



**KCDE - Mëso Online**  
Kosova Center for Distance Education



**ICEDA**

Increasing Civic Engagement  
in the Digital Agenda

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# LESSONS LEARNED? THE FUTURE OF "E-LEARNING" IN KOSOVO



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# Policy Brief

Two years into the pandemic, teachers across Kosovo still struggle to engage their students via “e-learning”.

Policymakers have taken note of these issues, acknowledging that the tools available to educators are not getting the job done. While this statement rings true to many in the field, it overlooks a point often missing from these discussions. Simply put, what do educators themselves think about the effectiveness of “e-learning”? The Kosova Center for Distance Education (KCDE) sought to answer this question. Earlier this year, the organization asked teachers to describe how these technologies affected their work with students. Findings showed that, while there were benefits to studying from home, most teachers felt it came with the cost of creating an environment conducive to learning.

**As officials in Pristina turn their attention towards digitizing the sector, they must take the time to rethink how “e-learning” can better serve youth in the future.**

In terms of the challenges teachers faced using “e-learning”, the majority shared that a lack of equipment was high on the list. However, the shortage of resources was far from the only problem. Among the nearly 200 individuals who worked with KCDE, 46 of them stated that disinterest from students made their jobs more difficult. Put differently, this means that a fourth of teachers who participated in this survey felt they could not capture the attention of their pupils. These insights are not surprising: spending all day on Zoom or Hangouts can sap the enthusiasm out of any class. Yet this opinion oversimplifies the issue, as officials in Pristina have not considered broadening their definition of “e-learning”.



Adopting a different strategy, such as “gamifying” lessons or personalizing curricula, can help improve outcomes for students. Without thinking creatively, policymakers will be unable to reap the rewards of this format for instruction. Problems with “e-learning” go beyond the concentration of students. When questioned about what they disliked about these programs, educators told KCDE that relying on these technologies decreased the level of interactivity found in the classroom. Lackluster engagement was cited the same number of times as student indifference by Kosovar teachers contacted for this research project.

**At their best, programs for “e-learning” capitalize on the creativity of users, as technologies become a means by which pupils can showcase their skills without relying on tests and assignments.**

The solutions proposed by officials did not tap into the potential of these resources. While this outcome is understandable, especially in light of constraints imposed by the pandemic, all stakeholders in the field of education are right to expect more from the government. Technologies must be integrated into schooling in a manner that makes instruction more dynamic, simultaneously furthering the process of digitization in Kosovo.

Considering how these problems have soured teachers on “e-learning”, many in the sector have wondered what could be done to improve these initiatives. Results from the survey highlight the need for change, as respondents listed recommendations ranging from incorporating “hybrid” instruction to enhancing digital infrastructure. Yet there was one suggestion that was mentioned by the majority of participants. KCDE found that around 57.4% of the 235 individuals featured in this study requested training on the methods of “e-learning”. Several conclusions could be drawn from these initial results. Having to learn how to use these technologies on their own, in the midst of a crisis, has pushed educators to request more support. At the same time, scores of teachers want to make the most of these technologies, accomplishing more than uploading lessons to the cloud. In other words, structured training that encourages inventive uses of “e-learning” programs is a natural solution.

Looking ahead, will policymakers “think outside the box” as they attempt to make “e-learning” more mainstream? At this current juncture, it looks like leading officials are moving in the right direction. For instance, a working group has been formed to explore how to effectively digitize the education sector, led by key figures in the Ministry of Education, Science, Technology and Innovation (MESTI). In spite of this attention from leaders in government, it remains to be seen as to whether they will tweak their approach to “e-learning”. They must think of ways of how these technologies could capture the attention of students, as well as how they can make the environment for learning more dynamic. Critically, investments in training would help make these goals a reality.

As countries move past the pandemic, Kosovo has the unique opportunity to reimagine how “e-learning” can engage and inspire students from all walks of life.

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