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COVID-19 AND LABOUR MARKET IN KOSOVO⁴

The purpose of this paper is to understand the impact of the pandemic on the labour market in Kosovo, as well as the response of institutions to address the challenges produced by the pandemic. The research model was based on the quantitative approach and comparative study. Furthermore, this study focused on the official data about the impact of Covid-19 on the labour market in Kosovo and Government reactions, as well as comparing it with the best practices of European countries. The pandemic has had a significant impact on the labour market in Kosovo; Kosovo institutions have adopted an emergency package as well as the economic recovery package as a response to the challenges produced by the pandemic. The pandemic has had a significant impact on the labour market in Kosovo. The Government of Kosovo has drafted and approved two packages in order to support employment. However, the number of people who have benefited from these measures is small compared to the needs.

Keywords: Kosovo; Covid-19; labour market; measures; institutions

JEL: J45; JEL: E24; JEL: J01

1. Introduction

Measures taken by Kosovo institutions have only partially addressed the challenges of the pandemic in the labour market. The main importance of studying this topic lies in the fact that the pandemic has a significant impact on the labour market in Kosovo; Kosovo institutions have adopted the emergency package, as well as the economic recovery package in response to the challenges posed by the pandemic; as well as the results of empirical research we understand that employers, workers and the unemployed consider that institutions have not done enough to support them in the time of the pandemic.

The pandemic has had a significant impact on the labour market in Kosovo. The data of the Employment Agency from the Labour Market Information System show a significant

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increase in the number of jobseekers registered in the Employment Offices (Employment Agency [EA], 2020). Thus, the number of jobseekers registered in the Employment Offices by the end of June 2020 is 75,939, of which 35,246 are female, while 40,693 are male. While, mediations in regular employment due to the pandemic have been very low, in which case, in the period January – June mediated in regular employment through the Employment Offices are 897 people, of which 366 women, while 531 men (2020). The sector most affected by the pandemic in terms of employment is the wholesale and retail trade sector in this case the number of employees in this sector from 80 thousand at the beginning of the pandemic has dropped to 43 thousand. However, the extent of the impact of the pandemic on the labour market will be seen after the pandemic ends because many employers are now keeping workers on hold.

According to the quarterly assessment of the Central Bank of Kosovo, Kosovo's economy during 2020 is facing the economic and social crisis caused by the Covid-19 pandemic (Central Bank of Kosovo [CBK], 2020, p. 6). Restrictive measures on the movement of citizens and closure of certain economic activities have caused economic shock, broadcast by external channels as well as domestic demand. In particular, the structure of Kosovo's economy, which is highly dependent on foreign income (exports of services and remittances, which together account for close to one-third of GDP), make it very sensitive to this global shock.

Especially for Kosovo World Bank Group finds that:

- Kosovo was projected to grow by about 4 percent by 2020; however, due to the Covid-19 explosion, the economy is expected to shrink by 4.5 percent while services exports, public and private investment fall;
- If the outbreak is prolonged and control measures are maintained during the third quarter of 2020, the recession may be longer and the revenue shortage greater, limiting further policy response;
- The government has announced an incentive package of 2.8 percent of GDP to support affected citizens, businesses and professions. Proper targeting of this package remains essential in mitigating the economic, poverty and social impact of the crisis (World Bank Group [WBG], 2020, p. 19-24).

The main objectives of this paper are:

- Understanding and presenting the experiences by others countries in related with measures undertaken by the governments to addressing the effects of pandemic in labour market;
- Analyzes the challenges of the impact of pandemic in labour market in Kosovo;
- Researches the measures undertaken by the Government of Kosovo to addressing the effects of pandemic in labour market;
- Researches the number of jobseekers and unemployed people which have benefit from these measures.

The hypothesis of the paper is that:

- Number on jobseekers and unemployed people which have benefited by the two packages of Government to addressing the challenges of pandemic in labour market, is very low.

The subject of the paper is limited because the pandemic is going on and Government has undertaken other measures to help the people who have lost the job because the pandemic, as well as to help the jobseekers who have been unemployed even before the pandemic. Other measures adopted by the Government in 2021 and measures which are planning to approved until end of the year (2021) are not included in this paper.

