

**CERP**

COMPETITIVENESS AND  
EXPORT READINESS PROJECT



Republika e Kosovës  
Republika Kosova - Republic of Kosovo  
*Qeveria - Vlada - Government*

*Ministria e Industrisë, Ndërmarrësisë dhe Tregtisë  
Ministarstvo Industrije, Preduzetništva i Trgovine  
Ministry of Industry, Entrepreneurship and Trade*

# REPORT

## Research: Businesses Inspections in Kosovo



Pristina, Kosovo  
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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

MIET	Ministry of Industry, Entrepreneurship and Trade
D&D BSC	D&D Business Support Center
CERP	Competitiveness and Export Readiness Project
SMEs	Small and medium enterprises

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## 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The inspection of enterprises, as in any other country and in Kosovo, represents a key element for the development of suitable business environments and ensuring the construction of a fair and orderly society. This process is important to ensure compliance with safety and quality standards, as well as to reduce potential risks for breach of regulations.

An efficient and fair inspection is essential to increase investor and consumer confidence and contribute to increased business accountability. Thus, this improves the overall business climate and contributes to the achievement of economic development goals in Kosovo.

Consequently, taking into account the importance of the inspection, the need for research into the real situation and its improvement remains inevitable. Therefore, CERP/MIET has contracted D&D BSC to develop research that highlights companies' experiences with the inspection process as well as the challenges and difficulties these companies encounter during this process. based on the two indicators predetermined by the project: this process by being based on the two indicators predetermined by the project:

-  Reducing the annual cost of inspection compliance for enterprises; and
-  The number of inspections visits that companies face each year.




The findings of this research are based on 600 interviews conducted with SMEs, which constitute a comprehensive sample of the production, service, and trade sectors in Kosovo.

From the total number of enterprises surveyed through this research, in terms of size, 74% belong to the micro category, 19% are small enterprises, while the remaining 7% are medium-sized enterprises.

As for business activity, 51% of these enterprises are in the production sector, 36% of them have trade as their main business activity, and the rest or 14% have various services as their main activity.

As for the inspection process, according to the findings of this research for the period January - August 2023, 85% of the enterprises have been part of the inspection process, while the rest of 15% have claimed that throughout this year they have not yet been inspected by any institution in Kosovo.

Through this research, the experiences of enterprises in the inspection process and the challenges and difficulties are highlighted, which are as follows:

-  Improving communication and cooperation between the enterprise and inspectors;
-  Continuous performance monitoring and evaluation;
-  Improving information technology infrastructure and simple and efficient ways to report and monitor inspections.

## 2. INTRODUCTION

In a time when order and efficiency in the public and private sectors are the fundamental challenges of government services, the inspection system plays a critical role in ensuring compliance with various rules and standards. This project is an important effort to understand, evaluate, and improve the current inspection system in Kosovo.

This initiative is essential for several key reasons - First, effective inspection is essential to public safety and the rule of law. Appropriate and efficient intervention of inspection authorities helps to ensure the safety of citizens and maintain high standards of food safety, environmental and public health. Second - in a context of economic development and foreign investment, a decent inspection system is essential to ensure law and order in the market.

In order to achieve the two indicators of this project, which are related to 1) Reduction of the annual inspection cost for companies, and 2) The number of inspections visits that companies face every year, a questionnaire was compiled which was addressed to all 600 active enterprises in the Republic of Kosovo, through which the problems in the inspection system were identified and served as the main source of information for our analysis and recommendations for reforming the system.

In the following part of this report, the results of the questionnaire have been examined and the analysis of statistical data and key findings has been made which have helped to draw conclusions and present specific recommendations for improving the inspection system

### 3. METHODOLOGY

This research funded by CERP/MIET and implemented by D&D BSC to have a clearer view of active companies in Kosovo regarding their inspection process in order to further improve this process by addressing the missing links. The same will serve to reduce the administrative burden for businesses by improving the efficiency of inspection services and will influence the improvement of the capacities of companies in the field of export, as well as increasing their competitiveness.

Aiming at achieving this goal, the questionnaire was first compiled and divided into two parts:

- **PART ONE** – This part of the questionnaire was intended to gather basic information about the companies and their characteristics. The questions include the name of the enterprise, the location, the position of the person interviewed in the enterprise, the gender of the owner, the operating sector, the number of employees, the legal status of the enterprise, its size and activity, as well as information about the export of products or services of the enterprise. This information was essential to understand the context and characteristics of the enterprises involved in the research and their experience with inspection services.
- **PART TWO** – This part of the questionnaire contained questions aimed at discovering and documenting the experience of businesses with inspections throughout the year 2023. Questions include aspects such as frequency of inspections, staff costs for inspections, gross monthly wages of employees involved in inspections, fines paid by business, satisfaction with inspectors' work, and changes in the inspection process. This information has served to better understand the experience and challenges faced by businesses in relation to inspections and to draft recommendations in accordance with the collected data.

The primary data collected in this research was done through face-to-face visits and online communication with enterprise owners or one of the senior managers, who had sufficient experience in general business activities.

## 4. SAMPLE FRAMEWORK

In the framework of this research, primary data were used, realized by the consulting company D&D BSC and financed by MIET. The selection of the sample was made including enterprises from all regions of Kosovo. This sample has been adapted to the type of activity of the interviewed enterprises in order to be comprehensive and reflect the current situation of the sector, the way of operating their work and the inspection process to which they are subjected.

According to the findings of this research for the period January - August 2023, of the 600 businesses interviewed, 85% of them have been part of the inspection process, while the rest of 15% have stated that throughout this year they have not yet been inspected by any institution in Kosovo.

The survey included 7 regions of Kosovo:

Pristina - 239 enterprises

Mitrovica - 58 enterprises

Peja - 62 enterprises

Prizren - 66 enterprises

Gjilan - 61 enterprises

Gjakova - 48 enterprises



In the municipality of Pristina, 239 out of 600 businesses were interviewed, representing 40% of the total. In Mitrovica, 58 businesses were interviewed, making up 10% of the total. In Peja, 62 businesses were interviewed, also representing 10%. There are 66 businesses in Prizren, which constitute 11% of the total. Gjilan has 61 businesses, representing 10%, while Gjakova has 48 businesses, or 8% of the total.



