report.

Status of the cases addressed by the programme. For this aspect of the programme, the survey findings report that of the total of 1421 cases covered by the programme, 1217 (85.9%) achieved a Closed status during 2013, meaning that assistance for the given cases was completed, whereas 199 (14.1%) are ongoing and subject to further assistance within the programme. Of the total Closed cases, 946 (77.9%) were successfully assisted by mediators, compared to 269 cases (22.1%) that were unsuccessful in meeting the purpose of assistance. Figure 4 presents the ratio of the case statuses, while more comprehensive data on this can be found in Table 10 of Annex 1 of the report.

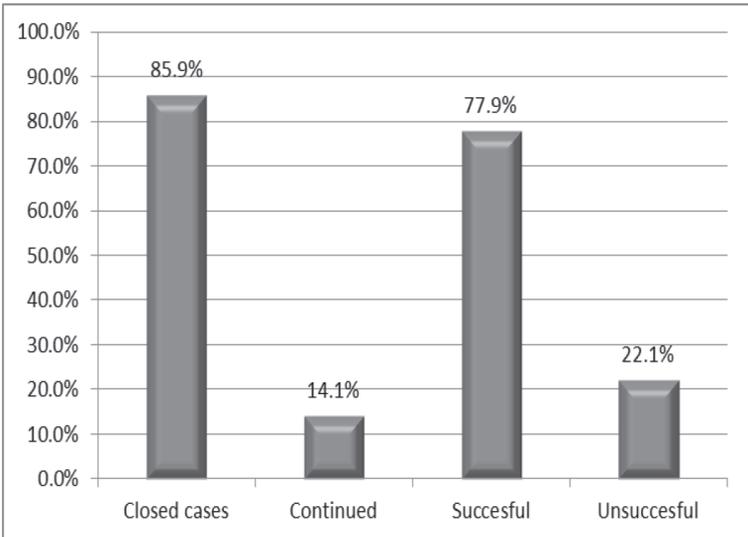


Figure 4. Case status and support success rate

²¹ The number beside the name of a town indicates the number of education mediators involved.

The number and type of assistance activities conducted in the field depended on the nature of the problem/reason for involvement in the programme and the purpose of assistance. Considering the interrelation between these, mediators planned and conducted specific activities for involved cases. The number of assistance activities carried out for the cases in question varies by municipality and on a case-by-case basis. This figure varies from one to seven assistance activities offered for each case, depending on the nature of the problem and the possibilities of finding (quick) solutions.

Provision of assistance has mainly taken place through contacts/visits in the family, at school, in local and central institutions (MEST, MED, MOCR, in municipalities), in local and international organisations operating in Kosovo, in learning centres, etc.

In order to provide an overview of the nature of issues, type and number of supporting activities, a series of assistance case studies, extracted from the mediators' data from different municipalities, is presented below.

Case study 1: Obiliq/Obilić. Male student, 13 years old, 2nd grade, from a family returned from the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. Reason for assistance: non-regular attendance, but no dropout. The student had been assisted for two months and the purpose was to improve school attendance. The mediator conducted a total of 7 assisting activities.

Activity 1: After contacting the school and being informed of the absences, the mediator visited the student's family, talked with them, and informed them about his absences and the consequences for the parents if they did not send their child to school.

Activity 2: Talks with the parents, verification of the student's attendance.

Activity 3: Contacts with the school and family, cooperation with the OSCE, and family visits together with the school director and an OSCE representative.

Activity 4: Meeting with parents, verification of the student's school attendance.

Activity 5: The mediator informed the parents that their child was not attending lessons regularly. They stated that the child was lying and that he had been going to school, and that they would supervise him.

Activity 6: Verification of attendance, enrolment in supplementary lessons.

Activity 7: Recurring non-regular attendance, but agreement reached with the student that it would not happen again. The case is successfully concluded.

Case study 2: Ferizaj/Uroševac. Male student, 14 years old, 4th grade. Reason for assistance: Non-regular attendance, but no school dropout. The student was assisted for 4 months and the purpose was to improve school attendance. The mediator conducted a total of 4 supporting activities.

Activity 1: Parents were informed of the student's school absence and relevant reasons were clarified (according to the parent, this happens due to their being busy with work, allowing no time to deal with the child adequately). The school invited the parent for a meeting.

Activity 2: A meeting with the parent, headteacher and the education mediator took place. The meeting focused on the student's absences and the parent promised to take greater care of the issue.

Activity 3: Meeting with headteacher, who informed of evident improvement of attendance and successful performance.

Activity 4: Meeting with headteacher, with the parent and the student, and discussion on preventing the recurrence of school absences, which both the parent and the student have promised to respect. The case is successfully concluded.

Case study 3: Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje 1. Female student, no information about the age, 4th grade. Reason for assistance: repeating the year, as the student dropped out of school. The mediator carried out only one visit/assistance intervention. The family has social problems and the student was enrolled in the intensive learning class in order to be integrated into school, but dropped out of the programme as well. The student has to look after her other family members. The case is concluded with no success.

Case study 4: Pejë/Peć. Male student, 17 years old, 8th grade; reason for assistance: non-regular attendance; the student has dropped out of school. The schoolboy was assisted for 6 months by the education mediation programme. The mediator helped the student change school by transferring documents, in order to move closer to his place of residence. Following the school change, no issues with school attendance have been observed. The case is successfully concluded.

4.1.3. Impact of mediators' work in school dropout reduction

The information generated by the BSFK database on individuals involved in the education mediation programme includes records on school dropout by the students of the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities in the municipalities covered by the programme. Data shows that of a total of 980 students/individuals involved in the mediation programme, 268 (or over 29%) are dropouts and have been included as such in the programme. The highest number of dropout students is recorded in Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje municipality (91 cases), followed by Gjakovë/Đakovica (50 cases) and Pejë/Peć (35 cases). The highest dropout percentage is among male students, with 55.2%; in terms of age, the highest percentage (29,9%) are between 8-11 years old, while with reference to the school year, 41% of dropouts are from the first and second grade. With reference to the definition of "dropout" set in MEST AI 7/2011, "Establishment and Strengthening of Prevention and Response Teams towards Abandonment and Non-registration in Compulsory Education," the BSFK programme which assisted students who had dropped out of school were mostly those enrolled in compulsory education, but who had interrupted attendance at different levels/grades (mainly grade 1-5).

²²MEST: AI – Establishment and strengthening of Prevention and Response Teams towards Abandonment and Non-Registration in Compulsory Education, 2011, Article 2.

According to this document, a "dropout" is the student who: 1. Interrupts attendance prior to completing compulsory education as provided by the law; 2. Continues school after compulsory education, but interrupts attendance at a later period, prior to the intended end result; 3. A child or young individual who is not enrolled in school and, as a result, does not attend compulsory education as provided for by the law.

During the period of assistance considered in this study, education mediators carried out numerous activities aimed at individuals' reinsertion into the education process. Among the major issues identified that lead to a drop out from school is non-regular attendance (39.6%) and the students' issues with school performance (22.4%). Other issues affecting school dropout, identified by the database, are early marriage, social problems and requests for a change of school, although they account for a smaller number of cases and do not have a significant impact on the process. For more details, see Table 12 in Annex 1 of the report.

Of the total dropout cases (268) identified in the framework of BSKF education mediation programme, 243 (90.7%) were marked as Closed in terms of assistance during 2013, whereas 25 continued to receive assistance during 2014 as well. Thanks to the supporting activities of education mediators in the municipalities covered by the programme, 131 (53.9%) Closed cases were judged as Successful, meaning a student's reintegration in the education process was achieved. The largest success achieved by mediators in this regard has been identified in Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje (72 students, or 81.8%), Lipjan/Lipljan (4 students, or 66.7%) and Pejë/Peç (18 students, or 51.4%). Figure 5 represents the Dropout vs. Return ratio of dropout students; for more information, see Table 13 in Annex 1.

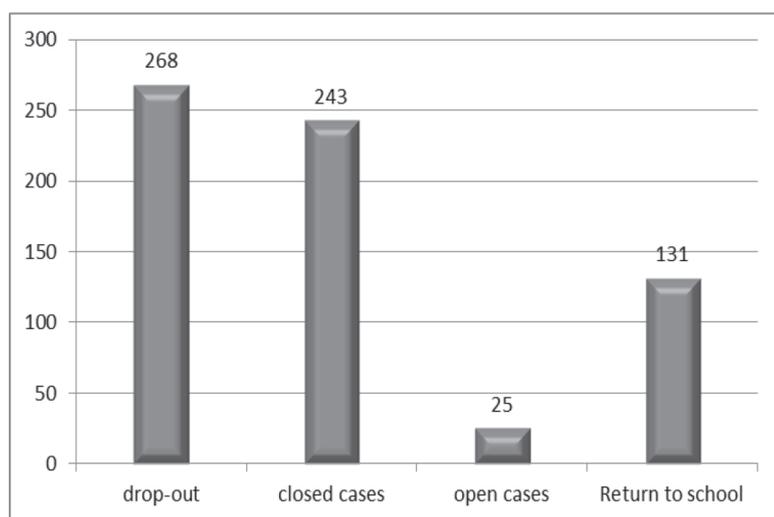


Figure 5. Return to school of dropout individuals

Male individuals represent the highest percentage of school returns, with 59.5%, whereas in terms of the age, the group of 8-11 year olds constitute the highest proportion of returning students, with 32.8%. Grades with the highest dropout rates are the first and the second, with 51.91% of individuals dropping out (see Table 14 in Annex 1).

Comparing the reasons behind school dropout and the type of assistance offered by education mediators aimed at overcoming problems and their reinstatement in the education process, it can be observed that the most predominant problem relates to school performance (39.7% of cases) followed by non-regular attendance (23.7%). Mediators therefore oriented major efforts in assistance towards supporting activities with the individuals and their parents/families that helped them overcome these challenges - mainly through case identification, family visits, school visits, and communication with the students and their relatives - in order to persuade them to improve school performance and attendance. Efforts also included information on the opportunities for reintegration through intensive learning, providing support for the collection and nostrification of documents in cases of repatriation, holding meetings with school representatives and respective teachers, holding meetings with intensive learning

provider institutions, and holding meetings with institutions and organisations that support the integration of children from these communities into the education process. For more information, see Table 15 in Annex 1.

There have been instances where, due to the nature of the problem and the need for support, mediators have referred dropout cases to other cooperating entities. The data analysis indicates that 66 dropout cases (of a total of 268) have been referred to partner organisations and institutions, such as MED, the Municipal Office for Communities and Return, the Municipal Community Representative, the Red Cross, the police, The Ideas Partnership, VoRAE, schools and PRTANs. As a result of this referral, 60 of these cases were able to benefit from further assistance and be concluded successfully (a return to school). See Table 16 in Annex 1 of the report.