2. Literature Review

One of the main measures taken by almost all the world's governments to avoid spreading the virus and protect workers is to promote works from home. Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development and International Labour Organization find that "In order to promote a rapid shift towards work from home, governments took many measures to simplify its use, including financial and non-financial support for companies" (Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development [OECD] and International Labour Organization [ILO], 2020, p. 21). Another measure taken by Governments was to allow work within companies by restricting business activities to essential services by enforcing anti-virus standards (p. 22). Also, "Providing sickness benefits and paid leave for all workers is another measure taken by governments" (p. 23). However paid leave is an effective tool only in cases of limitation periods. Increasing the demand of many workers to provide family care, extending the duration of paid leave (parental leave) or providing financial means to pay for care services, as well as special measures to address the care needs of employee's essential service, many of whom are women (p. 24). Other measures taken by Governments were a combination of different measures, as well: job support subsidies (p. 25), liquidity support for businesses (p. 27), income support for workers who have lost their jobs through the self-employment scheme (p. 29), employment services and training for jobseekers and workers (p. 32), promoting social dialogue (p. 33).

The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development has found that the pandemic has affected almost all countries of the world and more than 50 million people worldwide. According to the OECD (2020) "In socio-economic terms governments are providing massive fiscal support to protect businesses, families and the population in need. Governments have spent more than \$ 12 trillion globally since March 2020" (p. 2). According to this study, "Many countries, including European Union countries, have reallocated public funds to crisis priorities by supporting health care, small and medium-sized enterprises, the population in need and crisis-stricken regions" (p. 2).

The institutions with the greatest responsibility for managing the consequences of the pandemic in the labour market are the public employment services. The International labour Organization (2020) has listed the main points of response of the Public Employment Services to the pandemic. The main points of this reaction are: "Active labour market policies and programs have been very important in helping workers and employers during the

pandemic; use of technology to adapt and facilitate the capacity of Public Services in providing employment services even during a pandemic; active labour market support is much more important when offered as an integrated package with other economic measures in business support, especially in countries with a high degree of informality in the labour market” (p. 1-2).

Kniffin et al. (2020) say that “The impacts of Covid-19 on workers and jobs across the globe have been dramatic” (p. 1). Blocking businesses and industries in order to stop the spread of the virus has produced unique and fundamental challenges for employers and workers. Thus, “At the level of individual workers affected by the closure overnight turned into: (a) workers from home; (b) essential workers as: medical staff and shop workers; (c) unemployed who are looking for ‘equivalent’ work or seeking unemployment benefit” (p. 4). Also Kaushik. M. and Guleria. N. (2020) says that closure during the pandemic “Has affected different sectors to varying degrees” (p. 1). For instance, “Airlines, hotels, manufacturing industry are completely banned and it will take a long time to get out of this situation, if it can ever come out” (p. 1). Consequently, millions of people in such sectors are likely to lose their jobs forever.

Seen as a whole, the pandemic has caused a massive rise in unemployment in western countries. According to Eichhrost, W., Marx, P., Rinne, U (2020) “Looking at the growth of unemployment during 2020, there has been a massive increase in countries like Spain and Sweden. This increase has been even greater in the US, while other countries saw a fairly moderate reaction to unemployment, e.g. France, Great Britain or Italy” (p. 2). Also, “Some countries have seen a massive decline in working hours in general, and in particular a massive increase in announcements for and short-term employment (although there is a lack of accurate data)” (p. 3). The United States is the most prominent case of a large increase in unemployment.

The United Kingdom has faced major difficulties in the labour market due to the pandemic. Dias, M., J, Robert., V, Fabien., X. Xiaowei (2020) have found that “The public health response to Covid-19 has led to a significant decline in job demand in many sectors of economic activity in the UK” (p. 32). The immediate policy response to the pandemic imposed the closure of entire sectors of the economy, including non-core retail businesses, hospitality and leisure, while air travel was halted mainly due to travel restrictions. “The initial policy response has focused on softening the blow to the finances of families and allowing the majority of workers and firms to resume their original activities once the crisis is mitigated” (p. 32).

France has mobilized various measures to address the challenges posed by the pandemic in the labour market. The French government has approved measures for active workers, the unemployed and those suffering from the pandemic. The wage subsidy is one of the main measures. Tatiana (2020) finds that “Under this type of scheme, the suspension of employment contracts is combined with the maintenance of a part of the remuneration (70% of the gross remuneration, 84% of the net remuneration) paid by the state. Employers must advance the payment of wages, with the state paying its assistance later” (p. 28). The next measure is unemployment support. The government has adopted new rules on unemployment benefits. The purpose of these new rules is to enable those who were in the scheme before the start of the pandemic to continue to benefit, and to strengthen the rules for new

beneficiaries. Another measure is the payment to persons affected by the pandemic. “Persons affected by the Covid-19 virus are entitled to receive replacement income from social security and more specifically from health insurance” (p. 28).