A part of this sample for extracting primary data and further analysis has been the interviews with 500 enterprises as the total number, of which 74% belong to the micro category, 19% are small enterprises, while the remaining 7% are medium- sized enterprises.

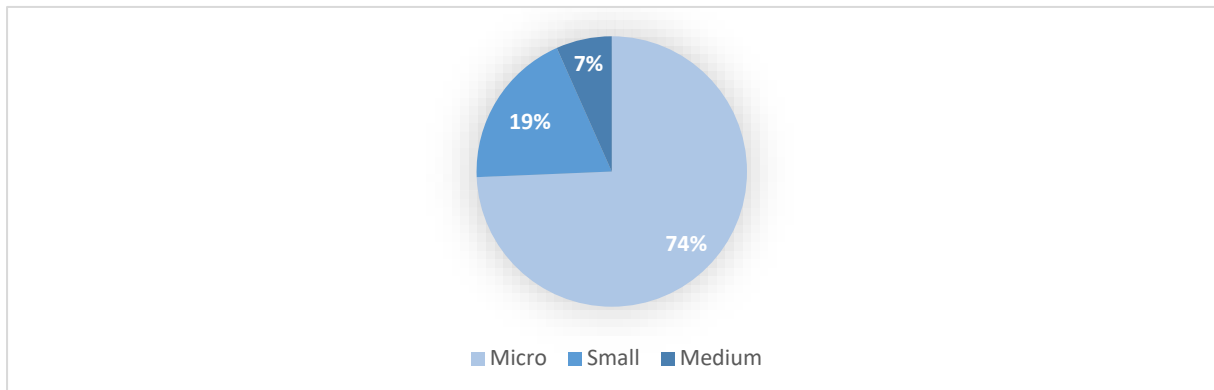


Figure 1. Structure of enterprises according to size

As for the business activity, 303 or 51% of these enterprises are in the production sector, 216 or 36% of their main business activity is trade and the rest 81 or 14% have the main activity of providing various services.

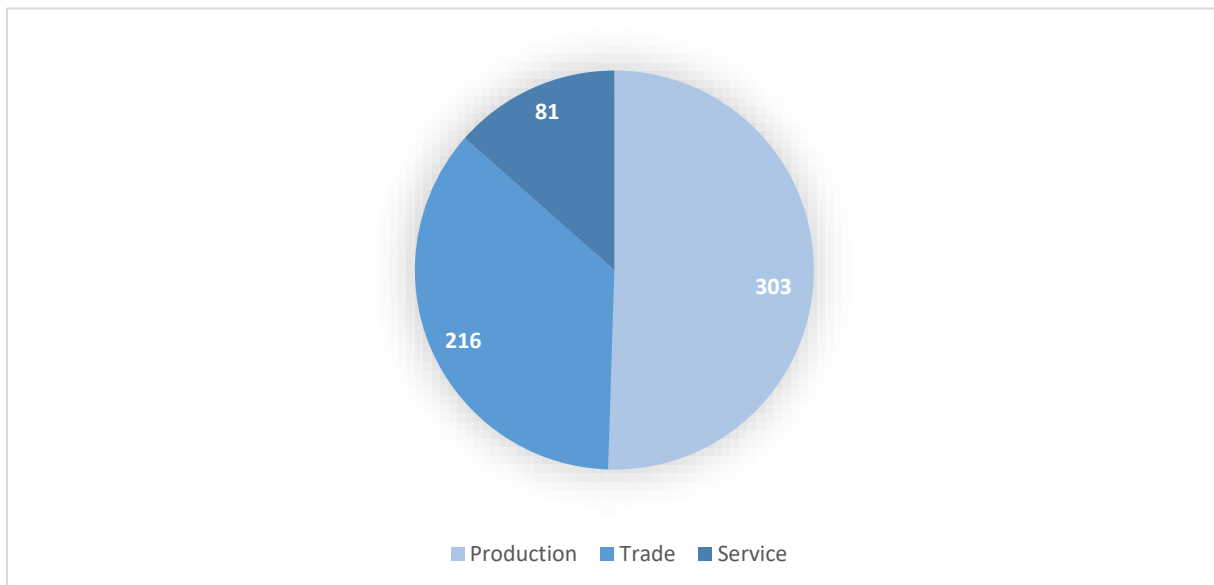


Figure 2. Structure of enterprises according to activities

## 5. PRIMARY DATA ANALYSIS

According to the findings of this research, from the total number of interviews conducted, of them 391 interviewees or 65% are both owners and managers of the enterprise at the same time, 67 of them or 11% are owners of the enterprise, 122 or 20% are in positions manager 14 or 2% were accountants of the enterprise while the rest of 6 or 1% are legal advocates of these enterprises.

Through the questionnaire, despite that the owner was not necessarily the respondent, we have also asked the respondent about the gender of the owner of the enterprise in order to have an overview of the ownership of the enterprise, from which it was understood that 488 or 81% of the enterprises interviewed have male owners, while 112 or 19% of the total enterprises have female owners.

Similarly, through this questionnaire we also understood the sector in which these businesses operate, from which it resulted that the majority of the total number of respondents operate in the production sector with 50.50%, followed by wholesale and retail trade with 30.33 %.

