



Young Cell Scheme (Round XI-XII)

EU Scholarship Programme for Kosovo

Rules of Procedure for the Selection Process of Round XI



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I) Objectives and content of the Scheme

A) YCS Objectives and principles

The main objective of Young Cell Scheme (YCS) programme is to contribute to build and enforce a professional, accountable, merit-based and apolitical Civil Service at all levels in Kosovo. YCS supports Kosovan public administration through a specific scholarship programme that aims at improving the professional capacity of civil servants to better service Kosovo citizens and to meet the challenges and the obligations arising from the SAA.

The specific purpose of Young Cell Scheme – Round XI call for application is to support the Government of Kosovo (GoK) in generating a core group of civil servants in the fields identified as weak areas for Kosovo. This Action aims to strengthen the Kosovan public administration by means of ensuring that the administrative gaps in the GoK are addressed by offering specialised higher education opportunities to young Kosovo citizens in EU countries in an inclusive approach. These awarded grantees, upon completion of their studies in EU universities, will be integrated within the governmental structures, on the basis of their educational background, and with an aim to build a modern system of public administration that meets the demands of EU integration processes. At the same time, Action assistance will contribute to poverty reduction through the enhancement of economic opportunities for Kosovo population, including of the most marginalized groups by promoting inter alia minority recruitment and representation in the civil service, the central and local administration and meeting the specific needs of all communities, with a specific focus on RAE groups.

The specific objectives of the Action will be met by an efficient, effective, transparent, non-politicised, and fair implementation of YCS Round XI, conducted in the spirit of positive discrimination towards members of minority communities, women, and candidates with disabilities.

YCS will select up to 45 young motivated Kosovan citizens who, after finishing their Master studies in prominent EU universities, will be employed (or re-employed) as civil servants in PA and will be



determined to drive and implement reforms in public administration, in particular those required for the SAA implementation”.

As it has been under last Round X selections held in 2016, also this year the programme provides for a reserved quote of grants (up to 10% of the total of awarded grants, see below for more details) for civil servants already employed in PA. As it was in 2016 selections, these reserved places for civil servants will undergo exactly the same rules and principles governing the selection of non-civil servants. The only differences between grants reserved for civil servants and those for general public are related to:

a) the tools used during the outreach campaign (the project will disseminate information about YCS Round XI selections among civil servants using governmental social media, as well as the internal email system provided by the Ministry of Public Administration, and organising a dedicated open day in GoK premises);

b) the obvious fact that civil servants, once awarded with a grant, will not be required to attend a 2 months internship as other grantees, but they will simply continue to work in their old position until the planned departure for their master studies abroad;

On the other hand, Civil servants awarded with a grant will be obliged, as other non-civil servant grantees to attend all trainings required and organized by YCS Secretariat prior to departure (i.e. English, GMAT if needed, etc.).

So, the overall objective of the Young Cell Scheme in Kosovo is to promote and to improve expertise in different departments of Kosovo Civil Service. This general goal will be pursued through the completion of advanced academic training and education of, up to 35 years old, graduated (or under-graduated but in their last year of University) Kosovan students and civil servants, and their subsequent (re)integration into the Public Service for a minimum period of 3 consecutive years.



The scheme's Programme includes:

- a) active and compulsory participation to all language (or other, i.e. GMAT) training activities that will be provided for the selected grantees by the YCS Secretariat prior to their departure;
- b) 2 months internship within Kosovo's Public Administration or other agreed bodies (just for non-civil servants, as stated above prior to their departure civil servants grantees will simply continue to work in their old position), to be completed in the period between May-July 2018;
- c) One year post-graduate studies in Colleges/Universities of any EU Member State in one of the following sectors previously required by and agreed with Kosovan Public Administration: Law, Economics, Public Administration;

Once the Programme has been completed, the grantees have the obligation to start serving or continue to serve (if he/she was already a civil servant prior the departure) Kosovo Public Administration for a minimum period of three consecutive years, thus using the expertise and education acquired during the completion of their master studies abroad.

The definition of Kosovo Public Administration includes the possibility of working for local governments, municipalities and all public institutions and bodies. Such obligation will be enshrined in the reviewed scholarship contract that grantees will sign prior to their departure for studies abroad. Financial liability for the full amount of the grant will be provided for by the grant's contract in case a grantee refuses to serve or return to serve Kosovo Public Administration (or other agreed bodies) at the end of his/her Master programme, or in the case he/she does not finish his studies abroad without a proper justification/force majeure. The Government of Kosovo will take all the necessary legal measures to ensure that the grantees who refuse to reimburse the full amount of the grant are prosecuted in accordance with the applicable laws in Kosovo.