The Federal Government of Germany has adopted a number of different measures to support the labour market. Occupational health and safety measures. Adam, Christian (2020) find that “1. Workplace adjustment. 2. Toilets, food and rest facilities. 3. Ventilation. 4. Infection control measures for construction sites, farms, field service personnel, etc. 5. Infection control measures for collective workplaces. 6. Work from home. 7. Business trips and meetings. 8. Distance. 9. Equipment and tools. 10. Organization of schedules and working hours. 11. Storage and cleaning of work clothes, etc.” (p. 293). The extension of working hours in the health sector, reduction of working hours in other sectors, part-time work (750,000 companies have stated that they worked part-time during 2020), Continuous payment in case of illness of workers (person suffering from covid is released from work while maintaining the right to compensation), child care (if the child is infected or if the children are attending school from home and the parent needs to take care of them), quarantine and prohibition of professional activities (in which caseworkers are paid if there are official decisions to terminate work), etc.

Austria has taken measures to mitigate the negative effects of the pandemic on the labour market. Rene, Thomas (2020) find that “The main components can be summarized as follows: (i) a €15 billion ‘Corona support fund’, targeted at all firms, (ii) a €2 billion ‘difficulty fund’, aimed at the self-employed, independent professionals and small enterprises, (iii) guarantees and postponement of tax liabilities for businesses, and (iv) ‘Covid-19 short-term work scheme with an initial budget of around €12 billion. Measures (i)-(iii) addressed to businesses that have little or no income due to crisis. All measures were announced as methods to keep the business functioning and capable of securing employment” (p. 15).

The pandemic has hit the labour market in Italy very hard. The Italian government has taken a number of measures to mitigate the impact of the pandemic on the labour market. Marco (2020) found that some of the measures taken by the Italian government are: “Parental leave – as a result of the temporary closure of schools, public and private sector employees and self-employed workers caring for children under the age of 12 or with disabilities were entitled to up to 15 days paid leave for both parents; Temporary ban on dismissal – employers banned from taking collective redundancies; work from home; measures to protect health and safety at work; development of social dialogue during the emergency phase” (pp. 309-311).

Wage subsidies and various tax incentives for employers are the main measures taken by the Government of Croatia to address the challenges in the labour market after the pandemic (Ivana, 2020, p. 1). Slovenia has adopted a series of measures to meet the challenges of the pandemic in the labour market, such as: work from home, partial re-securing of workers’ salaries for workers temporarily fired due to closure, deferral of payment of taxes and tax contributions, basic income for self-employed persons, etc. (Barbara, 2020, p. 1). The Government of Montenegro also took measures to manage the difficulties caused by the pandemic in the labour market, but these measures were not consulted with the social partners (ILO, 2020, p. 8).

Canada is one of the countries where there has been a drastic reduction in employment due to the pandemic. According to Lemieux, Th., Milligan, K., Schirle, T., Skuterud, M., (2020) “Covid-19 has caused a decrease of 32% of the total weekly hours worked between February and April 2020 and a decrease of 15% of employment” (p. 2). Almost half of the job losses can be attributed to low-income workers. The biggest losses can be attributed to the industries and professions most affected by closures (accommodation and food services) and workers who are younger, paid every hour and who are not union members.

The Australian labour market has also been severely affected by the pandemic. Borland and Charlton (2020) find that “After a sharp one-month drop in working hours from March to April during closing, this was followed by May-June by the largest increase of one month in working hours after opening” (p. 316). We have argued that what happened in the Australian labour market from March to June is best understood by looking at key executives – first, the impact of the pandemic on household spending through government business constraints and consumers voluntarily withdrawing from activities in which they perceive themselves at risk of contracting the virus; and second, the government response, and especially the job retention program.

India is one of the countries that have faced great difficulties in the labour market due to the pandemic. Walter (2020) said that “As an immediate measure of support during the blockade, the Indian Government had secured a package of US \$ 25 billion, about 0.8% of GDP. Reserve Bank of India has taken steps to release about \$ 18 billion in liquidity to the banking system” (2020). In addition, an economic stimulus package was announced as part of the ‘Self-Support Mission’ project, amounting to INR 20 trillion (about 10% of GDP).

