

PRISHTINA, MARCH 2020

# STATE QUALITY COUNCIL MONITORING REPORT





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“Our Father, who art in heaven, give us the power to keep our mouths shut when we have nothing to say. And forgive us the patience to think before we write! Inspire us with a sharp sense of justice to speak not only without bias, but to also act thus! Save us from the traps of grammar, distortions of language and errors of typing. Amen!”

[Faik Konica]

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abbreviations and definitions.....	7
Introduction .....	8
What is the Kosovo Accreditation Agency and the State Quality Council? ..	9
Legislation .....	10
Accreditation/reaccreditation and withdrawal of accreditation process ..	12
Decisions of the State Quality Council (SQC) .....	14
List of higher education institutions with or without accreditation .....	16
Accredited study programs in Higher Education Institutions .....	18
Interventions and irregularities that expelled KAA from ENQA and EQAR ..	20
The challenges of the Kosovo Accreditation Agency and State Quality Council.....	24
KAA projects.....	27

# ABBREVIATIONS AND DEFINITIONS

- **KAA** – The Kosovo Accreditation Agency, is an independent agency whose primary mission is the evaluation and accreditation of higher education institutions and their study programs
- **SQC** – The State Quality Council is a policymaking authority and the decision taking authority in KAA; it is comprised of nine members, three of which are international
- **HEI** – Higher Education Institution
- **Accreditation** – Formal recognition that a higher education institution and its study programs fulfil internationally recognized quality standards, through which the official status of a higher education institution and its study programs is set for a period of time
- **ENQA** – European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education
- **EQAR** – European Quality Assurance Register in Higher Education
- **Institution** – Any institution or other authority authorized to offer educational services in higher education
- **Public institution** – Institution founded by the government of the Republic of Kosovo
- **Program** – Study program that leads to a qualification or a diploma, that is given by a higher education institution
- **Appeals Commission** – The authority which treats and reviews the appeals submitted against the SQC decisions, comprised of three permanent and two reserve members.

# INTRODUCTION

In the past years, the Kosovo Accreditation Agency and the State Quality Council often have appeared in the front pages of the daily newspapers, televisions and local tabloids.

Despite the fact that this agency is independent in decision-making, political interventions from the outside and disorder on the inside, influenced the degradation of the quality of higher education institutions and their study programs.

This report is the result of the monitoring of the work of the State Quality Council (SQC) in the Kosovo Accreditation Agency (KAA) during 2019.

ORCA has participated in the meetings held by the SQC, through which we were informed about the challenges they face during their work, the board and the KAA in general.

In order to ensure total independence and higher efficacy in the decision-making processes for the accreditation of institutions and programs, and for better functioning, the agency needs a separate law, sufficient staff, and creating and maintaining databases.



# WHAT IS THE KOSOVO ACCREDITATION AGENCY AND THE STATE QUALITY COUNCIL?

The KAA was founded in 2004 and started working as a formal accreditation authority in Kosovo in 2009. The KAA is an independent agency and its primary mission is the evaluation and accreditation of higher education institutions and their study programs

The agency is responsible for the process of accreditation of higher education institutions in Kosovo, it establishes the standards and compiles its procedures for quality assurance in accordance with local legislation and international standards for quality in higher education.

The KAA is composed by its board – State Quality Council (SQC), which is a policymaking and decision-making authority, and its permanent administrative structure of the KAA.

The SQC decides on accreditation with the majority of votes of the general number of its members, but no decision for accreditation/reaccreditation can be taken without the presence of at least one international member.

The current SQC local members are Gazmend Luboteni – head of SQC, Vjollca Krasniqi – deputy head of SQC, Arta Jakupi, Dukagjin Zeka, Rozafa Koliqi and Osman Ismaili, while the international members are Herbert Amato, Magdalena Ziolo and Jeffery Butel.