In order to have an overview on the nature of the identified problems, the type of assistance and dropout case referrals, we have included several case studies taken from the reports of mediators in the municipalities covered by the programme.

Case study 1: In Podujevë/Podujevo, four students (1 F and 3 M) from a repatriated family (from France) who had difficulties with the verification of their school documents obtained abroad. The mediator intervened by contacting the family and facilitating a solution to the problem. The students were enrolled within 4 days and now attend regular classes. This is a successfully concluded case in the BSKF database for 2013.

Case study 2: A student from Pejë/Peć municipality enrolled in the first grade but was not going to school. The motive behind this was the social difficulties of the girl's family, who had six children of school age. The mediator was alerted to the case by the headteacher of the course the girl was supposed to attend. He contacted the family and communicated with them on a regular basis, managing to persuade the parents during the course of one month to allow their daughter to attend school.

Case study 3: In Obiliq/Obilić municipality (Plemetin village) a student had behavioural problems at school. Seemingly the student had issues with his school peers, and had interrupted school attendance for this reason. His father did not allow him to return to school. After communicating with the parent for five months, the mediator managed to persuade him to allow the child to return to school, where he continues to attend lessons currently.

Case study 4: A total of 59 cases have been identified in Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje municipality where students were assisted in enrolling and attending intensive learning. These cases are grouped into two categories: students who were previously enrolled but have dropped out (mostly due to poor performance) and students who were never enrolled. The mediator identified the above cases, contacted them and the intensive learning providers, and has enabled their enrolment in this form of learning. The mediator has regularly followed up the attendance and performance of students. By the end of the first semester, all the enrolled students have reported positive performance scores.

It is important to mention that, in addition to the cases in which the mediators concluded their intervention, 9.3% remained ongoing, thus leading to the continuation of support into 2014. Another element worth recalling is the fact that among the cases with a Closed status in the database, the mediators failed to successfully return students to the education process. These are primarily cases from families experiencing social problems or economic difficulties, cases with health issues, and others of individuals who come from an adult group age (over 18 years old) and as such it has been impossible for them to return to school.

Case study 1: Obiliq/Obilić municipality. A 9 year old student dropped out of the 1st grade and, at the same time, interrupted attendance of lessons in the learning centre. His mother informed the mediator that the child is experiencing speech problems and does not understand some words properly and it is therefore impossible for him to continue school. The mediator advised the student's mother to consult with the school director and let the school decide whether the student can continue with the lessons. Furthermore, he visited the centre and was informed that the student comes to class quite dirty and his peers refuse to cooperate with him. When the mother was told about this, she said it was impossible for her to buy detergent, since all the social assistance money she received is spent to support her spouse, who was in prison. The same family also had an 8 year old daughter who was not enrolled in school. MED had called this to the attention of the family through a written note, informing them of the failure to enrol children in school and ensure their regular attendance. The mediator continuously tried to persuade the mother to allow children to go to school. Both cases were assisted for about one month. This case was recorded as Closed without success in the Database.

Case study 2: Municipality of Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje. The girl does not attend school on a regular basis. She is prevented from doing so by her parents, since she is older than her peers (there is no age record for her in the database). The mediator talked to the student, contacted the parents, communicated with the school director and made efforts to find a solution. The parents do not allow their daughter to attend school due to her age and boys courting her at school. The duration of the assistance was five months. This case was recorded as Closed without success in the Database

Summary: The BSFK database analysis for 2013, with respect to the activities conducted and case assistance, indicated the following:

- ▶ Between January and December 2013, the BSFK education mediation programme involved 12 mediators, who conducted supporting activities in 9 municipalities: Shtime/Štimlje, Ferizaj/Uroševac, Podujevë/Podujevo, Pejë/Peć Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje, Lipjan/Lipljan, Gjakovë/Đakovica, Gračanica/Gračanicë and Obiliq/Obilić;
- ▶ The programme has established cooperation with the central and local institutions, as well as with the local and international NGOs operating in Kosovo;
- ▶ The programme covers a total of 35 schools;
- ▶ The programme involved a total of 980 individuals of different municipalities, gender, age groups and school grades, of whom 441 have received assistance more than once, taking the number of cases addressed during the year up to 1,421;
- ▶ The mediators' assisting activities have been focusing on the problems and needs of the individuals/cases requiring assistance until a conclusion can be found;
- ▶ Cases have been primarily assisted with respect to dropout prevention, improvement of

school attendance, fostering of school-family-community cooperation, enrolment and return of students to school, etc;

- ▶ During 2013, out of the total 1,421 cases, 1,217 acquired a Closed status in the programme, with 946 being cases where the mediators' assistance has been successful;
- ▶ The mediators' supporting activities have shown to be particularly successful in the reintegration to school of students who previously used to be dropouts and had been involved as such in the programme;
- ▶ Of the total dropout cases (268) during 2013, 243 acquired the status of Closed, while 25 cases received assistance in 2014 as well. Of the concluded cases, 131 returned to school;
- ▶ For 60 of the returned cases, mediators collaborated with the local and central institutions, with NGOs, learning centres, communities and other supporting mechanisms, such as MED, the Municipal Office for Communities and Return, the representatives of communities in the Municipality, the Red Cross, the police, TIP, VoRAE, schools and PRTANs.

4.2. Practice and outcomes of cooperation between education mediators and interested parties within the mediation programme

This section of the report deals with the results of the field research into the role of education mediators for the integration of the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities in Kosovo's education system, with a main focus on the improvement of school attendance and reduction of the dropout rate. Findings in this section are the result of a poll conducted in schools, the work with the parents' focus group and the interviews conducted with representatives from interested parties²³.

4.2.1. Cooperation of education mediators with key stakeholders of schools included in the study

The aspects addressed with school stakeholders (teachers, students, school directors and parents) with regard to the cooperation of mediators with the school are: (i) *the information on and role of education mediators*; (ii) *support and assistance provided by education mediators*; (iii) *activities conducted by education mediators*; (iv) *evaluation of the education mediators' activity*; and (v) *suggestions to improve the work of education mediators*.

Information on the recruitment and role of education mediators

All the key school stakeholders were asked whether they were informed about any education mediators working in their schools. From their responses it was understood that the majority of stakeholders at school level are well informed of such engagement, while when it comes to the role and tasks of the mediators, school directors and parents appear to be the most informed compared to the teachers (around 20%) and students (around 30%) interviewed.

²³The stakeholders included in the survey were: (i) school representatives – teachers, students, school directors and parents; (ii) representatives of institutions both at the central and local level; and (iii) representatives of partners and organisations supporting education. For more information on the respondents who participated in the survey, see the chapter describing the survey sample and population.

Support and assistance provided by education mediators

According to the main school stakeholders who were informed about the role and involvement of mediators, their view of mediators' main efforts went along different lines, primarily including:

- Students' enrolment;
- Improvement of school attendance by students;
- Improvement of students' school performance
- Improvement of students' behaviour at school;
- Establishment of good family-school communication;
- Prevention of school dropout;
- Return to school of previous dropout students;
- Assistance for students to access intensive learning;
- Enrolment of repatriated children;
- Nostrification of documents for school enrolment;
- Verification of students' transfer cases;
- Dropout prevention for cases with economic difficulties;
- Healthcare for students;
- Students' motivation for good behaviour and performance at school;
- Encouraging girls' enrolment.

Based on the questionnaires and interviews with different stakeholders, it can be concluded that the main directions of assistance and support provided by education mediators are related to:

- School enrolment (around 60 %);
- Prevention of students' dropout (around 59 %);
- Improvement of students' attendance (around 55 %);
- Improvement of students' behaviour at school (around 54 %);
- Return to school of dropout students (around 53 %);
- Fostering better communication between school and family (around 52 %);
- Encouragement of girls to enrol in school (around 52 %).

Students' responses with regard to the assistance provided reflect these findings. According to students, assistance has focused on:

- Improvement of students' attendance (around 65 %);
- Prevention of students' dropout (around 63%);
- Fostering better communication between school and family (59 %);
- School enrolment (around 58 %);
- Enrolment and attendance of intensive learning (around 52 %);
- Improvement of behaviour at school (around 51 %).

Activities conducted by education mediators

In order to accomplish the above-mentioned interventions, mediators have worked with various entities who have influence in and out of school, including the school director, teacher, headteacher, students involved in the mediation programme, meetings with parents and joint school-family meetings.

Based on the high number of responses provided by the school directors and teachers, it can be seen that, in order to improve of school attendance and reduce the rate of dropouts, education mediators have carried out activities as follows:

- Cooperation with school director (74.6%);
- Cooperation with course headteacher (74.5%);
- Visits conducted to the students' families/communication with family members and students (72%).

According to school principals, mediators have carried out a series of activities linked to the work carried out by PRTANs²⁴ at school level. They have reported that education mediators are members of PRTANs in 68% of the schools covered by the study. As part of these teams, they have carried out the following activities so far:

- Collect and disseminate data on the number of children in the school catchment area who have reached education age (around 85 %);
- Cooperate with the school to ensure return of the children who have dropped out of school (around 85 %);
- Provide information on the needs, opinions and concerns of parents from the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities with regard to their children's education (85 %);
- Cooperate with the school for the organisation of children's first grade enrolment campaigns (around 71%);
- Cooperate with the school for the enrolment of returned and repatriated children (43%);
- Cooperate with the school for the promotion and encouragement of children's enrolment in pre-school education (43%).

Mediators have undertaken cooperation activities/measures among various entities with influence in and out of school, also providing support to the targeted students. Among the most explicit cooperation activities/measures, students singled out the following:

- Conversations between the mediators and students themselves (73.6%);
- Cooperation with the school director (69.9%)

See table 17 in Annex 1 of the report for more information

No.	Alternatives	Yes	Total
		%	No
1	Home visits and communication with the parents/family members	40.0	75
2	Cooperation with the school director	69.9	73
3	Cooperation with the head teacher	42.6	68
4	Cooperation with my teachers	48.5	68
5	Personal communication with me	73.6	72
6	Organisation of meetings with parents, teachers and children in the centre for education, at school, at the learning centre or at the house, etc.	51.4	72

²⁴According to Administrative Instruction No. 7/2011, on the establishment and empowerment of teams for the prevention and response toward dropout and non-registration in compulsory education, the PRTAN is an administrative entity set up within the official school administration. At the school level, PRTANs are composed of the school Steering Council. Members of these teams are representatives of students, teachers, parents, school director's office and, where required, representatives of non-governmental organisations. PRTANs deal with the prevention and response of school dropout at all levels of pre-university education, prevention of interruption of regular school attendance, and with the non-registration of children and youth of school age in the compulsory education.

Even when talking to parents, they highlighted the support provided to children and families by mediators. Among the most frequent interventions, they mention the mediators' visits at school or to families, interventions with the school for the enrolment or return of students, and assistance with ensuring transport, books, learning and hygiene materials. Mediators have organised joint meetings with parents (mainly on a monthly basis), during which they have discussed various issues related to the child's education, the issues and difficulties of the families and students, and opportunities to find solutions.