Psychologically, the pandemic has affected the labour market in several dimensions. According to Trougakos, Chawla, McCarthy (2020), “The Covid-19 pandemic has disrupted the lives of workers across the globe, yet it makes little sense how Covid-19 health anxiety (CovH anxiety) – that is, feelings of fear and intimidation about having or contracting Covid-19 – affects in critical work, home and health outcomes” (2020).

The Covid pandemic will radically transform the job market globally. Fana, Perez, Enrique (2020) find that “The Covid crisis is so deep that it will not only radically affect the labour markets in the short and medium term, but can also profoundly change the way of organizing the work” (p. 402). Telework will transform the labour market and replace the classic form of work with the physical presence of workers in the workplace, but this will not be the only transformation. This is because “Early evidence from Italy suggests that industries that employ more robots per worker in production tend to exhibit a lower risk of infection due to Covid-19” (p. 402). Automation can be accelerated after the crisis as it can be used as a strategy to minimize health risks while maintaining production and economic activity.

3. Methodology

The data presented in the paper are taken by institutions and are administrative data. Administrative data is the data by Government and Ministries collect about their operations. It includes data for routine operations regarding the impact of the pandemic on the labour

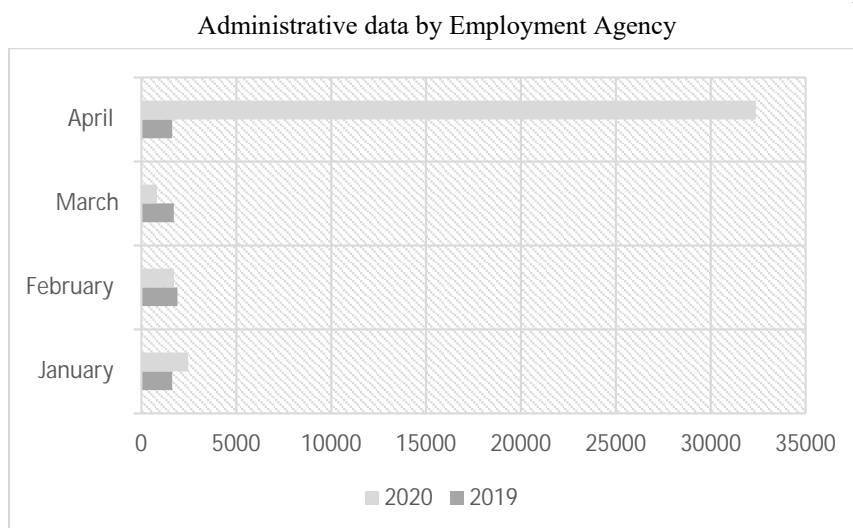
market. This administrative data source is a data holding that contains information collected primarily for administrative purposes, but in this paper we based our research on these data. The data presented here are taken from Government public sources. The authors have systematized and cross-referenced such data for the needs of analysis.

4. Result and discussion

4.1. The effects of the pandemic on the labour market – statistical and administrative data

The administrative data of the Employment Agency and the statistical data of the Kosovo Agency of Statistics show an enormous increase in the number of job seekers in the Employment Offices in the first months of the pandemic in 2020. According to these data, the number of jobseekers registered as unemployed in the Employment Offices in the period January – June 2020 was 37392, in contrast to the same period of 2019 when the number of registered jobseekers was 6882.