For more detailed information regarding the operating sector of the companies that were interviewed, please refer to the graph below:

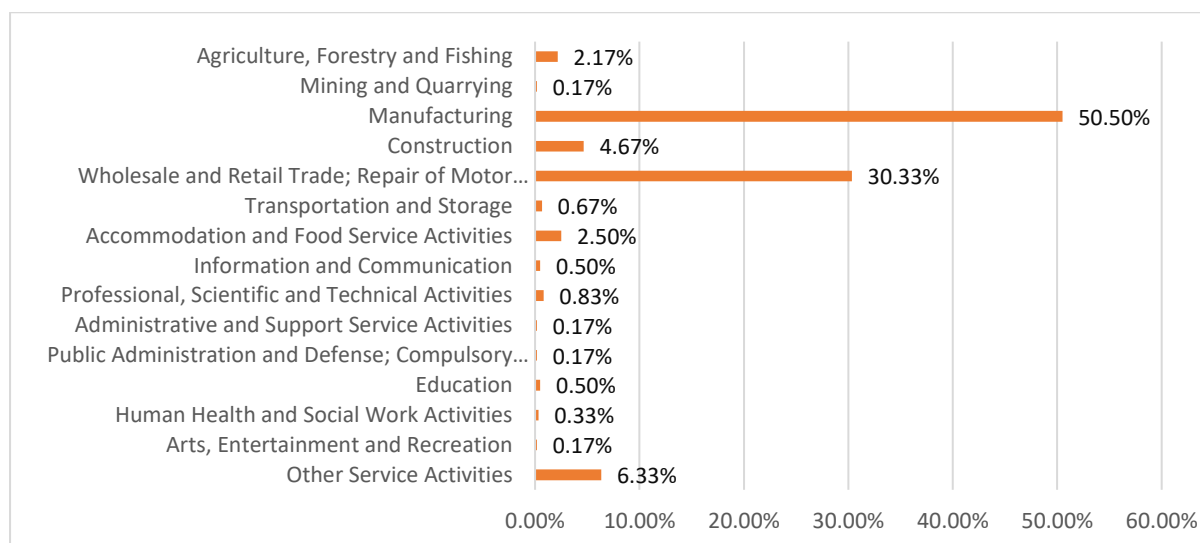


Figure 3 The sector in which the firm operates

Furthermore, the respondents were asked about the number of employees in their company and the dominant gender in the enterprise, from which it was understood that a total of 6,958 workers are employed in 600 enterprises, with 61% men and 39% women. On average for each company, 7.13% are men and 4.47% are women.

As for the legal status of these enterprises, from their total number, 422 enterprises or 70.33% are registered as Limited Liability Companies, 169 or 28% are registered as individual businesses, 6 or 1% are registered as joint stock company and the rest of 3 or 0.50% are registered as a general partnership.

## 5.1. Export

Out of the 600 businesses interviewed, 53 businesses or 9% export their products, while 547 businesses or 91% do not export.

This information assisted in understanding how many businesses are involved in international trade, important for business strategies and market analysis.

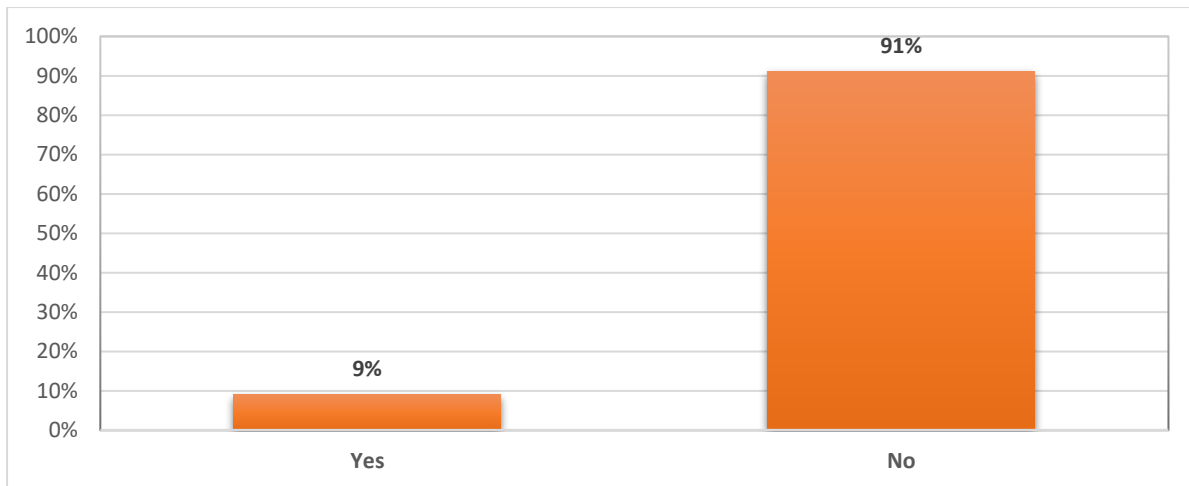


Figure 4. Export Readiness

## 5.2. Export percentage

The results show that 53 of the 600 inspected businesses are part of international trade and export a significant percentage of their products or services which is 2,250% in total or 42.45% on average.

## 6. Inspections

According to the data received from 600 enterprises about their inspection, 508 or 85% of them declared that they had been inspected during 2023, while another 92 or 15% indicated that they had not yet had an inspection during this year.

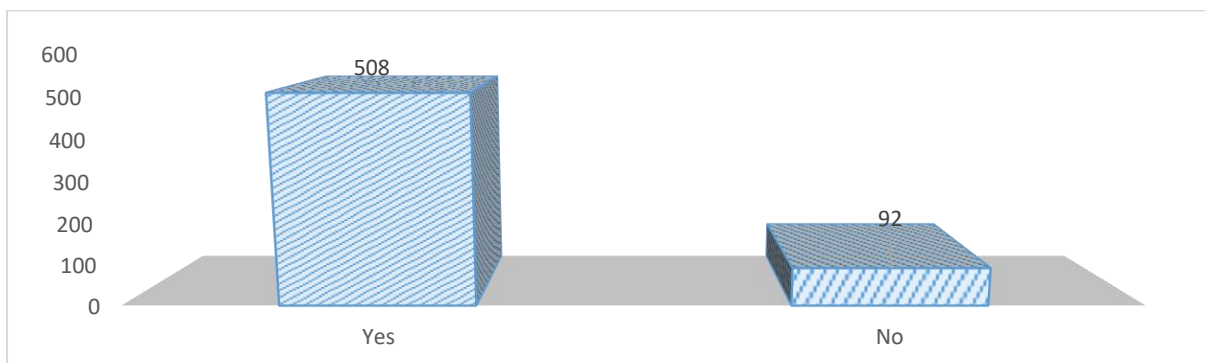


Figure 5. Inspections

### 6.1. Agencies that inspected businesses

According to data from business interviews, the division of inspectorates based on the number of inspections is as follows:

- ✚ The Labor Inspectorate has conducted 301 inspections, accounting for almost half of them, with a percentage of 49%.