## LEGISLATION

The Kosovo Accreditation Agency currently works based on the *Law on Higher Education in the Republic of Kosovo*<sup>1</sup>, concretely on **Article 7** '*Kosovo Accreditation Agency*', where it is clarified that the KAA is an independent agency responsible for evaluating and promoting quality in higher education in Kosovo, and that it ensures the standards and quality of higher education fulfils the criteria and expectations of the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education.

The KAA is responsible for inspecting higher education institutions and coordinating with the Ministry of Education about the giving, changing or cancelling of licenses, periodical inspections on the quality of the licensed HEIs and taking decisions about their accreditation or reaccreditation, periodic evaluation of the quality of the programs offered by the accredited institutions, and declaring the policies, criteria and standards for accreditation.

*The Administrative Instruction for Accreditation of Higher Education Institutions in the Republic of Kosovo*<sup>2</sup>, determines the competences of the Kosovo Accreditation Agency, the request and procedures for the accreditation of the higher education institutions and their study programs.

The KAA also functions with the Regulation on the work of the State Quality Council (SQC)<sup>3</sup>, ), through which the functioning, composition, decision-making procedure, duties and the manner of work (calling meetings, holding meetings, manner of decision-making) of this council are established.

In **article 7** of this regulation, '*Responsibilities and functions of the SQC*', it says that the SQC established the primary objectives and deadlines for the process of evaluating higher education institutions (HEIs), it approves the standards, procedures and criteria for external evaluation of HEIs compiled by KAA.

This council also compiles and approves the statute of the KAA, the regulations and other needed documents for the functioning of the Agency.

<sup>1</sup> [http://www.akreditimi-ks.org/docs/LawRegulation/Ligji\\_AL\\_RKS\\_04\\_L\\_037.pdf](http://www.akreditimi-ks.org/docs/LawRegulation/Ligji_AL_RKS_04_L_037.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> <https://masht.rks-gov.net/uploads/2018/10/ilovepdf-merged.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> <https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B7etG3bh-SBVVkt4T2J5bmZuOTdYVFN4bFZmMnFwax3Z0tR/view>

In the '*Regulation for the work of the Appeals Commission*'<sup>4</sup>, the rules and procedures for reviewing appeals, how work, organization and competences of the Appeals Commission are regulated are established.

**Article 4** of this regulation, '*The right to appeals*', clarifies that the parties can file appeals if the decision is taken as a result of a violation of dispositions related to the procedure of the decision making of the SQC, in case of the wrongful implementation of the law or rules applicable and if the decision is not based on presented facts and evidence.

In the *Administrative Instruction on amendment and supplement of administrative instruction no.15/2018 "on accreditation of higher education institutions in the Republic of Kosova"*<sup>5</sup>, in **article 2**, the part where it says that HEIs whose institutional or program accreditation was withdrawn or rejected, can reapply within 90 days of the final decision, was added.

This amendment also allows KAA to verify the HEI data at any time.

While in *Administrative Instruction no 13/2019 for change and fulfillment of the administrative instruction 08/2019 for fulfillment and change of administrative instruction 15/2018 for the accreditation of the higher education institutions in Republic of Kosovo*<sup>6</sup>, they added that the academic staff declared within an institution within the legal deadline and those who are not declared in any HEI, have the right to reapply within 90 days after receiving the final rejecting decision.

4 [http://akreditimi-ks.org/docs/LawRegulation/Rregullorja\\_e\\_komisionit\\_te\\_ankesave.pdf](http://akreditimi-ks.org/docs/LawRegulation/Rregullorja_e_komisionit_te_ankesave.pdf)

5 <https://masht.rks-gov.net/uploads/2019/05/ua-masht-08-2019-per-ndryshim-dhe-plotesim-te-ua-nr-15-18.pdf>

6 <https://masht.rks-gov.net/uploads/2019/07/4dd5f6a7-x.pdf>

## ACCREDITATION/ REACCREDITATION AND WITHDRAWAL OF ACCREDITATION PROCESS

Accreditation can be given to an institution of higher education, a study program, a department, or study programs that are given in that department and recognition of valid international accreditation.