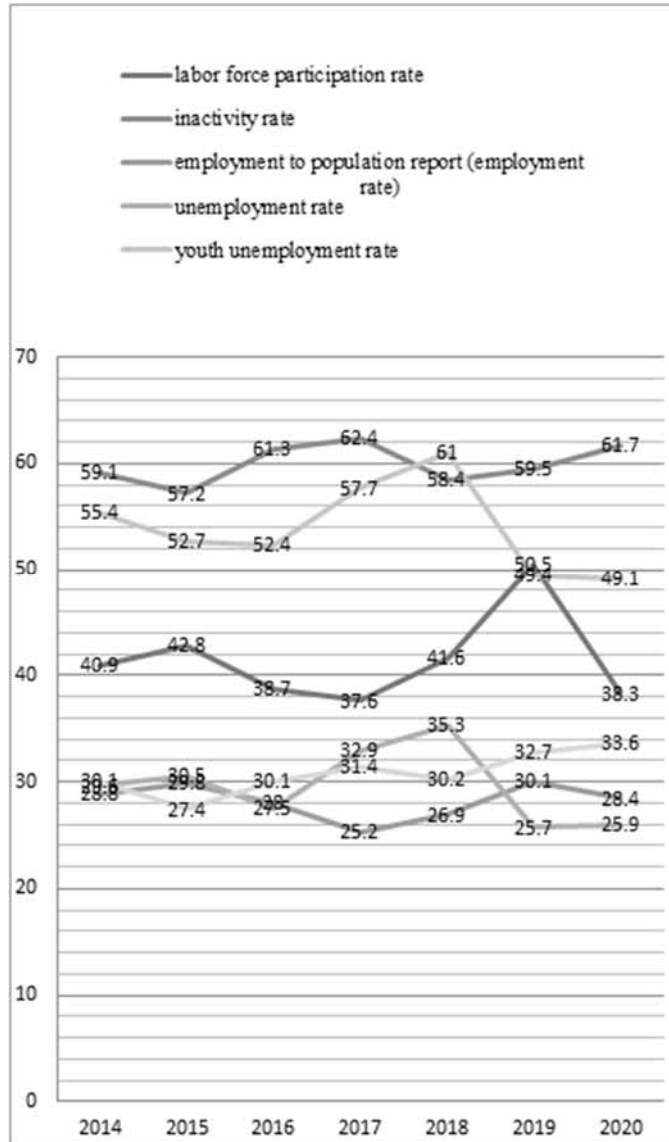
Table 1



Sources: Employment Agency. (2019) Performance report for 2019. Pristine: EA; Employment Agency. (2020) Performance report for 2020. Pristine: EA.

Figure 1

Comparison of key labour market indicators in the last five



Sources: Kosovo Agency of Statistics. (2018). Labour Force Surveys for 2018. Pristine: KAS; Kosovo Agency of Statistics. (2017). Labour Force Surveys for 2017. Pristine: KAS; Kosovo Agency of Statistics. (2016). Labour Force Surveys for 2016. Pristine: KAS; Kosovo Agency of Statistics. (2015). Labour Force Surveys for 2015. Pristine: KAS; Kosovo Agency of Statistics. (2014). Labour Force Surveys for 2014. Pristine: KAS; Kosovo Agency of Statistics. (2018). Statistical Yearbook of the Republic of Kosovo, 2018. Pristine: KAS. Kosovo Agency of Statistics. (2019). Statistical Yearbook of the Republic of Kosovo, 2019. Pristine: KAS. Kosovo Agency of Statistics. (2020). Statistical Yearbook of the Republic of Kosovo, 2020. Pristine: KAS.

The unemployment rate has risen from 25.7% in 2019 to 25.9% in 2020. The increase in the unemployment rate is estimated to have come as a result of the impact of the Covid 19 pandemic on the labour market, in which a considerable number of workers have lost their jobs. The employment rate in 2020 was 28.4%, compared to the year 2019, the employment rate was 30.1%, in which case, it is considered that there was a decrease in employment of 1.7%, which is considered to have come as a result of the pandemic and its impact on the labour market. Large gender differences lie in the labour market. 20.8% of working-age women were active in the labour market in 2020 (21.1% in 2019), compared to 56.0% of men (59.7% in 2019). Unemployment is higher for women than for men (33.2% for women, 23.5% for men in 2020). In 2020, 53% of women were employed in the education, trade and healthcare sectors, while 46.3% of men were employed in the construction, manufacturing and trade sectors. The unemployment rate among young people aged 15-24 has decreased from 49.4% in 2019 to 49.1% in 2020. About 37.4% of young people aged 15-19 were long-term unemployed (12 months). Based on the 2020 labour Force Survey, there are gender differences among young people in terms of unemployment. Among young men, the unemployment is 45.2%, while among women, the unemployment is 57.2%, i.e. with a difference of 12%. According to VET, about 67% of the registered unemployed are considered long-term unemployed, while the percentage of young people in the NEET category has increased from 32.7% in 2019 to 33.6% in 2020 (33.2% among young women and 34.0% among men).