- ✚ The Market Inspectorate has conducted 143 inspections, corresponding to 23% of the total.
- ✚ The Food and Veterinary Agency has conducted 130 inspections, representing 21% of total inspections.

Other inspectorates have lower number of inspections, which can be seen in the graph below.

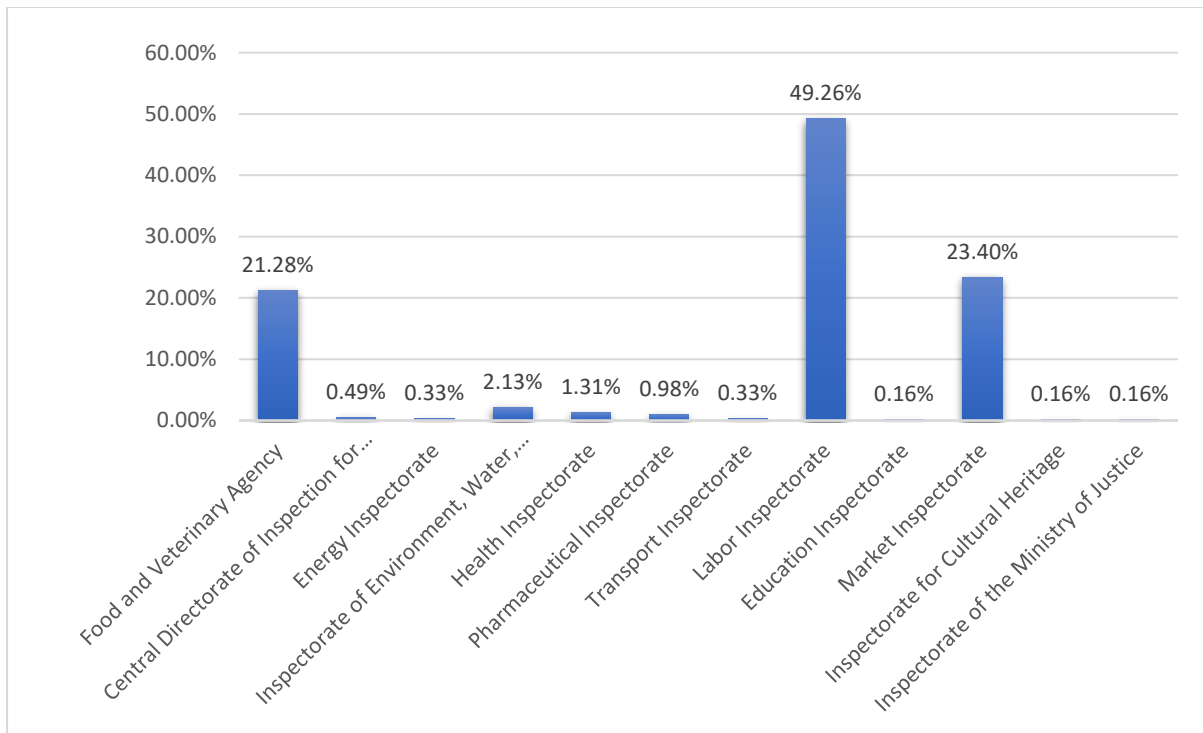


Figure 6. Entities Conducting Business Inspections

## 6.2. Entities and inspections

In 2023, a total of 1,195 inspections were carried out in 508 different businesses surveyed in Kosovo. According to the data from the survey, the most frequent inspections were carried out mainly by the Labor Inspectorate, which carried out 541 field inspection visits, the Food and Veterinary Agency with 333 visits and the Market Inspectorate with 252 visits, respectively.

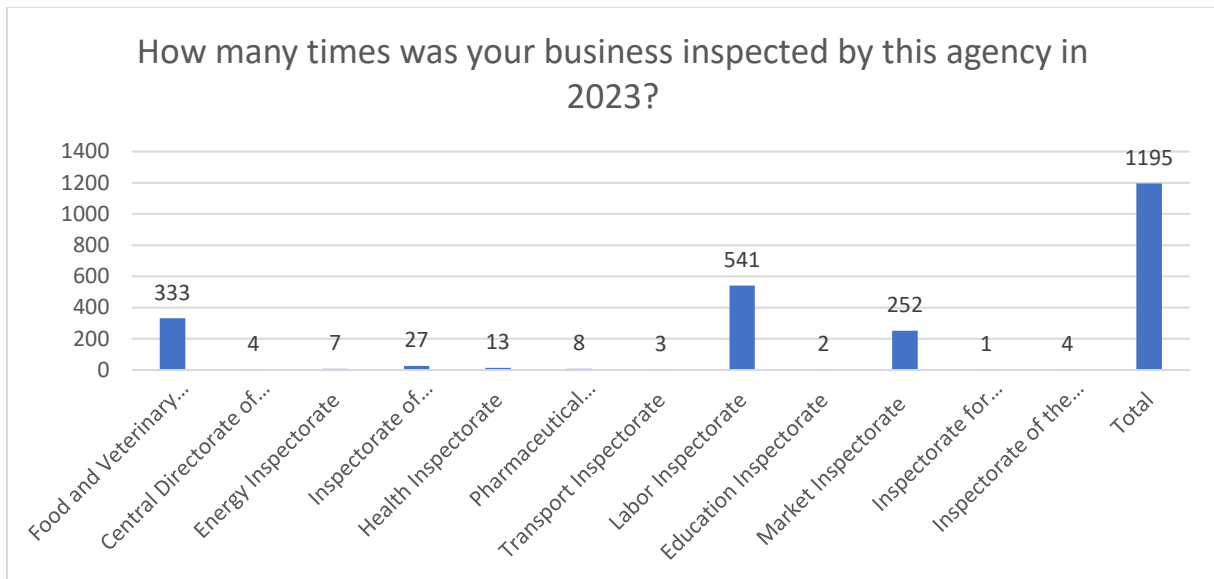


Figure 7. Number of inspection visits

### 6.3. Inspection timeframe

According to the data, the staff of the interviewed businesses used a total of 5,180 minutes for the preparation of inspections by all agencies during the year 2023. This reflects that the process of preparation for inspections required a significant commitment of human resources. It is essential that this commitment is managed efficiently to reduce the costs and time required for future inspections.