The request for accreditation can be made by the HEI itself, for the institutional and program accreditations, by the Ministry of Education (MEST) and the State Quality Council (SQC) in specific cases.

Each institution which wants to offer higher education in Kosovo goes through initial accreditation, while accredited HEIs go through reaccreditation periodically.

The Higher Education Institution (HEI) which applies for accreditation/reaccreditation, must submit the request for accreditation with the list of academic staff, for which the SQC must approve each list of academic staff for each study program.

If the preliminary evaluation by SQC is positive, it implies that the application fulfils the formal criteria according to the legislation in power authorizing the KAA director to start the procedures for evaluating and accrediting.

While, if the preliminary evaluation is negative and the SQC concludes that the application is lacking and does not fulfil the formal criteria, then the SQC decides to reject the application.

After the approval of the academic staff list and the application, the KAA receives a self-evaluating report from the institution, which is sent to the team of international external evaluators.

This team writes an external quality evaluation report for the institution and its study programs, based on the standards and the accreditation guideline, where it offers the final recommendation for reaccreditation or no accreditation.

After this report, the SQC decides for accreditation/reaccreditation or rejection.

The KAA is allowed to treat the applications within a year of accepting the request for accreditation.

These applications must be submitted to the Agency no later than October 31.

The initial institutional accreditation is three years and reaccreditation is no longer than five years, except for cases when the team of external evaluators recommends a different duration, which is approved by the SQC. Meanwhile, the duration of the reaccreditation of a study program, is three to five years, except for cases where the recommendation says differently.

The KAA can withdraw its decision for accreditation at any time, if the criteria at the time the accreditation was given are violated, if the applicant submitted false information or documents that may have influenced the decision to be accredited, and if the monitoring report by the international evaluators concludes that the recommendations of the external evaluators were not implemented and the factual situation in the situation has negatively impacted quality.

The appeals submitted by the HEIs against the SQC decisions are treated by the Appeals Commission, which reviews the appeal and issues a decision within 30 days of receiving the appeal.

# DECISIONS OF THE STATE QUALITY COUNCIL (SQC)

During 2019, SQC has held a total of 12 meetings, where they decided for accreditation or rejecting accreditation for the programs and institutions of higher education (HEI), both public and private.

The SQC has given an institutional accreditation to 10 Higher Education Institutions (HEI), 9 private and one public. While they didn't give institutional accreditation to 3 public HEIs and 4 private HEIs.

In public HEIs, the SQC has accredited 25 Bachelor programs, 20 Master, and has given 4 decisions to continue the accreditation of doctorate programs, while it issued decisions to not accredit 8 Master programs.

In private HEIs, the SQC accredited 31 Bachelor programs, 20 Master, and 2 integrated programs (Dental Doctor), while it didn't accredit 6 Bachelor programs and one master program.

SQC DECISIONS FOR PROGRAMS

Public institutions			Private institutions		
	Accreditation	No accreditation		Accreditation	No accreditation
Bachelor programs	25	0	Bachelor programs	31	6
Master programs	20	8	Master programs	20	1
PhD programs	4	0	Integrated programs	2	0
Total decisions	49	8	Total	53	7

The appeals commission has treated 25 appeals total, where **5** were approved, **4** from **private HEIs** and 1 from public HEIs, 9 appeals were rejected, **6** from private **HEIs** and **3** from public HEIs.

10 appeals were postponed, 9 from private and **one** from **public HEIs**, and one appeal was not treated because the HEI withdrew the appeal.

The number of study programs that had accreditation in 2019 in public **HEIs** is **173**, while in **private HEIs** it's **120**.



If we compare the number of accreditations of programs before the current board was appointed, it results that upon receiving this mandate, the current board found **220 public HEIs'** programs with accreditation and **122 private HEIs** programs.

Currently, **six public HEIs** and **15 private HEIs** have institutional accreditation. Upon receiving this mandate, the current board found **9 public HEIs** and **21 private HEIs** with institutional accreditation.