4.2. The reaction of Kosovo institutions to the impact of the pandemic on the labour market

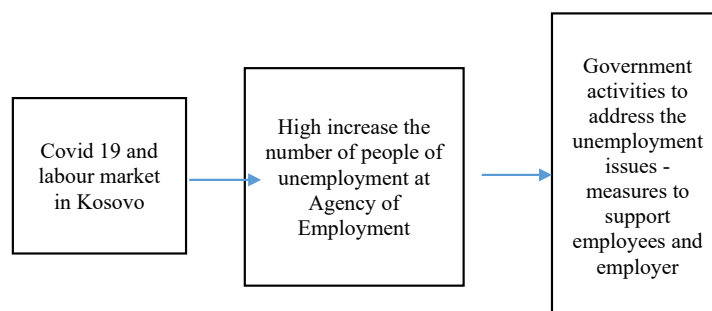
At the end of March 2020 the Government of the Republic of Kosovo approved the Fiscal Emergency Package to address the consequences of the pandemic (Decision of the Government of the Republic of Kosovo, No 01/2019, dated: 30.03.2020). If we look at the measures contained in the package, we see that, out of 13 measures contained in the package in total, 6 of them are directly for the labour market, as they are:

- Double payment of the value of the social scheme for all beneficiaries of social schemes for April and May;
- Additional payment in the amount of thirty (30 €) euros per month for all beneficiaries of social and pension schemes which receive a monthly payment in the amount of less than one hundred (100 €) euros for the months of April, May and June;
- Providing a salary supplement in the amount of three hundred (300 €) for field workers who are directly exposed to the risk of infection in their work: medical staff, police, Correctional Service officials, Emergency Management Agency officials, KSF staff, workers working in Quarantine;
- Additional payment in the amount of one hundred (100 €) euros for workers of grocery stores, bakeries and pharmacies for April and May;
- Additional payment in the amount of one hundred (100 €) euros for workers of grocery stores, bakeries and pharmacies for April and May;

- Payment of monthly assistance in the amount of one hundred and thirty euros (130 €) to citizens, who lose their job due to the public health emergency situation for the months of April, May and June.

Figure 2

The process of drafting and approving new packages



In addition to the Fiscal Emergency Package, the Government of the Republic of Kosovo in 2020 approved the measures for the implementation of the Economic Recovery Package (Decision of the Government of the Republic of Kosovo, No 06/58, dated: 14. 01. 2021). The approved plan for the implementation of the Economic Recovery Program amounts to three hundred and sixty-five million euros (365,000,000.00 €). If we look closely at the measures contained in the economic recovery package, out of a total of 15 measures, only 5 of them are for direct employment support, as they are:

- Increase of employment, in particular of specific groups of workers with a lower probability of employment;
- Increase local agricultural production, increase employment in rural areas, reduce the import of agricultural products, overcome the challenges of lack of sales caused by Covid-19 and increase food security;
- Stimulating aggregate demand, which promotes production and employment with multiplier effects in the economy;
- Financial support for youth employment, support of civil society organizations, other informal groups, stimulation of cultural, artistic, sports activities and their revitalization;
- Financial support for projects and initiatives aimed at improving the position of women in society and the economy.

Table 3

Fiscal Emergency Package to address the consequences of the pandemic

Fiscal Emergency Package to address the consequences of the pandemic		
Number	Measures	Amount, €
1	Double payment of the value of the social scheme for all beneficiaries of social schemes for April and May	7,650,000.00
2	Additional payment in the amount of thirty (30 €) euros per month for all beneficiaries of social and pension schemes who receive a monthly payment in the amount of less than one hundred (100 €) euros, for the months of April, May and June	-----
3	Financial support for companies that are in financial difficulties due to the decline of their activity due to the public health emergency situation	-----
4	Providing interest-free lending to public enterprises that have financial difficulties due to the public health emergency situation, in order to ensure their temporary liquidity, with a return until 31.12.2020	20,000,000.00
5	Providing additional financial support to the Municipalities of the Republic of Kosovo that have been affected in dealing with the pandemic, in case of need due to the eventual extension of the public health emergency situation	10,000,000.00
6	Providing a salary supplement in the amount of three hundred (300 €) for field workers who are directly exposed to the risk of infection in their work: medical staff, police, Correctional Service officials, Emergency Management Agency officials, KSF staff, workers working in Quarantine	15,000,000.00
7	Additional payment in the amount of one hundred (100 €) euros for workers of grocery stores, bakeries and pharmacies for April and May	3,000,000.00
8	Payment of monthly assistance in the amount of one hundred and thirty (130 €) euros to citizens who lose their job due to the public health emergency situation, for the months of April, May and June	4,000,000.00
9	Supporting initiatives and projects aimed at improving the lives of non-majority communities in the Republic of Kosovo, which have been hit hardest by the public health emergency situation, in the amount of up to two million	2,000,000.00
10	Increase the budget for grants and subsidies for the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Rural Development to increase agricultural production	5,000,000.00
	Increase the budget for grants and subsidies to the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports to avoid the situation created by the emergency situation of public health in sports and cultural activities	5,000,000.00
11	Support for exporters in the Republic of Kosovo after the end of the public health emergency situation	10,000,000.00
12	Financial support for companies that register employees with an employment contract of at least one (1) year during the period of public health emergency situation, from one hundred and thirty (130 €) euros for the next two months after registration	6,000,000.00
13	Payment of monthly assistance in the amount of one hundred and thirty (130 €) euros for citizens with severe social conditions, registered as unemployed in the competent institution, who are not beneficiaries of any monthly income from the Kosovo budget, for the month of April, May and June	3,000,000.00