Feedback on the work of education mediators

Feedback from school directors, teachers and parents on the work of education mediators is varied. Generally, comments tend to be positive and encouraging for the work the mediators have been carrying out.

Considering the fact that they appreciate the support provided by the education mediators in the integration children into the education process, about 68% of school directors and deputy directors claim to be very satisfied with this kind of support. The engagement of education mediators is considered a good practice in order to improve the education situation of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians in Kosovo, and according to them, it should continue. Comments provided at the end of questionnaires relate mainly to the need for even greater cooperation among all actors in order to better support these communities, especially greater cooperation between mediators and PRTANs to enable prompt reactions in cases of absences in schools and school dropout.

Equally, parents involved in the study highly appreciate the practice of engaging education mediators in improving the education situation of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians. 95% claim to be satisfied with the activities conducted by education mediators, in particular with regard to activities of cooperation with schools in order to improve attendance and prevent dropout.

Summary: The analysis of the findings from the survey, conducted with school stakeholders on cooperation with education mediators, indicates that:

- ▶ The vast majority of key actors at school level are well-informed of the presence of education mediators in their school, and of their role;
- ▶ Education mediators carried out numerous activities that have mostly focused on improving attendance and preventing school dropout among students of the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities;
- ▶ The cooperation with and assistance provided to the school by mediators has mainly been in the form of support for children's enrolment in school, improvement of attendance, improvement of students' behaviour at school, establishment of good communication between the school and the family, prevention of students' dropout, return to school of previous dropouts, enrolment and attendance of intensive learning, and promotion of girls' school enrolment;
- ▶ In general, the evaluation of school stakeholders for the work undertaken by education mediators is positive and encouraging of their activity, and suggestions for the future request an increase of cooperation and their institutionalisation.

4.2.2. Cooperation of education mediators with central and local institutions

This section will present the findings from the interviews conducted with representative of central and local institutions²⁵ in relation to the work of education mediators, focusing on: (i) the main role and tasks of the mediators; (ii) cooperation/support between mediators and institutions; (iii) cases of out-of-school children from communities; (iv) evaluation of the work of education mediators. The list of interviewed individuals can be found in Table 2 in Annex 1.

Perception on the role and tasks of education mediators

MEST – Office for Education of Communities. According to the interview with its representative, the office is well informed about BSFK's education mediation programme, the role and tasks of mediators involved in this programme and the mediation process. According to the respondent, MEST has not been part of the development/assignment of the role, tasks and recruitment of education mediators. The role of MEST has been primarily focused on the financial support of six learning centres (including BSFK LC in Gračanica/Gračanicë).

*Municipal Education Directorate (MED)*²⁶. Interviews with the MDE representatives indicate that they are well-informed about the role of BSFK education mediators and that they have accessed information mostly through cooperation and regular meetings with BSFK, in line with the Memoranda of Understanding signed between them.

The respondents consider that the tasks of education mediators comply with the needs of the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities. However, they report that some of the requirements do not fit with the mediators' role and tasks, such as the request to monitor classes, which is not allowed by MED, since these are matters regulated by the law.

Municipal Office for Communities and Return (MOCR). The majority of the interviewed officials in the Municipal Office for Communities and Return report to have information on the role and tasks of education mediators. When asked specifically in relation to the mediators' work, two of the respondents (Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje and Obiliq/Obilić)²⁷ stated that they were aware that mediators work is based on the *Strategy on the Integration of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian Communities, the Education Component 2009-2015* while other respondents said they were not adequately informed of the role and tasks of the mediator (Pejë/Peć). Another official stated that he saw the role and tasks of mediators as driven towards providing family-school support (Gjakovë/Đakovica).

²⁵Interview with Enesa Kadic, Head of division for communities and gender issues, MEST, date 17.04.2014,

²⁶Interviews with the representatives of MED:

Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje: Islam Shabani, Director (date: 24.03.2014)

Obiliq/Obilić: Fatime Pllana, Director (date:24.03.2014)

Pejë/Peć: Mon Berisha, Official (date:25.3.2014)

Gjakovë/Đakovica: Diana Qarkaxhia, Director (date: 25.3.2014)

²⁷List of interviews with representatives of Municipal Offices for Communities and Return:

Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje: Sladana Lazic (date 24.3.2014)

Obiliq/Obilić: Slavisa Agiancic (date 24.3.2014)

Pejë/Peć: Nexhat Kastrati (date 25.3.2014)

Gjakovë/Đakovica: Kapllan Kërshi (date 28.3.2014)

*Representatives of the communities in municipalities*²⁸. Two out of the three interviewed community representatives (Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje and Obiliq/Obilić) affirmed that they had information on the role and tasks of BSKF education mediators, since they operate in their municipalities and are in contact with them.

Cooperation/support between education mediators and institutions

MEST – Office for Education of Communities. With regard to the cooperation between MEST and BSKF on the education mediation programme, it was highlighted that the Ministry has already established cooperation with the organisation but still lacks direct cooperation with its mediators. There are cases where mediators have provided information to MEST or have requested assistance from this institution, with respect to the reintegration to school for dropout students or of children who had not been enrolled previously, with the Ministry offering its support. According to the MEST official interviewed, BSKF has ensured enrolment of 50 children in regular schools and has further assisted them to continue attending school.

Municipal Education Department (MED). Interviewed officials reported that the MEDs cooperate with the mediators in various areas related to the mediators' Terms of Reference. According to them, most cooperation takes place with regard to activities concerning PRTANs. They pointed out that activities carried out with the mediators' support, mainly consisting of efforts for first-grade enrolment of children who are above the enrolment age (students above 6 years old), provision of transport for students, in particular for those who have difficulties in travelling to school, supply with materials for hygiene, and the organisation of exams for students who have not been graded for certain subjects (with particular focus on Pejë/Peć for the latter).

Municipal Office of Communities and Return (MOCR). Respondents from these offices refer to various forms of cooperation with education mediators such as mutual visits, particularly mediators' visits to the municipality, joint visits to schools and families for the assessment of cases, and assistance towards school enrolment and attendance.

According to these respondents, as a result of cooperation with education mediators they have received various requests mainly focusing on the verification of cases and data compatibility. Mediators have also requested that the office support the facilitation of enrolment of students in schools that are closest to this community. Additionally, they said that they received requests to provide documents required for enrolment, learning materials, etc.

With regard to plans for cooperation with education mediators in the future, the interviewed officials (except for those in Pejë/Peć) state that they are open to continue institutional support with the means and resources available to them. However, when it comes to material support for the activities, they say that the budget and relevant funds are missing. For the MOCR of Pejë/Peć, a requirement for potential cooperation between the office and education mediators is that the latter request cooperation and be ready to accomplish their tasks and duties.

²⁸Interviews with community representatives in Municipalities:
Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje: Halil Qerimi (date 24.3.2014)
Pejë/Peć: Gani Toska (date 25.3.2014)
Obiliq/Obilić: Shaban Berisha (24.3.2014)

Representatives of communities in municipalities. There are many discrepancies when it comes to the cooperation of the communities' representatives in the municipalities with education mediators. This has been affirmed by three interviewed representatives of the communities in Pejë/Peć, Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje and Obiliq/Obilić. The representative from Pejë/Peć municipality affirmed that there is no cooperation whatsoever with BSFK's education mediator. The representative of Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje municipality reports that cooperation is not so adequate, whereas the representative from Obiliq/Obilić said they had good cooperation with the BSFK education mediator and that, with support from MED, several joint activities focused on the integration of children from communities to school were organised.

Cases of out-of-school children from communities

MEST – Office for Education of Communities. The general information supplied by this office on the inclusion of children of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities in the education system highlights cases of children who still remain out of the system. According to an official, the reports on dropout cases within the EMIS framework (the report for the first half of 2013) identify 120 children who dropped out of school, mainly seventh and eighth grade students. Statistics on students of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities since 2012 report the reduction of the number of out-of-school children and an increase in the enrolment rate in compulsory and secondary education. According to the official, this is a result of the affirmative policies developed by MEST for these communities and continuous activities organised with parents and the community. Nevertheless, there is no specification of the impact of the work undertaken by education mediators in this segment.

Municipal Education Department (MED) The interviews with MED representatives in four of the municipalities covered by this study - Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje, Obiliq/Obilić, Pejë/Peć and Gjakovë/Đakovica - reveal a better inclusion rate of children of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities in the education system. According to the respondents, this achievement comes as a result of the cooperation activities between MED, PRTANs, schools, families and education mediators, but also as a result of the numerous activities carried out by actors such as UNICEF, BSFK, Help for All etc.

Municipal Office for Communities and Return (MOCR). Interviewed officials from these municipal offices affirmed that the cases of out-of-school children from these communities are still an issue in their municipalities. Their statements in this regard focus on the work undertaken with returnees and the integration of their children into the education system.

The majority of the officials affirmed that the number of children in need of integration into the education system is relatively high, with around 30 children in every municipality. According to the interview statements, the biggest obstacles for the integration of children into the education system have been identified in the municipalities of Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje and Pejë/Peć.

Representatives of communities in municipalities. Respondents report of a large number of children from the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities who are out of school - approximately 20-23 children per municipality. In addition, and according to respondents, these children come mainly from families who have returned from Serbia and Montenegro and fall under the age group of 8-20 year olds.

Interviewed representatives of the communities in municipalities said that compared with the two previous years, 2014 has seen a falling trend in the number of out-of-school children although, according to them, it should be noted that while some children are integrated into the education system during a certain period, others drop out of it.

Assesment of the work of education mediators

MEST – Office for Education of Communities. In terms of the results of the mediators' field work, it was stated that they have offered significant help in supporting and integrating children and increasing cooperation between the school and family but that, so far, MEST has not carried out any assessment or monitoring of the mediators' work in the field and considers the current situation as a result of the joint effort of all stakeholders (MEST, MED, BSFK, other organisations). Municipal Education Department (MED). MED representatives consider the results of education mediators' work as very positive in that they have mostly succeeded in dropout prevention (Pejë/Peć) and students' return to school (Obiliq/Obilić). The supporting measures undertaken by mediators are mainly focused on day-to-day monitoring, assistance for extra-curricular activities, help with homework, visits in the families and contacts with schools.

Strong emphasis is placed on the contribution of education mediators in raising families' awareness and establishment of contacts between MED and the families, given that the mediators are represented in the parents' councils.

In general, the work and commitment of education mediators is viewed as a good practice pursued by MEDs, since they have resulted in significant impacts on the increase of the students from the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities who have enrolled in schools. For the future, though, officials address their recommendations to the central level (MEST) to support this programme. The activities of mediators in the future should also be financially supported by other organisations. Additionally, work should be done to ensure their professional capacity building, since this is an element that can frequently strain opportunities for cooperation.