Based on the graph below, to the question of how many working minutes have been spent by all employees of the companies during the inspection of the inspection agencies, we can say that the inspectorate which resulted in the most minutes to carry out inspections was the Labor Inspectorate with 16,945 minutes from the total of 508 businesses inspected by this inspectorate, while the Food and Veterinary Agency ranked second with 11,765 minutes. In total, Information about other inspectorates can be seen in the following graph presented in minutes.

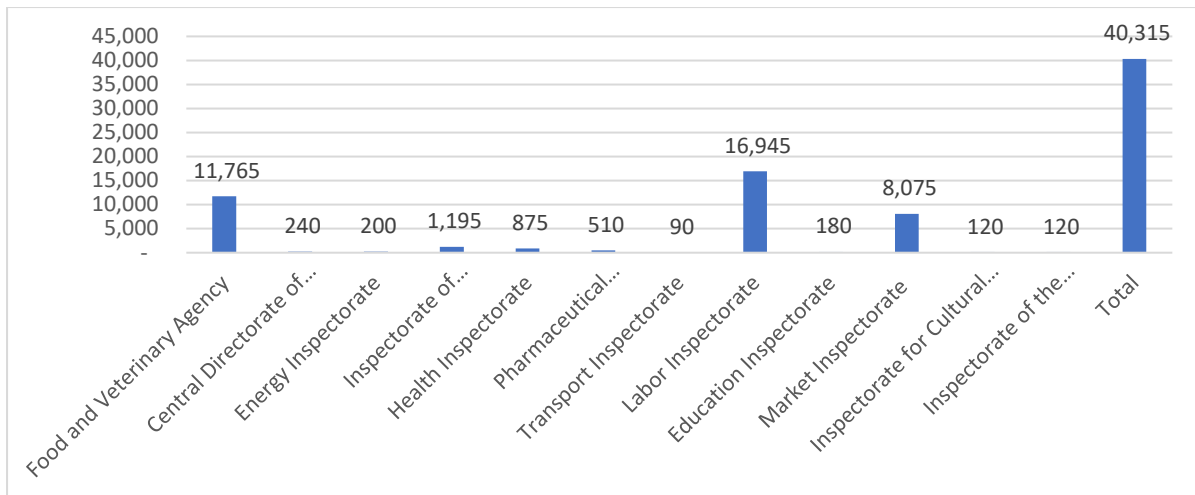


Figure 8. Inspection timeframe

Regarding the time that business employees spend to implement the procedures after the inspection, it is evident that those who are subject to inspections by the Labor Inspectorate required more time to implement these procedures, with a total of 3,415 minutes. Also, for all the employees of these businesses. Additionally, the total commitment time to implement the procedures after the inspection is 7,456 minutes. This information provides a detailed picture of the time needed for the implementation of these procedures by the employees of the inspected businesses.

## 6.4.COST

Based on the results of the interviews, the inspectorates with the main focus for the inspection of businesses are the Market Inspectorate, the Labor Inspectorate and the Food and Veterans Agency.

Based on this, it is indicated that the evaluation of the costs of working time spent on inspections is related to these inspectorates. Business owners during the interview declared that they pay the workers who are included in these inspections.

The average gross salary of these employees involved in inspections is around 347.78 euros.

In the graph below, we have the business costs, including travel costs, if you travel to the inspectorates, the amount paid outside of formality, as well as other costs for the inspections that have been done. Some businesses have paid substantial amounts for administrative paperwork, copying, testing, mailing and shipping costs, while others have paid less or none at all.

From the results of the survey, we conclude that the total costs of the inspected businesses are 7,286.00 euros for the period January/August 2023.

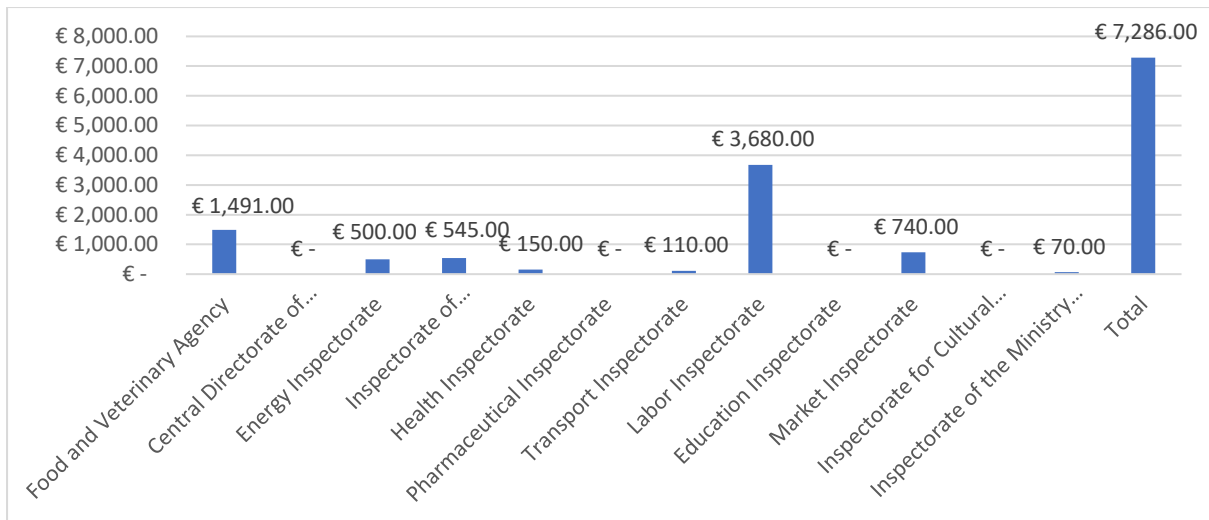


Figure 9. Inspection costs

## 6.5. Fines

Regarding the fines paid by businesses during 2023, the graph below gives an overview of the general fines, divided by different inspectorates.