Source: Decision of the Government of the Republic of Kosovo, No. 01/2019, dated: 30.03.2020.

Table 4

Economic Recovery Package

Economic Recovery Package		
Number	Measures	Amount, €
1	Facilitate access to credit for private enterprises, to finance investment projects and the continuation of the operation	100,000,000.00
2	Relief of the tax burden of businesses, to improve their short-term liquidity	15,000,000.00
3	Increase of employment, in particular of specific groups of workers with lower probability for employment	67,300,000.00
4	Increase local agricultural production, to increase employment in rural areas, to reduce the import of agricultural products, to overcome the challenges of lack of sales caused by Covid-19 and to increase food security	26,000,000.00
5	Stimulating aggregate demand, which promotes production and employment with multiplier effects in the economy	15,000,000.00
6	Support the operation and capital investments of public enterprises, in particular, those investments that are of a strategic nature, to afford the reduction of collection revenues and the necessary capital investments to be undertaken	17,000,000.00
7	Financial support for youth employment, support of civil society organizations, other informal groups, stimulation of cultural, artistic, sports activities and their revitalization	5,000,000.00
8	Support for existing and new programs related to regional development through the Ministry of Regional Development, which affect balanced regional development	2,000,000.00
9	Support to non-majority communities in the Republic of Kosovo, for projects and initiatives aimed at improving their lives and their economic revival	2,000,000.00
10	Financial support for projects and initiatives aimed at improving the position of women in society and the economy	2,000,000.00
11	Support of the education sector to enable the successful start and progress of learning during the school year 2020/2021	10,000,000.00
12	Support to Kosovo municipalities to manage the situation created by the Covid-19 pandemic	10,000,000.00
13	Financial support for compatriots covering the cost of the insurance policy premium	3,000,000.00
14	Financing (reimbursement of budget lines) for the implementation of the measures of decision no. 01/19 of the Government of the Republic of Kosovo	71,700,000.00
15	Contingency for emergencies – Contingency is maintained for emergencies for better coping with the pandemic Covid-19	19,000,000.00

Source: Decision of the Government of the Republic of Kosovo, No. 06/58, dated: 14.01.2021.

4.2. Administrative data and discussion

The data on the results consist of administrative data obtained from government agencies regarding the number of beneficiaries of various measures. It should be noted that the execution of the measures has not been completed yet, which means that it is a process, which is still ongoing and consequently, we do not yet have collected data on the number of citizens who have benefited from the measures; some of the institutions have not yet systematized and published the data until the moment of writing this paper. It should also be noted that we have focused only on measures that are directly related to the labour market, while other measures we have not traced.

Regarding the measure for the payment of monthly assistance in the amount of one hundred and thirty euros (130 €) for citizens with severe social conditions, registered as unemployed

in the competent institution, who are not beneficiaries of any monthly income from the Kosovo budget, for April, May and June, in the amount of up to three million (3,000,000.00 €) euros, as can be understood from the data presented in chart 1, the number of families that have benefited from this measure is a total of 87,277 with 261,523 members.

Table 5

Beneficiaries of the fifteenth measure of the emergency package

Beneficiaries of the fifteenth measure of the emergency package		
Month	Number of families	Number of a family members
April	25,376	75,184
May	31,381	94,713
June	30,520	91,626
Total	87,277	261,523

Source: Government of Kosovo.