Municipal Office for Communities and Return (MOCR) Interviewed representatives stated that certain results of the mediators' work should be considered positively, not only when it comes to returnees but in general for the efforts they have made, particularly for the inclusion of children in intensive learning, improvement of communication with parents, identification of cases and avoidance of ethnic conflict in schools, as well as in raising awareness of the respect for cultural diversity, children's school enrolment, etc.

Representatives of communities in municipalities. The majority of the interviewees underlined that the involvement of education mediators is a very good practice that must continue further. As recommendations for the future, they mentioned the need for the mediators to come exclusively from these communities so that they are acquainted with the specific cultural background, problems and concerns of the area, and the need to build capacity and increase the number of mediators in order for their work to become even more efficient in time.

Summary. The review of findings from the interviews conducted with representatives of central and local institutions showed that:

- ▶ Both central and local institutions are acquainted with the main role and tasks of education mediators;
- ▶ There is cooperation/support between education mediators and the education institutions at both levels. Greater support and cooperation has been reported at the local level, although it is not yet at the desired level (as affirmed by some of the local officials).
- ▶ Education mediators have contributed in the identification of cases of dropout children from the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities. Interviewed officials say that the work of education mediators has led the number of dropout cases to decrease.

- ▶ The work of education mediators has received positive evaluation from most of the interviewees, although it has been suggested that mediators be granted an institutional status so that this cooperation is realistic and sustainable.

4.2.3. Contribution of other organisations to the education mediation programme of BSFK

This section will focus on the work of the education mediators in partnership with organisations and partners who support education in Kosovo. This information is based on the answers of interviewed respondents in three different organisations²⁹, whose scope of work is closely linked to the improvement of the education situation of the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities, and whose mission and commitments in this context are frequently interrelated with the goals of the BSFK programme.

*Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) – Policy Office for Communities and Returnees in Kosovo*³⁰. Good cooperation has been reported with the BSFK mediation programme, in particular in the period from 2010 to 2013, at the time when OSCE provided financial support to cover the salaries of education mediators, developed the programme/training modules and supported and trained mediators for the programme. Another period of cooperation between this organisation and BSFK was the support to conduct the study “Out-of-school” (Balkan Sunflowers 2013), aimed at looking at the participation of the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities in education. Education mediators were part of this study and their contribution focused on the collection of field data. In addition, mediators participated in the activities that OSCE organised with parents and the community.

The OSCE officer interviewed for the purpose of this study expressed her high appreciation for the impact of the education mediators on improving the education situation of these communities for the period during which OSCE was actively supporting the BSFK programme. In this respect, she declared that there were cases whereby the mediators’ assistance enabled children to return to school, through the established contact between families and school. *“Our aim was to ensure institutionalisation of the mediators within the period between 2012 and 2013, although it has not been accomplished so far. On the other hand, MEST has not yet licensed the training programme and the mediators do not avail of any recognised and accredited certificate. It was of importance to us to institutionalise the role of mediators, but, on the other hand, also to make sure that they offered a successful and quality work. The Strategy on the Integration of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian Communities 2009–2015 foresees support for the mediators, but it has not yet become functional.”*³¹

*UNICEF*³² According to the interviewed representative, UNICEF has been involved in concrete cooperation activities with the BSFK education mediators in the framework of the implementation of communal action plans for the integration of the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities in the education system (through ECMI).

²⁹ (1) Interview with Sara Bagnato, Community Policy Officer/Returns OSCE, Kosovo (date 14.4.2014)

(2) Interview with Aferdita Spahiu, Expert in Education, UNICEF Office Kosovo (24.4.2014)

(3) Interview with Vera Pula, Minority and Roma Programme Coordinator, KFOS (date 04.05.2014)

³⁰ The Mission of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) in Kosovo is to promote human rights, good governance and security of people in Kosovo through the monitoring and support of the work of the local institutions. – date accessed 24.04.2014. www.osce.org

³¹ *ibid*

³² UNICEF’s mission is to advocate for the protection of children’s rights, to help meet their basic needs and to expand their opportunities to reach their full potential. UNICEF is guided in doing this by the provisions and principles of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. For more, see: <http://www.unkt.org/un-agencies/unicef/>. (date accessed 25.04.2014)

As far as the role of mediators is concerned, the UNICEF official emphasised the importance of strengthening their position in relation to the inclusion of the children of these communities in education, with a main focus on cooperation with the institutions, schools, families and communities. The role of education mediators is considered a good opportunity to create a link between the school and the community and is viewed as a tool to increase children's inclusion in education.

Currently, UNICEF has obtained funds from UNMIK, a part of which also covers the support the activities of BSFK and education mediators. UNICEF believes that the issue of institutionalisation and support of the role and work of education mediators in Kosovo has to be addressed, in order for their activity to be more successful.

*KFOS*³³ The cooperation of KFOS with BSFK was focused on providing support to the learning centres, providing support to BSFK in realising a documentary film on the life expectancy of the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities in the Balkans, which indirectly touched upon aspects of education, providing support to conduct the "School's Out" survey, and cooperation for the project "EU Support for the Implementation of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians Strategy (EU SIMRAES) 2011-2013."

KFOS considers mediation practices generally very important and recommends MEST to address the need for formalisation and a clear specification of the mediations' role. According to its representative, MEST should regularly monitor and evaluate their work, set out quality standards for the provided programmes and the compatibility of the infrastructure with the needs of the children who participate in these programmes. Further, she emphasised that *"the work done by the centres has been appraised by the government institutions, the international community and the donors as a factor that has positively influenced education viability and dropout prevention. It is based on this result that the Government should examine the possibility to include such centres and the mediators in its funding schemes, creating a separate code for their support. The issue of the lacking funds can be addressed by combining own funds (from Kosovo's consolidated budget) with donors' funds that, further, with good planning, could be transferred under full government competencies."*³⁴

Summary

The analysis of the results obtained from the interviews conducted with representatives of the OSCE – Policy Office for Communities and Returnees in Kosovo, UNICEF, and KFOS indicate that:

- ▶ These organisations have good cooperation and have been involved in joint activities with BSFK's education mediators in the mediation programme;
- ▶ The three partners who support education in Kosovo consider the role of education mediators as a good opportunity to establish links between the school and community, to increase school attendance and prevent school dropout among children of the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities;
- ▶ They recommend the central and local education institutions, including MEST, take measures to institutionalise the mediators' role and provide clear specifications of tasks and responsibilities.

³³Kosovo Foundation for Open Society (KFOS) works with government and civil society to strengthen capacities, improve implementation of existing policies and develop new strategic directions. It does so both through developing and implementing its own projects, and by supporting Kosovar organisations that require both financial and operational assistance. For more information, see: www.kfos.org (date accessed 05.05.2014)

³⁴ibid

■ V. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter presents the findings of the study and offers theme-grouped recommendations on the *role of mediators in the integration of the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities in the education system in Kosovo*.

5.1. Conclusions

The analysis of education policies and documents that address the integration of the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities in the education process in Kosovo, and the results of the interviews conducted with officials from Council of Europe (CoE) and Balkan Sunflowers Kosova (BSFK) **in the context of the education mediation programme in Kosovo indicated the following:**

1. The education mediation programme in Kosovo and the involvement of education mediators therein resulted from the Interculturalism and the Bologna Process Project implemented during 2008-2011, by CoE and in cooperation with MEST, local institutions and international organisations operating in Kosovo. BSFK has been the key implementing organisation since 2010, whereas CoE has moved on with the implementation of other projects whose objectives focus on the engagement of education mediators. The mediation programme's supporting activities have taken place through two modalities primarily: (i) the activities in five learning centres; and (ii) activities of education mediation in school, the family and the community. Their purpose is to provide support for increased access to education for the children of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities by encouraging enrolment, improving school attendance and dropout prevention.
2. Education mediators involved in the programme are individuals who come from these communities and have been previously engaged in mediation activities in earlier projects (in different organisations). They have completed at least secondary education and undergo continuous professional training. BSFK/OSCE designed a training package for the professional development of the mediators, but the programme has not yet been licensed and accredited by the relevant institutions (MEST and Agency for Accreditation of Education Programmes), although BSFK submitted the request for accreditation to MEST in 2012.
3. The education mediation programme was developed with CoE support to serve as a supporting mechanism for the integration of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities in Kosovo's education system, and it is based on the education policies for inclusion in education and respect of the right to education for all the citizens living in Kosovo.

The analysis of the legal framework on education in Kosovo and other documents related to the mediators' work **that are relevant to their position, indicated that:**

- The position of the education mediators has not yet been recognised or regulated with any document in the legal framework on education in Kosovo;
- Currently, the position of education mediators is only regulated by the Terms of Reference for the recruited mediators and the employment contracts in the programme for some municipalities.

The analysis of the programme's statistical database (Education Mediation Client Database) **with regard to the coverage and extent of support of BSFK's school mediation programme for 2013 showed the following:**

1. The education mediation programme covered nine municipalities in Kosovo: Shtime/Štimlje, Ferizaj/Uroševac, Podujevë/Podujevo, Pejë/Peć Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje, Lipjan/Lipljan, Obiliq/Obilić (including Plemetin), Gjakovë/Đakovica and Gračanica/Graçanicë. In the framework of the programme, cooperation is extended to 35 schools in these municipalities;
2. In addition to providing data on the programme coverage, the extent of support, and individual specificities for all the persons assisted by the mediation programme in the involved municipalities and schools, the statistical database serves as resource for the programme itself and for the information of stakeholders over its content and specifics;
3. The support level of the education mediation programme varies from one municipality to the other and from one school to the other. During 2013, education mediators assisted a total of 980 individuals of whom 441 have received assistance more than once, known as “recurring cases” in the language of the programme. With the recurring cases included, the total of the cases assisted by the programme for 2013 is 1421. Table 3 in Annex 1 presents in more detail the coverage and recurring cases for each municipality involved in BSFK’s mediation programme.
4. The gender structure of the individuals participating in the programme is relatively balanced, with 583 (59.5%) males and 397 (40.5%) females. In terms of the age of individuals involved in the mediation programme, findings indicate that the highest percentage of assisted individuals falls under the age group of 8-11 years, with 39 %. Table 4 in Annex 1 provides details in relation to the age group covered by BSFK’s education mediation programme.

The analysis of the programme’s statistical base in relation to the activities carried out by education mediators and their work modalities indicated that:

1. The mediation programme assistance activities have taken place through two main modalities: (i) activities in five learning centres; and (ii) education mediation activities at school, in the family and the community.
2. The highest number of cases assisted by education mediators focused on (i) improvement of school attendance (475 cases assisted); (ii) students’ return to school (321 cases assisted); and (iii) information or support for enrolment in the intensive learning programme (134 cases assisted). In terms of duration of assistance, the majority of cases have been assisted for a period up to one month (474 cases), followed by those for up to one day (223 cases) and, finally, those assisted for a period up to two months (156 cases).