**3 public** and **8 private HEIs** do not have institutional accreditation.

# LIST OF HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS WITH OR WITHOUT ACCREDITATION

## PUBLIC HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

 <b>With accreditation:</b>	 <b>Without accreditation:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ University of Prishtina "Hasan Prishtina"</li> <li>✓ University of Applied Sciences in Ferizaj</li> <li>✓ University of Gjakova "Fehmi Agani"</li> <li>✓ University of Gjilan "Kadri Zeka"</li> <li>✓ Kosovo Academy for Public Security</li> <li>✓ Faculty of Islamic Studies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✗ University of Mitrovica "Isa Boletini"</li> <li>✗ University of Peja "Haxhi Zeka"</li> <li>✗ University of Prizren "Ukshin Hoti"</li> </ul>



## PRIVATE HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

**With accreditation:****Without accreditation:**

✓ AAB college

✗ Biznesi college

✓ AUK

✗ Fama college

✓ Dardania college

✗ Globus college

✓ Dukagjini college

✗ Iliria college

✓ ESLG college

✗ ISPE college

✓ Evolucion Academy

✗ Juridica college

✓ Arberia college

✗ Tempulli college

✓ International Business College Mitrovica (IBCM)

✗ Kosovo Art Academy

✓ Heimerer college

✓ "Pjetër Budi" college

✓ Rezonanca college

✓ Riinvest college

✓ UBT college

✓ Universi college

✓ Universum college

# ACCREDITED STUDY PROGRAMS IN HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

## **Study programs accredited in public HEIs according to study levels<sup>7</sup> are as follows:**

The SQC has accredited 81 programs in Bachelor level, 31 in Bachelor of Arts, 41 in Bachelor of sciences, 2 Bachelor of arts (professional), 2 are Bachelor of Law, 2 are Bachelor of Music, and one is Doctor of Veterinary Medicine, 1 is Doctor of Dental Medicine, and 1 is Doctor of Medicine.

While in the master level, the SQC has accredited a total of 72 study programs: 29 Master of Arts, 32 Master of Sciences, 1 Master of Arts (professional), 1 Master professional, 6 Master of Law, 2 Master of Music, 1 Master of Public Health.

In the doctorate level, SQC has accredited 14 programs, while 5 science doctorate programs were accredited.

## **Study programs accredited in private HEIs according to study level<sup>8</sup> are as follows:**

The SQC has accredited 76 programs in Bachelor level, 39 in Bachelor of Arts, 28 in Bachelor of sciences, 1 Bachelor of arts (professional), 3 Bachelor professional, 5 are Bachelor of Law, 1 Doctor of Dental Medicine, and 1 Doctor of Medicine.

While in the master level, the SQC has accredited a total of 41 study programs: 18 Master of Arts, 15 Master of Sciences, 1 Master of Arts (professional), 6 Master of Law, 1 Master of Public Health and 1 of fifth level.

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<sup>7</sup> <http://akreditimi-ks.org/docs/Downloads/Accreditation/kshc20092019/kshc20092019.pdf>

<sup>8</sup> <http://akreditimi-ks.org/docs/Downloads/Accreditation/kshc20092019/kshc20092019.pdf>

## NUMBER OF STUDY PROGRAMS ACCREDITED IN HEIS

Type of diploma	Public	Private	Total
Bachelor of arts	31	39	70
Bachelor of sciences	41	28	69
Bachelor of arts (professional)	2	1	3
Bachelor professional	-	3	3
Bachelor of law	2	5	7
Bachelor of music	2	-	2
Doctor of medicine (integrated)	1	-	1
Doctor of dental medicine (integrated)	1	1	2
Doctor of dental medicine	-	1	1
Doctor of veterinary medicine (integrated)	1	-	1
Master of arts	29	18	47
Master of sciences	32	15	47
Master of arts (professional)	1	1	2
Master professional	1	-	1
Master of law	6	6	12
Master of music	2	-	2
Master of public health	1	1	2
Fifth level	-	1	1
Doctorate (PhD)	14	-	14
Doctor of science	5	-	5
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>172</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>292</b>

# INTERVENTIONS AND IRREGULARITIES THAT EXPELLED KAA FROM ENQA AND EQAR

## Expulsion from ENQA and EQAR

The Kosovo Accreditation Agency became part of the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA) in 2014, and was accepted in the European Quality Assurance Register in Higher Education (EQAR) in 2015.