Table 5 summarizes the number of beneficiaries by measures to support the labour market from the emergency package. Regarding the measure for supporting employers to support the salaries of active workers with 170 euros each in order to maintain the current level of employment, the number of active workers who have benefited from the measure is 148,188. The purpose of the measure is to support employers in order to keep workers at work, as well as to maintain the current level of employment. The measure for the support of inactive workers was aimed at supporting inactive workers with 130 euros per month. The number of citizens who have benefited from this measure is 834 beneficiaries. Measures to support new workers have also been part of the package. The purpose of the measure was the financial support of new workers with 130 euros per month. The number of citizens who have benefited from this measure is 14,988 beneficiaries. The number of beneficiaries from the measure of support of endangered workers with 100 euros per month is 14,925 beneficiaries.

Table 6

Measures to support the labour market, as well as the number of beneficiaries by measure

Measures to support the labour market		
Measures	The number of the beneficiaries	Indicators of the labour market by measures by persons (2020)
Support for active workers	148,188	507,826 (total active persons)
The number of inactive workers who have benefited from the measures	834	720,392 (total inactive persons)
Support for new workers	14,988	n/d
Support for vulnerable workers	14,925	n/d
Total	178,935	

Source: Government of Kosovo and Kosovo Agency of Statistics. (2020). Labour Force Surveys for 2020. Pristine: KAS.

4.3. Comparing the measures undertaken by Government of Kosovo with measures undertaken by other countries for the labour market

In Table 7, we compare the measures undertaken by Government of Kosovo with measures undertaken by other countries regarding the labour market. The aim of this part is to crosscut

and compare the measures undertaken by other countries with measures undertaken by Kosovo institutions regarding to support for employers and employees. The table identifies the main measures to support the employers and measures to support the employees undertaken by the other countries, in another hand, for each measure, we compare with measures undertaken by Kosovo. As we can see from the table, only some of the measures undertaken by other countries are also adapted for Kosovo. We had wage subsidies in Kosovo. While Kosovo does not have a scheme for unemployment benefits, only for three months (March, April and May) of 2020, the unemployed persons had a benefit from an emergency package in the name of unemployment. Also, Kosovo has paid leave for maternity, but this is only for women on the job, while unemployed women don't benefit any paid leave. Some of the measures were for all citizens, not only for employers and employees, like psychological support to face the pandemic.

Table 7

Measures undertaken by the governments of other countries to support the labour market / compare with Kosovo

Measures undertaken by the governments of other countries to support the labour market / compare with Kosovo			
Measures to support the employers	Kosovo	Measures to support the employees and unemployed	Kosovo
Active market labour measures (Wage subsidy)	Yes	New rules on unemployment benefits	Partly
Creation of specific new financial funds	No	Replacement income - paid leave	Partly
Extension of working hours in the health sector	Yes	Extension of working hours in the health sector	Yes
Occupational health and safety measures	Yes	Sickness benefits in case of Covid-19 contamination/isolation	No
Work from home (telework)	Yes	Work from home	Yes
Restricting business activities to essential services	Yes	Active market labour measures (Start-up)	No
Development of social dialogue with employers	Partly	Development of social dialogue with employees	Partly
Various tax incentives	Partly	Partial re-securing of workers' salaries	No
Psychological support for employers	Partly	Psychological support for workers	Partly

5. Some Policy Recommendations

Based on the data presented in the paper, we have articulated some policy recommendations:

- Increase the general number of people who benefit from measures through increasing the budget for these measures.
- Government must target to maintain current jobs. Current jobs can maintain by support for the employee through different kinds of subsidies (wage subsidies, subsidies for the training of employees, subsidies for pensions or tax of employees, etc.).
- To target integration of the people who are inactive in the labour market through active market labour measures.

- Promotion of employment of the people from vulnerable workers in the labour market (communities, women, etc.) through business start-up programs.
- To invest in vocational training programs based on the needs of the labour market (for example, training for online sales).
- Government of Kosovo must expand the measures to support the employers and employees based on the good experiences of other countries (creation of specific new financial funds, a start-up for job seekers, etc.).

6. Conclusions

Based on the results of the research, the authors of the paper concluded that the pandemic has had a significant impact on the labour market in Kosovo due to the fact that we have closures of many businesses, which has led to the termination of employment contracts and increasing the number of unemployed and jobseekers registered in the Employment Offices. Then, although Kosovo institutions have adopted the emergency package, as well as the economic recovery package in response to the challenges posed by the pandemic, according to participants in the study, it appears that the institutions have not done enough to support them during the pandemic and that most of them did not benefit from the emergency package measures as well as the economic recovery package. Therefore, based on these data, it can be concluded that the Government of Kosovo has not had a proper strategy to help the citizens affected by the pandemic.

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