The analysis of the programme’s statistical basis in relation to the impact of the mediators’ work on school attendance and dropout prevention indicated that:

1. Mediators have reached tangible results in improving school attendance and dropout prevention. The database indicates that BSFK’s mediation programme counts 268 incoming cases of school dropout. Thanks to the work done by mediators in 2013, 131 cases (or around 49%) have returned to school. Findings show that mediators from the municipalities of Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje, Pejë/Peć and Lipjan/Lipljan have managed to have greatest impact with their assistance of cases, succeeding in returning the majority of dropout students to school.

2. For the school return cases, 60 have been successful as a result of the mediators' cooperation with central and local institutions, NGOs, learning centres, communities and other supporting mechanisms, such as MED, the Municipal Office for Communities and Return, the representatives of the communities in the municipality, the Red Cross, the police, TIP, Voice of Roma Ashkali and Egyptians, the schools and PRTANs. The other successful cases have been a result of the direct influence of mediators in raising the awareness of parents and of assisted individuals over the importance of continuing education.

Findings of the survey on the cooperation of education mediators with other key school stakeholders, school directors, teachers, students and parents, indicate the following:

1. The overwhelming majority of the main stakeholders at the school level are informed about education mediators operating in their schools and are acquainted with their role;
2. Education mediators have conducted numerous activities that have been aimed at improving attendance and preventing school dropout among students of the communities;
3. The support and assistance provided to the school by mediators has mainly focused on students' enrolment, improvement of attendance, improvement of the students' behaviour at school, establishment of a better communication between the school and the family, prevention of school dropout, return of dropout students to school, enrolment and attendance of intensive learning, and encouraging girls enrolment in school;
4. Generally, school stakeholders have positive and encouraging feedback for the work undertaken by education mediators. On the other hand, there are also suggestions for the improvement of the mediators' work and institutionalisation of their position.

Findings of the survey on the cooperation of education mediators with central and local institutions indicate the following:

1. The main role and responsibilities of education mediators are clear both to the central and local level;
2. Cooperation/support between education mediators and institutions has taken place with education entities at both levels. The support and cooperation is higher at the local level, although not to the desired extent (according to some officials);
3. The work of mediators has enabled central and local institutions to provide more comprehensive data on the cases of dropout children among the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities;
4. Feedback on the work of education mediators is positive and the majority of the respondents recommend that they be granted an institutional status, so that such cooperation is realistic and sustainable.

Findings of the survey on the cooperation between the BSFK mediation programme with organisations and partners who support education in Kosovo indicate the following:

1. BSFK has received support by and cooperated with the OSCE – Policy Office for Communities and Returnees in Kosovo, UNICEF and KFOS;
2. These collaborating partners consider the role of education mediators as a good opportunity to establish a link between the school and the community, to increase school attendance and prevent dropout among children of the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities;
3. Partners supporting education in Kosovo recommend education institutions and MEST in particular to take measures to institutionalise and clearly define the role of education mediators in the future.

5.2. Recommendations

In order to enhance the success of integration of the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities in Kosovo's education process, it is required that education institutions take specific measures to strengthen the role of education mediators and to support the implementation of the mediation programme. For that purpose, and relying on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are issued:

1. For the purpose of institutionalisation of education mediators, it is required that:

- A working group is established by MEST in order to review the current legal framework and come up with an administrative instruction that shall regulate the position, role, tasks and responsibilities of education mediators and will define the role of MEST, MEDs, schools and other institutions in order to ensure support and cooperation;
- Based on this document, MEST and MEDs shall institutionalise the profile of education mediators, incorporating them into the supporting staff structure related to schools and the municipality.

2. In the area of professional development of education mediators, the following is required:

- BSFK together with the implementing partners should revise the education mediators' training programme, in line with MEST recommendations and reapply to MEST for its accreditation, as well as complete the education mediation training manual with good mediation practices in the Kosovo context that have led to measurable results in the integration of the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities in the education process in Kosovo;
- MEST should accredit the education mediation training programme based on the accreditation criteria and support its implementation according to its priorities in order to ensure inclusion in education in general, and integration of the children of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities into the education system in Kosovo.

3. In terms of strengthening school cooperation with mediators, each of the schools involved in the mediation programme is required:

- To recognise and evaluate the role of education mediators in achieving inclusion of the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities in education;
- Coordinate with education mediators' activities and action plans that focus on the integration of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities into the regular schooling system;
- Incorporate education mediators in the organisational and management school structures (School Steering Board and PRTANs);
- Support the professional development of staff and mediators, in order to conduct joint activities aimed at achieving inclusion in education;
- Promote the role of mediators among school staff and the broader community as collaborators and supporters of education processes at school and in the community.

4. In order to strengthen cooperation of central and local institutions with education mediators, it is required that:

- MEST – the Office for the Education of Communities develops and implements cooperation strategies with education mediators for activities relevant to the integration of Roma, Ash-

kali and Egyptian communities in the education process in Kosovo, particularly with regard to the improvement of school attendance and dropout prevention;

- MEST should allocate funds to cover salaries and the activities of mediators in the municipalities;
- MED in cooperation with the municipality decision-making authorities, MEST and the donors should: (i) include education mediators in the list of the support staff of municipal institutions and schools for the programmes and projects related to the integration of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities in the education system in Kosovo; (ii) obtain funds to provide financial support for the work and activities of mediators in the municipality;
- MED should develop and implement an action plan to support mediators' work for the integration of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities in education, support professional training of school staff and mediators, and support joint activities which assist the education of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities;
- The MOCR should develop and implement cooperation strategies with education mediators for activities relevant to the integration of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities and other returnees in Kosovo's education system.

5. In terms of strengthening cooperation between providers of the education mediation programme with organisations and partners supporting education in Kosovo, it is required that these organisations and partners:

- Maintain positive experiences in supporting integration policies for Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities in education and other aspects of life;
- Support the implementation of BSFK's education mediation programme and ensure its extension to other municipalities in Kosovo;
- Enable a network for the exchange of positive practices between various European countries, Kosovo included.

6. In terms of promoting the role and outcomes of mediators' work for 2013 and onwards, the following is required:

BSFK, the municipalities and schools benefiting from the mediation programme should publish the outcomes of the mediators' work through various campaigns, publications in local and national media, regular reports and special publications. This approach will possibly have an impact on raising the awareness of institutions, of the community and supporting partners and may furthermore ensure additional support for the mediation programme.

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<http://www.ibp-kosovo.org/> date accessed 18.05.2014
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- KFOS www.kfos.org date accessed 06.07.2014

■ ANNEX 1

Table 1: Survey sample

Municipality	Survey sample (questionnaire)					Focus group/interview sample											
	School	Director/deputy director	Teacher	Students		Parents	MED	MOCR	Representatives of communities in municipalities	LC	Mediators	CoE	BSFK	MEST	UNICEF	OSCE	KFOS
				5 th grade	7/8 th grade												
Pejë/Peç	Xhemail Kada	1	11	5	6	16	1	1	1	-							
	Skenderbeu	1	9	5	6												
Gjakovë/Đakovica	Yll Morina	1	9	4	3	9	1	1	-	-							
	Mustafa Bakija	1	10	8	4												
Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje	Selman Riza	1	8	9	10	10	1	1	1	1	11	2	1	1	1	1	1
	Aca Marovic	1	2	7	6												
Obiliq/Obilić	Ibrahim Rugova	11	68	4	5	9	1	1	1	1							
	Pandeli Sotiri	11	99	5	5												
	Sveti Sava (Plemetin)	11	10	5	4												
Total No:		9	76	52	49	44	4	4	3	2	11	2	1	1	1	1	1
				102		75											
%		4.8	40.6	54.5		58.7	5.3	5.3	4.1	2.7	14.7	2.7	1.33	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3

Table 2. Focus group/interview sample

	Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje	Pejë/Peç	Gjakovë/Dakovica	Obiliq/Obiliç
Parents	Ismail Hyseni, Lijana Hyseni, Naim Gash (Mediator-Almir Berisha); Avdulla Salihu, Fitim Kuka, Muharrem Gashi, Ismail Ademasi, Mergim Murtezi, Selim Murtezi (Mediator-Ferizi Kemail Krasniqi)	16 parents	Xhevat Mamusha, Ramadan Sokoli, Bujar Bajrami, Mehmet Mehmetaj, Ramadan Hasaj, Florim Mersulaj, Rexhep Pash-triku, Astrit Deshaku, Valon Vraniqi.	Muhamed Berisha, Bajrush Berisha,-Behxhet Neziri, Habib Gashi, Hanumshah Ibrahim, Ramize Krasniqi, Burbuqe Syla, Arsim Rama, Rexhep Gashi.
MED	Islam Shabani, Director	Mon Berisha, Official	Diana Qerkaxhia, Director	Fatime Pllana, Director
MOCR	Sllagjana Liazqi, Office Director	Nexhat Kastrati, Official	Kaplan Kersh, Official	Sllavisha Agjanç, Head of Office
Representative of communities in municipality	Halil Qerimi, Official	Gani Toska, Official	-	Shaban Berisha, Official
Learning Centre representatives	Rrahman Stollaku, Coordinator	-	-	Miranda Fondaj, Centre Coordinator
Mediators	Avdulla Shabani, Selatin Dudaki, Xhafer Ademi, Sali Berisha, Feriz Rizahi, Almir Berisha, Mustafe Berisha, Selim Mustafa, Mehdi Berisha, Nderim Prizreni, Ergit Qeli, Milaim Jashari			
MEST	Enesa Kadiç, Head of the Office for Communities			
CoE-Kosovo Office	Giovani Mozzarelli, Project Manager of EU/CoE JP "Support to Promotion of Education and Cultural Understanding" Juliana Olldash-Berisha – Project Senior Officer of the EU/CoE JP "Support to Promotion of Education and Cultural Understanding"			
OSCE-Office in Kosovo	Sara Bagnato , Policy Officer for Communities and Returnees			
UNICEF – Office in Kosovo	Aferdita Spahiu, Education Expert Kozeta Imamim, Education Official			
KFOS	Vera Pula, Coordinator of the Programme on Roma and Minorities			
BSFK	Kushtrim Visoka, Coordinator of School Mediation Programme			

Table 3. Inclusion of children from Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian Communities in compulsory education by municipality, 2007/2008-2012/2013