The request of the former prime minister Ramush Haradinaj to the former Minister of Education, Shyqiri Bytyqi, to dismiss the board and the director of the Kosovo Accreditation Agency<sup>9</sup>, resulted with the expulsion of this agency from EQAR in 2017.

EQAR in its decision considered that the KAA was no longer independent, and thus it doesn't fulfil the European standards of an accreditation agency.

For the same reason, ENQA in 2018 decided to reduce the KAA's position as full member to member under review.

The new members of the board of the SQC were chosen through a transparent process that went through voting in the Republic of Kosovo's parliament<sup>10</sup>.

In September 2019, this agency received the final decision of ENQA<sup>11</sup>, where it is said that the KAA's membership is no longer continued, with the reasoning that they no longer fulfil the European standards and rules, and that there are serious issues in its leadership.

9 <http://www.akreditimi-ks.org/neë/index.php/sq/homepage-2/98-kaa-articles-2/lajmet/377-sqarim-per-opinion-in-publik>

10 <http://www.akreditimi-ks.org/new/index.php/sq/homepage-2/98-kaa-articles-2/lajmet/379-kshc55>

11 <https://enqa.eu/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/KAA-external-review-report.pdf>

ENQA criticized the agency for not hiring the necessary officials to conduct the services offered by KAA according to the laws in power, the methodology of their work, inclusion of students, and the independence of their work.

### **You can find more of the critiques and recommendations below<sup>12</sup>:**

- Develop the Strategic Plan and include students in activities and the decision making process in the KAA
- Guarantee formal and operational independence
- Assure adequate human and financial resources
- Monitor the implementation of standards
- Improve the quality of reports with deeper analysis

### **The problem with quote surpassing in registering students**

In January 2020, a media published an article where it said that the Education Inspectorate in MEST had filed a criminal complaint against UBT college in the Basic prosecution in Prishtina, and that investigations had been opened for the suspicions that they had surpassed their maximum number of registered students<sup>13</sup>.

Even though the quotas or student number is established by the KAA, this agency has not taken any measure against this college or other HEIs suspected of similar violations.

<sup>12</sup> <https://enqa.eu/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/KAA-external-review-report.pdf>

<sup>13</sup> <https://frontonline.net/prokuroria-nis-hetimet-ndaj-kolegjit-ubt-regjistroi-1236-studente-me-shume/>

## Other interventions in KAA's independence

After the withdrawal of the institutional accreditation in three public universities in July 2019 and six private colleges<sup>14</sup>, in July 2019 and six private colleges<sup>15</sup> and tens of study programs, the former Prime Minister Haradinaj again intervened in the agency, by calling the members of the SQC mob members<sup>16</sup>

The SQC decisions were defended by the embassies of the United States, EU and United Kingdom, but apart from these political interventions, the KAA was also faced with the interventions of international diplomats who work in Kosovo.

A letter by the German ambassador, Christian Heldt, was published in the media<sup>17</sup>, which he sent to the head of SQC, Gazmend Luboteni, where he recommends that a meeting of the SQC is called so that they can decide on Heimerer College's accreditation<sup>18</sup>.

Three local members of the SQC, Dukagjin Zeka, Arta Jakupi and Rozafa Koliqi, left the meeting held on 16-17 January 2020, under suspicions that the accreditation process of some study programs was manipulated<sup>19</sup>.

The head of SQC, Gazmend Luboteni and the former acting director of the KAA, Avni Gashi, denied that the accreditation process of some programs of three private colleges was manipulated<sup>20</sup>, but the three members of the SQC who raised these suspicions, say that the evaluation reports for the programs of the Rezonanca College, Heimerer College, and ISPE College, were conducted in record time.