In total, during the year 2023 the value of fines paid by the interviewed businesses is 52,005.00 euros.

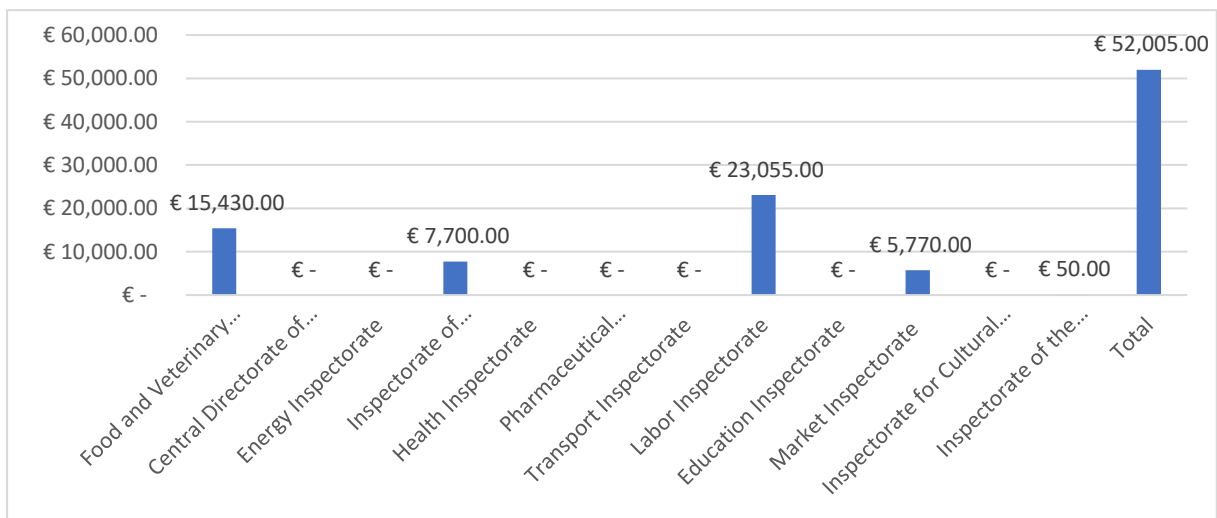


Figure 10. Fines paid

## 6.6. Visits from inspectorates

In the question of whether the businesses are satisfied with the work of the inspectorates during the inspection visit, based on the provided data, we can see that the Labor Inspectorate had the most visits to businesses, but also rated the highest for their positive behavior.

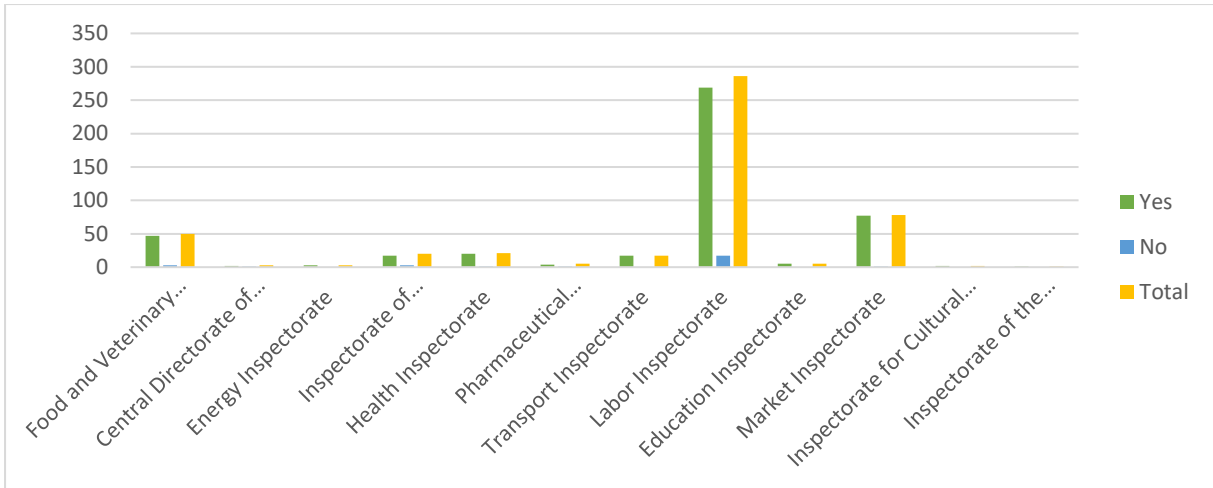


Figure 11. Visits from inspectorates

In general, the assessments indicate that there is a significant level of prior notification about the inspection visit and there is a very small number of businesses that have been informed about the inspectorate visits.

### 6.7. Basis for fines

Based on the question of how many percent of fines were for the reasons mentioned below, from the total number of inspected businesses that were fined, in the graph below it can be seen that, according to them, 57% of the fines were given due to lack of compliance, while only 19% of fines are due to unfair decisions by inspectors.

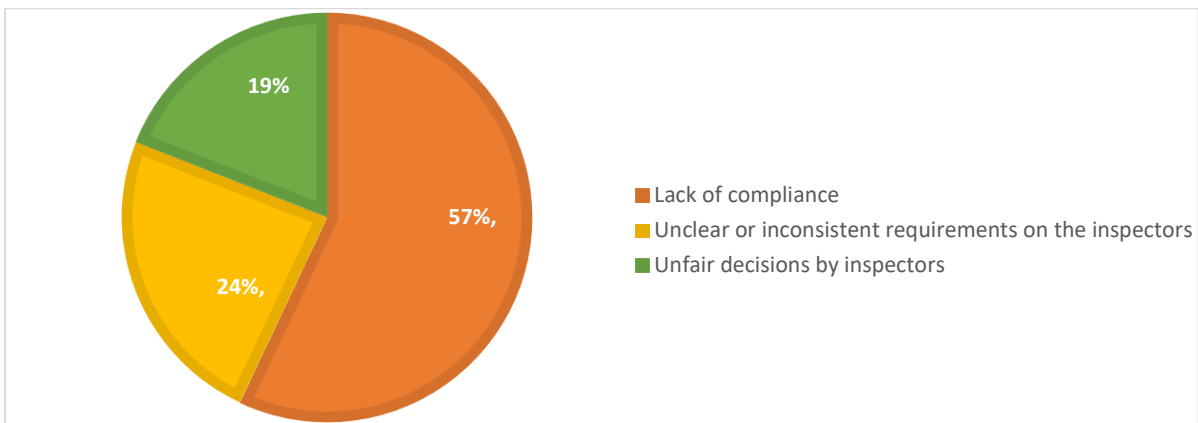


Figure 12. Basis for fines

### 6.8. Knowledge of inspectorates

Based on the data received, most businesses express confidence that inspectors have sufficient knowledge about the technical and scientific aspects that are necessary to perform