Municipality	Year	Ashkali	Roma	Egyptian	Total	Total in commune	%	Year	Ashkali	Roma	Egyptian	Total	Total in municipality	%
Podujevë/Podujevo		151	0	0	151	17,347	0.87		128	17	0	145	17,528	0.83
Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje		411	2	0	413	5,512	7.49		450	0	0	450	5,684	7.92
Pejë/Peć		158	184	221	563	16,702	3.37		102	200	237	539	16,241	3.32
Gjakovë/Đakovica	2007/2008	399	314	406	1,119	18,921	5.91	2008/2009	371	402	573	1,346	18,343	7.34
Ferizaj/Uroševac		768	18	0	786	21,666	3.63		859	49	0	908	21,366	4.25
Lipjan/Lipljan		264	0	0	264	10,948	2.41		316	4	0	320	11,014	2.91
Shtime/Štimlje		137	0	0	137	5,889	2.33		152	0	0	152	5,761	2.64
Total		2,288	518	627	3,433	96,985	3.54		2,378	672	810	3,860	95,937	4.02
Podujevë/Podujevo		135	20	2	157	17,178	0.91		135	2	0	137	16,873	0.81
Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje		465	5	20	490	5,577	8.79		469	4	2	475	5,669	8.38
Pejë/Peć		95	207	222	524	15,714	3.33		118	210	262	590	15,724	3.75
Gjakovë/Đakovica	2009/2010	368	459	611	1,438	17,505	8.21	2010/2011	316	604	619	1,539	16,951	9.08
Ferizaj/Uroševac		756	14	0	770	20,516	3.75		877	18	0	895	20,035	4.47
Lipjan/Lipljan		349	0	0	349	10,693	3.26		331	31	0	362	10,581	3.42
Shtime/Štimlje		135	0	0	135	5,539	2.44		126	0	0	126	5,474	2.30
Total		2,303	705	855	3,863	92,722	4.17		2,372	869	883	4,124	91,307	4.52
Podujevë/Podujevo		122	4	0	126	16,446	0.77		121	0	0	121	16,178	0.75
Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje		532	4	37	573	5,700	10.05		529	10	45	584	5,734	10.18
Pejë/Peć		103	221	248	572	15,300	3.74		103	221	248	572	15,300	3.74
Gjakovë/Đakovica	2011/2012	245	659	712	1,616	16,247	9.95	2012/2013	309	974	343	1,626	15,504	10.49
Ferizaj/Uroševac		884	18	0	902	19,737	4.57		806	5	0	811	19,631	4.13
Lipjan/Lipljan		367	33	0	400	10,738	3.73		390	43	0	433	10,478	4.13
Shtime/Štimlje		145	4	0	149	5,517	2.70		139	5	0	144	5,223	2.76
Total		2,398	943	997	4,338	89,685	4.84		2,397	1,258	636	4,291	88,048	4.87

Table 4: Cases assisted/contacted by education mediators by municipality

Data on the location and mediator		Total			
Municipality	Mediator	Assisted cases	Recurring cases	Assisted individuals	
				No	%
Shtime/Štimlje	Avdulla Shabani	15	1	14	1.4
Ferizaj/Uroševac/Dubrave	Selatin Dudaki	126	9	117	11.9
Podujevë/Podujevo	Xhafer Ademi	67	6	61	6.2
Pejë/Peć	Sali Berisha	245	127	118	12
Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje 1	Feriz Rizahi	232	49	183	23.1
Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje 2	Almir Berisha	59	16	43	
Lipjan/Lipljan	Mustafe Berisha	101	24	77	7.9
Obiliq/Obilić/Plemetin	Selim Mustafa	137	42	95	17
Obiliq/Obilić	Mehdi Berisha	99	27	72	
Gjakovë/Đakovica 1	Nderim Prizreni	39	1	38	11.4
Gjakovë/Đakovica 2	Ergit Qeli	81	7	74	
Gračanica/Gračanicë	Milaim Jashari	220	132	88	9
Total:		1421	441	980	

Table 5. Extent of coverage specified by gender and age of individuals/supported cases in the programme

Municipality	Assisted individuals	F	M	Up to 5 years old	6-7 years old	8-11 years old	12-13 years old	14 – 16 years old	17 – 18 years old	Over 18 years old	No information
Shtime/Štimlje	14	4	10	0	0	3	5	3	0	0	3
Ferizaj/ Uroševac / Dubrave	117	52	65	0	12	41	17	29	12	2	4
Podujevë/Podujevo	61	27	34	1	3	26	11	14	4	2	0
Pejë/Peć	118	44	74		10	38	14	18	5	2	31
Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje 1	183	72	111	3	36	31	18	15	3	2	75
Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje 2	43	16	27	1	1	4	2	0	0	0	35
Lipjan/Lipljan	77	27	50		20	18	6	26	6	0	1
Obiliq/Obilić /Plemetin	95	43	52	1	5	37	20	15	0	0	17
Obiliq/Obilić	72	30	42	0	3	26	10	12	4	1	16
Gjakovë/Đakovica 1	38	12	26	0	2	8	2	3	1	0	22
Gjakovë/Đakovica 2	74	30	44	0	11	34	12	14	2	1	0
Gračanica/Gračanicë	88	40	48	0	0	4	0	2	1	0	81
Total	980	397	583	6	103	270	117	151	38	10	285

Table 6. Schools and grades covered by BSFK Mediation Programme by municipality

Municipality	School name	Grade								
		Pre-school	1-2	3-5	6-7	8-9	10-13	Centre	Missing in	Total
Shtime/Štimlje	'Emin Duraku'		1	6	5	2	0		0	14
Ferizaj/Uroševac	'N. Frasheri', 'T. Çanga', 'F. Konica', High Technical School		52	20	14	23	5		3	117
Podujevë/Podujevo	'N. Frasheri', 'Sh. Shala', 'F. Noli', 'E. Maloku', 'A. Xhuvani', 'Z. Pajaziti', 'I. Boletini', 'L. Gurakuqi'		11	17	18	4	7	4	0	61
Pejë/Peć	'Xh. Kada', 'Skenderbeu', 'Sh. Spahia', 'A. Hadri'	2	67	17	24	3	4		1	118
F.Kosovë/ Kosovo Polje 1	'S. Riza', 'D. Bogujevci', 'H. Sylejmani'		121	16	7	2	9		28	183
F.Kosovë/ Kosovo Polje 2	'S. Sava', 'V. Karagjic'		17	15	7	4			0	43
Lipjan/Lipljan	'I. Luma', 'Z. Hajdini', 'Migjeni', 'Vllez. Haradinaj', 'F. Agani', 'H. Bajrami', 'A. Gllavica'		15	12	20	18	2		10	77
Obiliq/Obilić / Plemetin	'S. Sava', 'B. Radiqeviq'	13	34	26	19	3			0	95
Obiliq/Obilić	'I. Rugova', 'P. Sotiri', 'Jeta e re', 'B. Radiqeviq', 'H. Tasimi', 'S. Sava'		30	17	9	6	1		9	72
Gjakovë/Đakovica 1	'Z. Rexha', 'M. Bakija'		14	12	8	1			3	38
Gjakovë/Đakovica 2	'Y. Morina', 'M. Bakija', 'Z. Marku'		28	9	20				17	74
Gračanica/Gračanicë	Kral Milutin		25	39	15	9			0	88
Total:		15	415	206	166	75	28	4	71	980

Table 7. Problems of the cases/reasons for support by the education mediation programme

Municipality	Early marriage	Social issues	Health issues	Domestic violence	Lack of transport	Mistreatment by teachers	Placement at the end of the classroom	Ethnic differences	Forced labour	Grade repetition	Non-regular attendance	Non-regular attendance in BSFK LC	Delayed enrolment	Issues with school performance	Transfer from school to school/ transfer document	Lack of school commitment
Shtime/Štimlje		1								4	10					
Ferzaj/Uroševac/ Dubrave	2	18							2		48		37	11	2	6
Podujevë/Podujevo	1	8				1					43				8	6
Pejë/Peć		6								1	225			13		
F.Kosovë/Kosovo Polje 1		31	3	1		1			2	2	65		58	67		2
F.Kosovë/Kosovo Polje 2		10			2			2		2	43					
Lipjan/Lipljan		57			2					1	16			25		
Obiliq/Obilić/ Plemetin	2	1							1	4	106	15		5	1	
Obiliq/Obilić 2	7	21		1			2	4	10	2	41			7		2
Gjakovë/Đakovica 1		4							1	9	20		1			
Gjakovë/Đakovica		11			2	1		2		2	39		2	2		12
Gračanica/Gračanice		9	9	1			4		5	15	85			89		2
Total	12	177	11	3	6	3	6	8	21	42	741	15	98	219	11	30

Table 8. Purpose of school mediation programme case assistance

Municipality	Improvement school attendance	Performance improvement	Improvement of school discipline	Return to school	Enrolment in centres	Material assistance from Caritas	Students' motivation for education	Improvement of the school-family relationship	Information on and enrolment in intensive learning	Opportunity to take subject matter exams	Commitment to prevent dropout	Students' enrolment	First-grade enrolment	School change	Parents' awareness raising	Consultations with the teacher	Pre-school enrolment	Registration for the 9-year and Matura tests	Continuation of secondary education	Missing information
Shtime/Štimlje	10	1		4																0
Ferzaj/Uroševac/ Dubrave	23		1	32								8	37	3	4	3	2	2	10	2
Podujevë/ Podujevo	26	4	4	13								5			7	1		3		4
Pejë/ Podujevo	73		7	79					53		20	1	3	3	3					3
F.Kosovë/ Kosovo Polje 1	72	1		21				2	77	4		32		2	3	2				16
F.Kosovë/ Kosovo Polje 2	9			34										6	5	4				1
Lipjan/ Lipjan	68		31	2																0
Obiliq/Obiliç /Plemetin	67	5	1	46						1			11		1					5
Obiliq/Obiliç 2	27	9	1	21			3	3	2			19	1		8	1	2		1	0
Gjakovë/ Đakovica	12			18							2	1		1	1					4
Gjakovë/ Đakovica	14	1		28	1	1			2		8	21	1		2	1				1
Gračanica/Gračanice	74	77	4	23	9					6	2		1		15	1			8	0
Total	475	98	49	321	10	1	3	5	134	11	32	87	54	15	49	13	4	5	19	36

Table 9. Duration of assistance

Duration	1 day	Up to 1 month	Up to 2 months	Up to 3 months	Up to 4 months	Up to 5 months	Up to 6 months	Up to 7 months	Up to 8 months	Up to 9 months	Up to 10 months	Up to 11 months	Up to 12 months	Total	Missing information
Shtime/Štimlje		2	2	4	1									9	6
Ferizaj/ Uroševac Dubrave	3	22	8	16	36	6	1	5	1					98	28
Podujevë/ Podujevo		11	8	1				4						24	43
Pejë/Peć	6	149	36	21	9	2	2		3	10	1	3	3	245	0
Fushë Kosovë/ Kosovo Polje 1	47	65	18	25	3		50	2			10	1		221	11
Fushë Kosovë/ Kosovo Polje 2	8	26	3	3	1	2	4		2					49	10
Lipjan/Lipljan	39	32	16	2	10	2								101	0
Obiliq/Obilić Plemetin	1	61	12	15	6	7	3	1	2	2	1			111	26
Obiliq/Obilić	16	25	17	14	6	4	3	6	3		1	1		96	3
Gjakovë/ Đakovica 1	3	15	11	6			1	1						37	2
Gjakovë/ Đakovica 2	27	42		1	1								1	72	9
Gračanica/ Graçanicë/	73	24	25	3	3				1					129	91
Total:	223	474	156	111	76	23	64	19	12	12	13	5	4	1,192	229