According to the AI for accrediting Higher Education Institutions, the Agency has one year to deal with the request for accreditation after receiving it.

14 <https://kallxo.com/shkurt/universitetet-e-pejes-prizrenit-dhe-mitrovices-nuk-mund-te-regjistrojne-studente-te-rinj/>

15 <https://kallxo.com/shkurt/pervec-tri-universiteteve-publike-kshc-ua-terheq-akreditimet-edhe-4-kolegjeve-private/>

16 <https://kallxo.com/arsim/haradinaj-serish-i-reagon-kshc-se-nuk-mund-ti-leni-maturantet-ne-rruge/>

17 <https://www.rtklive.com/sq/news-single.php?ID=410886>

18 <https://www.gazetaexpress.com/gjinovci-pretendon-se-ambasadori-gjerman-ka-nderhyre-ne-agjencine-e-akreditimit-per-kolegjin-heimererx/>

19 <https://www.koha.net/arberi/204577/dyshime-per-dallavere-ne-akreditimin-e-programeve-te-disa-kolegjeve-private/>

20 <https://www.koha.net/arberi/204777/udheheqesit-e-akreditimit-mohojne-se-procesi-i-akreditimit-te-kolegjeve-eshte-i-manipuluar/>

In another media, another investigation was published, where a confession by a student in Rezonanca College was shown, who claimed that she was deceived by this college that they had accredited the program where she was registered<sup>21</sup>.

The aforementioned college said that they believe that the SQC would accredit them for 2019/2020 since they are allowed to reapply according to the new AI, and that if they are not accredited for this year, they will sue this institution<sup>22</sup>.

In January 2020, the former Prime Minister Ramush Haradinaj, once again tried to intervene in the Kosovo Accreditation Agency<sup>23</sup>, through a letter which he sent to the head of the SQC, and the former acting director of the KAA, where he accused the KAA for prolonged procedures and administrative obstacles in the accreditation process of some private colleges.

After this letter, the head of the European Quality Assurance Register in Higher Education (EQAR), Colin Tück, called on the board of the KAA to be careful how they treat this letter<sup>24</sup>, adding that the decisions of the KAA can only be reviewed by a court.

21 <https://kallxo.com/lajm/kolegji-rezonanca-tregon-pse-i-nisi-studimet-ne-programet-qe-nuk-ishin-akredituar/>

22 <https://kallxo.com/lajm/kolegji-rezonanca-tregon-pse-i-nisi-studimet-ne-programet-qe-nuk-ishin-akredituar/>

23 <https://kallxo.com/lajm/dokument-haradinaj-i-perzihet-serish-puneve-te-agjencise-se-akreditimit/>

24 <https://www.koha.net/arberi/209066/eqar-i-i-shqetesuar-me-veprimet-e-qeverise-se-kaluar-kerkon-kujdes/>

# THE CHALLENGES OF THE KOSOVO ACCREDITATION AGENCY AND STATE QUALITY COUNCIL

## **Lack of database for the labor market needs**

So far a document/database has not been prepared by the Ministry of Education<sup>25</sup>, the Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare<sup>26</sup>, the Kosovo Accreditation Agency<sup>27</sup>, the Kosovo Agency for Statistics<sup>28</sup> and the Employment Agency<sup>29</sup>, which analyzes the labor market needs.

This database, would be published in the KAA website, through which, people interested in university studies, would be informed and oriented for the programs which are needed by the labor market. It would also serve the SQC during the decision making process for accrediting study programs.

## **Lack of exchanging of information for academic staff in the regional level**

Such a database is needed, which would serve public and private HEIs, within and outside the country, for the academic staff in accredited institutions, so that professors cannot be employed by more than one HEI in different countries.

It would also serve the SQC during the process of reviewing academic staff of HEI which apply for accreditation or reaccreditation.