inspections efficiently. However, there are some contrary evaluations which show that there are cases when businesses have doubts about the inspectors' knowledge in this field.

Regarding employees' knowledge of inspection procedures and technical and legal obligations, 491 or 97% of the surveyed companies determined that their employees have knowledge of these procedures.



Figure 13. Knowledge of employees

### 6.9. The main problems during the inspection process

In order to identify the problems that businesses encounter, and therefore to address them, the questionnaire contains a question that tries to identify the main problems that business owners encounter during the inspection process

Unclear technical and legal requirements constitute the main problem, representing 32.69% of identified cases. Inspector misconduct is the rarest problem, representing only 0.38% of inspection cases.

### 6.10. Negative and positive changes

As for the positive and negative changes in the inspectorate's work over the years, from the data received from the inspected businesses, it results that:

- 🚧 186 or 37% of the businesses inspected reported that they had noticed positive changes.
- 🚧 8 or 2% of them confirmed that they had noticed negative changes.
- 🚧 While the majority, 314 or 62% of businesses, said they had not noticed any changes.

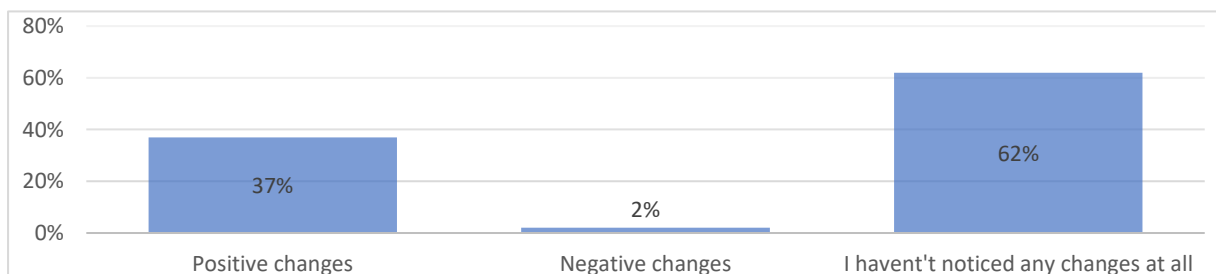


Figure 14. Positive and Negative changes

## 7. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The project "Reforming Business Inspection System - Interoperability data exchange system" highlights the advantages and challenges that the businesses encounter during the inspection, along with the importance for the development of a suitable business environment in Kosovo.

This process is a crucial tool for ensuring compliance with safety and quality standards, and, at the same time helps on reducing the risks of regulatory violations. Effective and fair inspection contributes to build trust among investors and consumers and enhances business responsibility.

Taking into account the main goal of this project, the research was developed through the questionnaire which was addressed to 600 companies active in Kosovo. The same helped to have a clear overview of the current inspection process, the challenges, and difficulties that these enterprises encounter during this process.

Consequently, in the framework of the findings of this research, it is understood that companies express dissatisfaction with the demands of inspectors, which are often unclear for companies, therefore improving communication and cooperation between companies and inspectors, ensuring that information and regulations are clearer for both parties would be essential in the effectiveness of the inspection towards businesses.

Although a relatively low percentage of fines are issued due to unfair decisions by inspectors according to the respondents, continuous monitoring and evaluation of performance is essential.

Reforms in the inspection system should be accompanied by the improvement of information technology infrastructure and simple and efficient ways of reporting and monitoring inspections. This research and other similar projects should continue to be part of a joint effort to strengthen the export sector in Kosovo and help businesses improve their competitiveness in international markets.

## **8. ANNEX 1. QUESTIONNAIRE**

Hello, I am \_\_\_\_\_ and I work at \_\_\_\_\_. \_\_\_\_\_ was contracted by Ministry of Industry, Entrepreneurship and Trade, under the World Bank funded project CERP, to conduct a survey with businesses in Kosovo in order to get a clearer understanding of businesses' experiences with inspection services.

The purpose of the CERP project is to support product certification for export markets, strengthen the capacity of Export-Oriented Businesses, and improve their Competitiveness. The project has been restructured to respond to the changing needs of MSMEs as a result of the situation created by COVID-19.

The CERP project consists of two components:

- Sub-component 1.1: Support Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) to improve Competitiveness and Export Readiness (€ 10.4 million) through the Matching Grants Program (MGP).
- Sub-component 1.2: Reforming the business inspection system

The reform of the Inspection system is aimed at reducing the administrative burden for businesses, thus increasing the efficiency of inspection services, by providing:

- Electronic data management system, E-inspectorate;
- Data Interchange System, Interoperability and ICT System Interaction
- Support for professional capacity building of inspectors.

Your answers are completely confidential and the survey will be implemented in accordance with international research standards. We would be grateful for your participation in this survey and encourage you to cooperate. Are you interested in participating in this survey?

Interview date:

Surveyor name: \_\_\_\_\_

ID: \_\_\_\_\_

### **Background Information**

1. Name of company \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. Location of the business (i.e. town): \_\_\_\_\_
4. What position do you currently hold in the company? *If other, do not complete the interview with this business.*
  - a. Owner and manager
  - b. Owner but not a manager
  - c. Manager
  - d. Legal Representative/Lawyer of the company
  - e. Financial Manager/Accountant
5. What gender is the owner of the company?