Table 10. Status of cases addressed by the programme

Municipality	Closed case	Ongoing	Total	Missing information	Successful	Unsuccessful	Total	Missing information on closed cases
Shtime/Štimlje	11	4	15	0	11	0	11	0
Ferizaj/Uroševac /Dubrave	98	28	126	0	86	12	98	0
Podujevë/Podujevo	20	45	65	2	6	13	19	2
Pejë/Peć	245	0	245	0	137	108	245	0
Fushë Kosovë/ Kosovo Polje 1	230	2	232	0	205	25	230	0
Fushë Kosovë/ Kosovo Polje 2	49	10	59	0	33	15	48	1
Lipjan/Lipljan	101	0	101	0	99	2	101	0
Obiliq/Obilić/Plemetin	112	25	137	0	101	11	112	0
Obiliq/Obilić	98	0	98	1	62	36	98	0
Gjakovë/Đakovica 1	38	1	39	0	27	11	38	0
Gjakovë/Đakovica 2	72	8	80	1	50	22	72	0
Gračanica/Gračanice	143	76	219	1	129	14	143	0
Total	1217	199	1416	5	946	269	1215	5

Table 11: Individuals involved in BSFK programme as dropouts, by gender, age and grade

Municipality	Dropout	Gender		Age							Grade						
		F	M	Up to 5 years old	6-7 years old	8-11 years old	12-13 years old	14-16 years old	17-18 years old	Missing information	Pre-school	1 and 2	3 and 5	6 and 7	8 and 9	10-13	Missing information
Shtime/ Štimlje	4	3	1			1	1	2		0				2	2		0
Ferizaj/ Uroševac/ Dubravë	26	19	7			8	2	11	4	1		4	6	2	13		1
Podujevë/ Podujevo	18	8	10	1	2	5	2	6	2	0		7	2	3	2	4	0
Pejë/Peć	35	17	18		5	13	1	3	2	11	1	18	7	7	2		0
Fushë Kosovë/ Kosovo Polje 1	79	29	50	3	2	14	14	14	2	30		41	12	5		1	20
Fushë Kosovë/ Kosovo Polje 2	12	9	3			2				10		4	4	2	2		0
Lipjan/ Lipljan	6	2	4		1	2	1	1	1	0		2	3	1			0
Obiliq/ Obilić	24	11	13			10	5	4	1	4		12	3	1	2		6
Obiliq/ Obilić/ Plemetin	6	2	4			4				2	1	2	1	2			0
Gjakovë/ Đakovica 1	13	2	11			5	1	3		4		4	5	4			0
Gjakovë/ Đakovica 2	37	16	21		3	16	5	11	2	0		14	5	14			4
Gračanica/ Graçanicë	8	2	6						1	7		2	5	1			0
Total		120	148	4	13	80	32	55	15	69	2	110	53	44	23	5	31
%	286	44.8	55.2	1.5	4.9	29.9	11.9	20.5	5.6	25.7	0.7	41.0	19.8	16.4	8.6	1.9	11.6

Table 12. Reasons for school dropout by the individuals involved in BSFK mediation programme

Municipality	Reasons for dropout									
	Early marriages	Social issues	Health issues	Forced labour	Grade repetition	Non-regular attendance	Non-enrolment in school	Problems with school performance	Change of school	Non-commitment of teachers
Shtime/ Štimlje		3			1					
Ferizaj/ Uroševac/ Dubravë	2	9		1		11			3	
Podujevë/ Podujevo	1					13				4
Pejë/Peć		6				25		4		
Fushë Kosovë/ Kosovo Polje 1		2	2	1	2	6	17	49		
Fushë Kosovë/ Kosovo Polje 2		2				10				
Lipjan/ Lipljan		3				1		2		
Obiliq/ Obilić					5	3				
Obiliq/ Obilić/ Plemetin		2			3	1				
Gjakovë/ Đakovica 1	2	8		5		4		4		1
Gjakovë/ Đakovica 2		1			3	7			2	
Gračanica/ Graçanicë		4				25	2	1		5
Total	5	40	2	7	14	106	19	60	5	10
%	1.9	14.9	0.7	2.6	5.2	39.6	7.1	22.4	1.9	3.7

Table 13. Status of dropout cases by end-2013 and return to school

Municipality	Drop out	Closed cases		Returned to school		Unsuccessful return		Ongoing cases
	No	No	%	No	%	No	%	No
Shtime/Štimlje	4	4	100	2	50	2	50	0
Ferizaj/ Uroševac/ Dubravë	26	10	38.5	1	10	9	90	16
Podujevë/ Podujevo	18	17	94.4	4	23.5	13	76.5	1
Pejë/Peć	35	35	100.0	18	51.4	17	48.6	0
Fushë Kosovë/ Kosovo Polje 1	79	77	97.5	69	89.6	8	10.4	2
Fushë Kosovë/ Kosovo Polje 2	12	11	91.7	3	27.3	8	72.7	1
Lipjan/Lipljan	6	6	100.0	4	66.7	2	33.3	0
Obiliq/Obilić	8	6	75.0	1	16.7	5	83.3	2
Obiliq/ Obilić/ Plemetin	6	5	83.3	2	40.0	3	60.0	1
Gjakovë/ Đakovica 1	24	24	100.0	3	12.5	21	87.5	0
Gjakovë/ Đakovica 2	13	13	100.0	6	46.2	7	53.8	0
Gračanica/Gračanicë	37	35	94.6	18	51.4	17	48.6	2
Total	268	243	90.7	131	53.9	112	46.1	25

Table 14. Gender, age and grade of dropout cases returned to school

Municipality	Gender		Age					Grade							
	F	M	5 - 7	8 - 11	12 - 15	16 - 18	Over 18	Pre-school	1 - 2	3 - 5	6 - 7	8 - 9	10 - 13	In centre	Missing information
Shtime/ Štimlje	1	1			2						1	1			
Ferizaj/ Uroševac/ Dubravë	1				1						1				
Podujevë/ Podujevo	1	3		1	1	2								4	
Pejë/Peć	10	8	3	10		1	4	1	13	2	1	1			
Fushë Kosovë/ Kosovo Polje 1	26	43		14	28	1	26		36	10	3		1		19
Fushë Kosovë/ Kosovo Polje 2	2	1		1			2		2	1					
Lipjan/ Lipljan	2	2		1	2	1			1		2	1			
Obiliq/ Obilić		1					1			1					
Obiliq/ Obilić/ Plemetin		2		1			1			1	1				
Gjakovë/ Đakovica 1	3			3					3						
Gjakovë/ Đakovica 2		6		3	2		1		3	2	1				
Gračanica/ Graçanicë	7	11	1	9	5	3			10	2	6				
Total	53	78	4	43	41	8	35	1	68	19	16	3	1	4	19
%	40.5	59.5	3.1	32.8	31.3	6.1	26.7	0.76	51.9	14.5	12.2	2.3	0.8	3.1	14.5

Table 15. Issues leading to school dropout and type of assistance

Municipality	Type of problem										Type of assistance							
	Non-regular attendance	Grade repetition	Social issues	Health issues	Performance issues	Discipline issue	Delayed enrolment	Transport	Return from abroad (repatriation)	Non-commitment by school	Communication with the student on performance improvement	Awareness raising on return to school	Information on and enrolment in courses of Albanian language	Information on and enrolment in intensive learning courses	Assistance for school enrolment	Assistance for change of school	Verification (nostrification) of school documents	Opportunities for grade tests
Shtime/ Štimlje		1	1								1	1						
Ferizaj/ Uroševac/ Dubravë	1											1						
Podujevë/ Podujevo									4								4	
Pejë/Peć	10		5		3						3	12		2		1		
Fushë Kosovë/ Kosovo Polje 1	3	1	1	2	46		16					7		59	2			1
Fushë Kosovë/ Kosovo Polje 2	1		1					1				3						
Lipjan/ Lipljan	1		1		2							4						
Obiliq/Obilić		1										1						
Obiliq/ Obilić/ Plemetin			1				1					2						
Gjakovë/ Đakovica 1	3											3						
Gjakovë/ Đakovica 2	3	2	1									6						
Gračanica/ Graçanicë	9		1		1		2			5		12		3	3			
Total	31	5	12	2	52	1	18	1	4	9	4	52	4	64	5	1	4	1
%	23.7	3.8	9.2	1.5	39.7	0.8	13.7	0.8	3.1	6.9	3.1	39.7	3.1	48.9	3.8	0.8	3.1	0.8

Table 16. Referral of dropout cases

Municipality	Dropout			Return			Status			Case referral								Assistance									
	Yes	No	Total	Successful	Non-successful	Total	Ongoing	Closed	Total	TPRDNR	MED	Representative of communities in municipality	MoCR	The Ideas Partnership	Voice of Roma	Red Cross	Police	Total	Return to school	Enrolment in high school	Material support	Attendance improvement	Reporting of the case	Arrangement of documents	Possibility to take grade exams	Registration to the final school exam	Total
Shtime/Štimlje	1		1		1	1	2		1									1	1								1
Ferizaj/ Uroševac/ Dubravë		4	4	4		4		4		1	2				1			4	2	2	1						5
Podujevë/ Podujevo		2	2	1	1	2	3	1	4	1					1			2	1		1						3
Pejë/Peç																											
Fushë Kosovë/ Kosovo Polje 1	50	1	51	50	1	51		51			2	2	47					51	48								48
Fushë Kosovë/ Kosovo Polje 2																											
Lipjan/Lipljan																											
Obiliq/Obiliç	2	3	5	3	2	5		3	3	1			1	1	2			5	1		2	2		1			6
Obiliq/Obiliç / Plemetin																											
Gjakovë/Dakovica 1	1	1	2	1	1	2		1	1						2			2			2						2
Gjakovë/Dakovica 2																											
Gračanica/Gračanicë		1	1	1		1	1		1								1						1				1
Total	54	12	66	60	6	66	6	60	66	1	3	4	2	48	1	6	1	66	52	2	6	2	1	1	1	1	66
%	81.8	20		90.9	9.1		9.1	90.9		1.5	4.5	6.1	3.0	72.7	1.5	9.1	1.5		78.8	3.0	9.1	3.0	1.5	1.5	1.5		

Table 17. Results of survey carried out with pupils, activities/support measures undertaken by education mediators

Nr.	Alternatives	YES	Total.
		%	Nr
1	Education mediators visited us at home / family members	40.0	75
2	Education mediators cooperated with the school director	69.9	73
3	Education mediators cooperated with the headteacher	42.6	68
4	Education mediators have cooperated with my students	48.5	68
5	Education mediators had discussions with me	73.6	72
6	Education mediators organised meetings with parents, teachers and children in the learning centre, school or home, etc.	51.4	72

■ ANNEX 2

Terms of Reference

Description of tasks:

In the context of Kosovo, the work of a mediator shall focus mainly on facilitating communication between the school, Municipal Education Departments (MED), families of the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities (including the NGOs dealing with education, if any) and Learning Centres where they exist.