<sup>25</sup> <https://masht.rks-gov.net/>

<sup>26</sup> <https://mpms.rks-gov.net/>

<sup>27</sup> <http://www.akreditimi-ks.org/new/index.php/sq/>

<sup>28</sup> <https://ask.rks-gov.net/>

<sup>29</sup> <https://apr.k.rks-gov.net/>



## Problems with the E-accreditation platform

This platform<sup>30</sup> which was built and is managed by the Ministry of Education, according to the KAA officials, is considered of poor quality because it often does not work, and it hasn't been maintained by more than two years, because there's no IT official in the Agency.

## Lack of staff in KAA

Currently the KAA functions through five officials: the acting director of the KAA, the official for administration and personnel, the official for budgeting and finances, the official for monitoring and evaluation, and the official for evaluation and accreditation.

In August 2019, the KAA opened a call for five positions<sup>31</sup>; Senior Legal Official, Senior Monitoring and Evaluation Official, Senior Evaluation and Accreditation Official, Senior Personnel Official, and Senior Information Technology Official, but this call was cancelled in February 2020<sup>32</sup>.

The administrative difficulties in recruiting, the criteria, the workload compared to their pay, the quality of case review, and many other reasons, have caused the KAA not to be able to hire necessary staff, and as a result they cannot conduct the monitoring process of HEIs.

*According to the Law on budget for 2019<sup>33</sup>*, the Kosovo Accreditation Agency has budget for 13 positions, but according to the KAA, that's not enough.

As a result of lack of staff, the KAA currently looks at the minimal criteria for accrediting study programs and institutional accreditation. So they only look at the professor-student ratio, number of equipment, and the buildings of the HEIs.

<sup>30</sup> <https://e-akreditimi.rks-gov.net/>

<sup>31</sup> <http://www.akreditimi-ks.org/docs/Downloads/Konkurs/Shpalljetekonkursit-shq-sr.pdf>

<sup>32</sup> [https://drive.google.com/file/d/1I9vqUvhZh9y\\_n91r-BEY1GfAa01g9HBv/view](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1I9vqUvhZh9y_n91r-BEY1GfAa01g9HBv/view)

<sup>33</sup> <https://mf.rks-gov.net/desk/inc/media/4CEFB44C-4397-4901-AB93-2AA37F43A9F7.pdf?>

## **The need to improve the legal infrastructure**

A separate law for the Kosovo Accreditation Agency is proposed, through which total institutional independency would be created, so that the function of the Agency is in accordance with the criteria of the European Quality Assurance Register in Higher Education (EQAR) and it would enable the KAA to create its own policies.

As a result of the lack of a separate law, MEST has compiled Administrative Instructions that influence the work of the KAA, for example the two change-supplements of the AI for accreditation of the institutions of higher education, which enable HEIs to reapply after 90 days of receiving a rejection.

The competences of the Appeals Commission are also established through an Administrative Instruction, in which the changes and supplements should be made to re-functionalize this commission.

More members should be added, from 3 permanent and 2 reserve members, to a commission with 5 members, a criteria set by European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA), which must be fulfilled.

## **Appeals Commission**

The State Quality Council has founded the Appeals Commission (AC) in January of 2019.

They suspended their work in April of that year, after they found that the latest version of the regulation with which the AC was working, was never voted by the SQC, while it was signed only in the Albanian version by the head of the SQC, Gazmend Luboteni, and after the board was informed that the AC had started to issue decisions for accrediting some study programs.

In interpreting the Administrative Instruction by the Ministry of Education, in article 22, which talks about the right to appeal, it says that the Appeals Commission cannot give or withdraw accreditation for a HEI.

So in May 2019, the SQC approved the regulation for the work of the Appeals Commission.

In August of 2019, the members of the Appeals Commission resigned, and the appeals received after that period have been left unanswered and were sent to court.

# PROJECTS IN DEVELOPMENT OF KAA

**The Kosovo Accreditation Agency is currently working on six projects:**

- Approving the guideline for monitoring
- The strategic plan of the agency
- The platform for training experts
- Reviewing and amending standards for the study levels Bachelor and Master
- Reviewing the standards for PhDs
- The action plan for fulfilling the standards of ENQA

DISCLAIMER:

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