- a. Male
- b. Female

6. In what sector does your firm operate?
- a. Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing
  - b. Mining and Quarrying
  - c. Manufacturing
  - d. Electricity, Gas, Steam and Air Conditioning Supply
  - e. Water Supply; Sewerage, Waste Management and Remediation Activities
  - f. Construction
  - g. Wholesale and Retail Trade; Repair of Motor Vehicles and Motorcycles
  - h. Transportation and Storage
  - i. Accommodation and Food Service Activities
  - j. Information and Communication
  - k. Financial and Insurance Activities
  - l. Real Estate Activities
  - m. Professional, Scientific and Technical Activities
  - n. Administrative and Support Service Activities
  - o. Public Administration and Defense; Compulsory Social Security
  - p. Education
  - q. Human Health and Social Work Activities
  - r. Arts, Entertainment and Recreation
  - s. Other Service Activities
  - t. Activities of Households as Employers; Undifferentiated Goods and Services Producing Activities of Households for Own Use
  - u. Activities of Extraterritorial Organizations and Bodies

7. How many employees does your firm have?

	Male	Female	Total
a. In 2023			

8. Legal status of the Business
- a. Individual Business
  - b. Limited Liability Company (LLC)
  - c. Joint Stock Company
  - d. General Partnership
  - e. Other

9. Does the firm export its goods or services?
- a. Yes (If yes, what is the percentage of sales that exports during 2023?) \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. No

**Inspections**

**Has your business been inspected in 2023?**

2023	Yes
------	-----

No

1. **Here I give you the list of all inspectorates. Please, have a look.** INTERVIEWER: PASS THE LIST OF INSPECTORATES TO RESPONDENT AND ALLOW A BIT OF TIME TO GET FAMILIAR. THEN ASK **Which agencies inspected your business in 2023?** FILL NAME OF INSPECTORATES IN THE TABLE BELOW.

#	I. Agencies that inspected the business in 2023	12. # Inspections 2023	13. Staff Time spent by staff per ONE inspection			14. Average (gross) salaries of the staff involved?	15. Total Other Costs per ONE inspection (transportation, external)	16. Amount of Fines	17. Are you satisfied with the inspector's performance ?	18. Are you satisfied with the inspector's conduct during the inspection visit?
			13.1. Preparation	13.2. Inspection	13.3. Follow up					
1										
2										
3										
4										

2. INTERVIEWER: FOR EACH AGENCY THAT INSPECTED, PLEASE, ASK **How many times was your business inspected by NAME OF AGENCY in 2023?** INTERVIEWER: RECORD THE ANSWER IN I2 COLUMN ABOVE.

3. **Now I will be asking you about staff time spent on ONE inspection. For example, if one employee spent 2 hours and another spent 3 hours, that would constitute 5 hours cumulatively, ok? Besides, I'd like to differentiate about time to prepare to inspection, time spent during inspection and time to follow up with inspector after inspection visit. Remember we are talking about staff-time, that is time, spent by all employees involved.**

3.1 INTERVIEWER: FOR EACH AGENCY THAT INSPECTED, PLEASE, ASK **How much staff-time did all employees of your business spend to prepare to ONE inspection conducted by NAME OF AGENCY in 2023?** PLEASE, WRITE THE ANSWER IN COLUMN I3.1 ABOVE.

3.2 INTERVIEWER: FOR EACH AGENCY THAT INSPECTED, PLEASE, ASK **How much staff-time did all employees of your business spend during inspection conducted by NAME OF AGENCY?** PLEASE, WRITE THE ANSWER IN COLUMN I3.2 ABOVE.

3.3 INTERVIEWER: FOR EACH AGENCY THAT INSPECTED, PLEASE, ASK **How much staff-time did all employees of your business spend to follow up with NAME OF AGENCY after inspection?** PLEASE, WRITE THE ANSWER IN COLUMN I3.3 ABOVE.

4. **We would like to estimate the costs of labor time spent on inspections. Would you mind telling me about the approximate gross monthly salary for employees of this business, who are usually involved inspections? As I mentioned, your answers will remain confidential and will be used only for the purpose of this survey.** INTERVIEWER: PLEASE, WRITE THE ANSWER IN COLUMN I4 ABOVE

5. **Now I will be asking you about costs of inspections. When you recall the costs, please, remember to include costs of travel, if you were traveling to inspectorates, amount paid unofficially as well as other costs. I do not need detailed breakdown, but rather an overall amount per ONE inspection for each agency.** INTERVIEWER: FOR EACH AGENCY THAT INSPECTED, PLEASE, ASK **What were the total costs related to ONE inspection by NAME OF AGENCY in 2023?** WRITE THE ANSWER IN COLUMN I5 ABOVE.

6. **Now, I'd like to ask you only about fines your business paid in 2023?** INTERVIEWER: PLEASE, WRITE THE AMOUNT IN COLUMN I6. ABOVE;

7. 17. Are you satisfied with the inspector's performance during the inspection visit? WRITE THE ANSWER IN COLUMN I8 ABOVE?

- a. Yes
- b. NO

8. Are you informed ahead (of the visit) of the inspection visit and purpose?

- a. Yes
- b. No

9. What percentage of total fines were due to the reasons mentioned below? The total should add up to 100%. If I7=0, skip this question.

	Share of fines paid (in percent)
Lack of compliance	
Unclear or inconsistent requirements on the inspectors	
Unfair decisions by inspectors	

10. Do you think the inspector was knowledgeable of the regulatory requirements needed for inspection?
- Yes
  - No
11. Are employees of the company fully aware of the inspection procedures and the legal and technical obligations of your enterprise?
- Yes
  - No
12. What are the main problems in inspection? – Multiple choice question
- Inspector's weak competence
  - Improper behavior
  - Duplication and overlaps of inspections
  - The high frequency of visits
  - Ambiguous regulatory requirements
  - High cost of for fulfilling the regulatory requirements checked in inspections
  - Penalties do not match the violation size and risk
  - Other (specify)
13. During the past years, have you noticed positive or negative changes in the inspection process?
- Positive changes
  - Negative changes
  - I haven't noticed any changes at all

[ END ]