The specific tasks of a mediator (Terms of Reference) shall include:

- Informs the communities on the measures facilitating access to education;
- Informs the communities on the activities initiated by the school to improve the education of their children;
- Raises communities' awareness on the importance of regular school attendance and continuation of higher education for both genders;
- Informs on a continuous basis the staff of the education centre on the topics taught at school and on the progress and difficulties encountered by the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities, so that learning centres facilitate provision of an effective and timely assistance where they exist;
- The mediator assists (BSFK) Centre staff with visits in the families of children who attend the Centre with regard to their attendance in School-Centre;
- Where possible, offers information to the school and learning centre staff information related to the needs, opinions and concerns of the parents from Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities;
- React immediately in case of dropout, in order to return children to school as soon as possible;
- Responds immediately in the case where children fail to attend lessons on a regular basis, in order to improve attendance to normal standards;
- Mediates in the relationship between various parties which have direct or indirect impact on the education of the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities;
- Facilitates/increases active participation of parents from Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities in the school meetings and activities;
- Cooperates closely with the school teachers and staff;
- Cooperates closely with the staff of other BSFK programmes;
- Contacts the children families who have returned recently to Kosovo, in order to involve children in school or establishes contacts with relevant authorities supporting the education of these children;
- Observes and assesses the situation at school of children from Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities;
- Informs immediately the coordinator of the mediation project on emergency cases;
- Attends meetings organised by the schools, including but not limited to attending the activities of parent-teacher council;
- Participates and becomes an active part of TPRDNR at both municipality and school levels;
- Hosts meetings with parents at schools or other possible venues;
- Participates in the meetings organised by the municipalities (on education);
- Participates in the meetings organised by other actors dealing with education in that municipality;
- Participates in the training, meetings and activities organised by any Organisation that enters an agreement with Balkan Sunflowers Kosova;
- Attends trainings or meetings organised by Balkan Sunflowers Kosova;
- Attends trainings or meetings where his/her participation is deemed appropriate by Balkan Sunflowers Kosova;
- Submits weekly reports and plans for the week ahead;
- Submits monthly reports on dropout cases and school returns;
- Updates profiles of the school, commune and community;
- Submits the database together with the report every Friday or Sunday at best;
- Writes Client Reports immediately upon the identification of the case and submits them together with the reports. Those who use the Dropbox application upload the documents immediately therein.
- Reports of emergency cases, where BSFK staff requires;
- The mediator has the obligation to provide data required by Balkan Sunflowers Kosova within their set deadline.

The mediator should be an important example for the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities, and raise the confidence of parents and members of the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities that the school is committed to providing quality education for their children. The mediator should contribute for the development of mutual and respectful relations between the school, family, communities, children and Education Centres.

■ ANNEX 3

Memorandum of Understanding between XXXX Municipality and Balkan Sunflowers Kosova

Whereas the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology is undertaking decisive action to reduce the number of early school dropouts through the authorisation and establishment of TPRDNR teams at the municipality and school level;

Whereas school mediation is proven to be a stable, tested and tried tool to reduce dropout rates, increase school enrolment and attendance and improve participation of children at risk in public schools throughout Europe and in the course of its three-year application in Kosovo;

Whereas the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and the Council of Europe (CoE) have made Balkans Sunflowers Kosova an implementing partner in the provision of school mediation, so that they enhance enrolment and attendance and reduce the number of children at risk of school dropout, particularly of children coming from Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities;

Whereas the Ministry of Education, Science, Education and Technology supports this initiative and has been partnering with CoE for the Inclusive Education and the Bologna Process Programme, thus initiating the education mediation in Kosovo;

The Municipality of XXXX and Balkan Sunflowers Kosova NGO, based on the above, enter a Memorandum of Understanding with the following terms and conditions.

1. Parties. This Memorandum of Understanding (hereafter referred to as "MoU") is entered into by and between the commune of XXXX Municipality and the Balkan Sunflowers Kosova NGO (hereafter referred to as "BSFK"), with a registered address at "Pallati i Kultures, Rinise dhe Sporteve 114, Rr. Luan Haradinaj, Prishtinë/Priştina, Kosovo." The municipality shall be represented by the Municipal Education Department (hereafter referred to as "DKA").

2. Purposes of cooperation.

- Retain recent successful achievements and progress towards reducing further dropout

rates, improving school attendance and increasing enrolment of children at risk, in particular, of the children in XXXX municipality who come from Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities;

- Enable education Mediators to cooperate actively with MED officials, schools and teachers;
- Ensure conditions for cooperation between Education Mediators and education institutions;
- Provide assistance for schools and teachers in meeting education goals with families and communities.
- Offer support for strengthening TPRDNR at the commune and school level.
- Contribute for the implementation of the Kosovo's Strategy on the Integration of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian Communities in Kosovo (2009-2015).

3. Terms of agreement. This MoU shall enter into force on the date of signature by the parties to this Memorandum. It shall remain effective as of [date]. Parties may terminate this memorandum of understanding upon submitting a written "termination notice" containing the relevant reasons one (1) month prior to the planned termination date.

4. BSFK responsibilities. Balkan Sunflowers Kosova intends to:

- Recruit³⁵ and pay the salary of an education mediator
- Ensure funds to cover the mediator's travel expenses and communication;
- Meet with MED four times a year;
- Ensure funds to mentor, train and supervise the Mediator;
- Notify MED of the time and venue of Mediator trainings.

5. Requirements and Responsibilities of the Mediator.

The mediator shall work five days a week, eight (8) working hours a day, with one hour of break for lunch daily, therefore 35 working hours in total. The work of the mediator shall consist of the following:

- Maintain regular and frequent contacts with teachers and directors of schools to learn of any case that needs action;
- Visit families of all children at risk;

³⁵BSFK actually recruits the Education Mediator; this is therefore not a new position.

- Work towards the goal of ensuring the return to school of the children who do not attend or have dropped out of school;
- Work with parents and children to improve poor attendance;
- Address existing issues between children, families and schools;
- Assist parents who enrol their children in first grade;
- Assist youth from the communities to find support to attend higher levels of education;
- Provide support for the organization of activities that enable better integration of the minorities and children at risk in the school community;
- Support PRTAN in their functions;
- Work together with school teachers for the organisation of extra-curricular activities that increase children's inclusion;
- Submit weekly reports to Balkan Sunflowers Kosova and MED in XXXX municipality, and hold regular meetings with the municipality official;
- Participate in the meetings that affect the education of students working with him/her;
- Attend training sessions organised by other partners, in coordination with BSFK;
- Coordinate activities with other stakeholders, including active NGOs in education matters, municipal departments of Labour and Social Welfare, Communities and Return, Health, etc.

6. Responsibilities of Commune XXXX /MED. The municipality of XXXX shall:

- Authorise and support cooperation among the municipality's officials, school officials and teachers with the mediators to the benefit and wellbeing of children;
- Receive a weekly report from the mediator and act upon any issues raised therein, where appropriate;
- Examine the possibility of a working space for the mediator in the municipal offices (facilities of Municipal Education Department or of the Office for Communities and Return) or at the school the mediator cooperates with, allowing them to use the resources available for the staff employed therein;
- Distribute relevant data on the success of the cooperation with the Education Mediator;
- Include mediators in the commune and school PRTAN;
- Hold regular meetings with BSFK, at least four times a year.

7.Schools. MEDs shall make sure that the schools (teachers and directors) cooperate with Mediators in the following ways:

- Inform education Mediators as soon as a child has interrupted attendance, has poor performance, shows major need for support (shoes, clothing, food) in order to be able to participate, or appears to have psychological or emotional issues;
- Obtain information on the school performance of an individual child, where there are indications of a situation of poor performance;
- Obtain information on the school performance that indicates progress or lack thereof in a group with poor results;
- Work together with PRTANs;
- Conduct visits at home, in the neighbourhood, different centres of the municipality together with the Mediators, where required;
- Involvement of identified teachers in meetings with Mediators, where required.

8.General provisions. These are the legal and technical provisions to this agreement.

a.Modifications. Every party herewith shall have the right to seek modifications of this memorandum of understanding. Every change, modification or revision to this MoU shall be mutual and in writing and shall become effective only upon agreement and signature by all the parties hereto.

b. Applicable regulations. Drafting, interpretation and entrance into force of this MoU shall be in conformity with the Strategy on the Integration of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities in Kosovo – Education Component 2007-2017.

c. Entirety of the Agreement. This Memorandum of Understanding, consisting of three (3) pages, represents a complete agreement by and between the parties hereto and supersedes all previous negotiations, representation and agreements entered into orally or in writing.

d. Legal clause. If any part of this memorandum of understanding is determined as legally improper or inapplicable, the rest of the MoU shall remain into force and fully effective; each party may revise the terms and conditions.

e. Sovereign immunity. In signing this Memorandum, the Municipality of XXXX and BSFK and their respective governing bodies shall not waive their sovereign immunity, with each of them retaining the overall immunity and the protection provided by law for every action resulting from this MoU.

f. Rights of third parties. Parties hereto have no purpose of creating another person or entity with the status of the third benefiting party and this MoU shall not be aimed at creating such a status. The rights, duties and responsibilities according to this MoU shall apply and bring benefits solely to the parties in this Memorandum of Understanding. The provisions of this memorandum of understanding are intended to assist parties in establishing and fulfilling obligations that derive from this MoU. Parties to this MoU shall be bound and explicitly agree that only the signatory parties hereto shall have the right to ask for the entry of this Memorandum into force, to ask for improvement from parties into fulfilling their obligations, or to acknowledge failure of the both parties to meet any conditions arising from this MoU, or commit any actions that go against this Memorandum of Understanding.

Signature. Attesting to this, parties to this MoU through their legal representatives have signed this memorandum of understanding on the dates cited below and confirm hereby they have read, understood and accepted the conditions set forth in this MoU.

This Memorandum of Understanding enters into force on the date of last signature on this page.

XXXX XXXX
XXXX Municipality
Education Department

Date

XXXXX,
Balkan Sunflowers Kosova
Director

Date



INSTITUTI
PEDAGOGJIK
I KOSOVES



Balkan Sunflowers
Volunteers for Social Reconstruction

Supporting Access to Education and Intercultural Understanding

Funded
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