Moreover, the Government of Kosovo will ensure that any of the grantees who refuses to fulfil his/her obligation in accordance with the contract, will be prevented from employment in all public institutions



funded through Kosovo budget, as well as other entities which receive funds from GoK. On the other hand, the European Union Office to Kosovo will also encourage and foster grantees to get employed in Kosovo Civil Service. The Public Administration of Kosovo retains the right to employ the student within the 12 months following the completion of his/her programme. During this period of time, however, the non-civil servant grantee will be entitled to take up employment also outside the Civil Service (i.e. in private sector) in case employment is not offered within the first 4 months after the completion of his/her studies. On the other hand, GoK/PA will reintegrate immediately the civil servant grantee in his/her old position upon his/her return from studies abroad.

The Project will make available to grantees details and specifications of the contractual relations with the Public Administration not later than two weeks after the completion of the selection procedure for Round XI (the selection procedure is planned to be completed by 19th March 2018) and in any case prior to the signature by the Grantees of the YCS Declaration of Understanding (please see next paragraph).

Upon completion of the selection process, and prior to the signature of their scholarship contracts, grantees will sign a Declaration of Understanding with the YCS Secretariat covering the obligations set forth by the present Rules of Procedure. The Declaration of Understanding will also establish precise disciplinary procedures to be applied to grantees in the period prior to their departure, where and if the grantee does not comply with all obligations set forth by the present Rules. Disciplinary consequences for non-compliant grantees might include the withdrawal of the grant in serious cases. Disciplinary procedures will be decided upon by the Project Steering Committee (composed of representatives from the European Union Office to Kosovo, the Ministry for European Integration and the Ministry of Public Administration), which acts on case referral from the YCS Secretariat.

To ensure the full success of Round XI selection procedure, attention will be drawn to:

- The quality, transparency and fairness of the recruitment process;
- The regular evaluation and assessment of grantees' progress and compliance to their obligations during the period prior to the departure abroad;



- The quality and accuracy of training delivered to awarded grantees;
- The identification and assessment of non-civil servants grantees' strengths and weaknesses when defining future positions in Kosovo Public Administration;
- The position held by civil servants grantees in Kosovo Public Administration and the possibility to raise their employment grade after the completion of studies;
- The past experiences of former "Young Cell Scheme" graduates.

The Selection Process will abide in particular to 3 fundamental principles: **transparency**, **fairness** and **non-discrimination**.

Transparency is to be understood by the fact that each stage of the selection process will be publicly advertised at the same time for all applicants, and the same information will be provided to everybody. The list of candidates and their ranking will also be published on www.ycskosovo.eu and on www.mei-ks.net. Thus all applicants, including those not short-listed or selected for the further stages, will be able to witness in details the development of each stage of the selection procedure. Upon their requests applicants will be allowed to view their own exam papers, and where applicable the outcome of their interviews after the results have been made public. The final minutes of the interviews stage will also be published on the project's official website <http://www.ycskosovo.eu>.

Fairness is to be understood by the fact that any candidate attempting in any way or form to influence or mislead the selection process in his/her favour will be disqualified and immediately eliminated from the selection (i.e. including selected reserves who will try to influence in a direct or indirect manner taken decisions). Attempts in this sense include, though not exclusively, phone calls, emails or any other form of direct contact with the YCS Secretariat or with other individuals officially involved in the selection process in order to try to influence the outcome of the selections (i.e. invigilators during written exams, experts during interviews or YCS team). Any candidate attempting to copy or use non-allowed materials during the written exams will be asked to leave and will be immediately eliminated from the selection (a



detailed set of rules governing written exams will be prepared in due course by the project and presented to all candidates admitted to sit written tests). Written exams will be code-numbered, to ensure anonymity of applicants, and they will be correct by optical marker reading using an independent professional service of an EU Member State with a proven track record of similar activities for public and private selections in the recent past. Candidates will not be allowed to write their names on any exam paper or mark them in any way that may lead to the identification of the candidate, subject to their exclusion from the selection. Written exam papers will be kept absolutely confidential and in a secure place until the day of the exams and accessible only to the YCS Secretariat (nor MEI/MPA neither EUO representatives will be allowed to get access to these forms). Any threats of any form or attempt to influence decision moved directly or indirectly to the YCS Secretariat or to any of the individuals involved in the selection process (in any stage of it: pre-selection, written exams, interviews, final ranking) will also be reported immediately to the competent authorities, where and if such threats represent a criminal offence. In addition, any direct or indirect (i.e. through third persons not directly involved in the selection process) attempt to influence the decisions and the independence of YCS Secretariat, interview panel or other professionals and experts involved in the selection procedure will cause the immediate disqualification of the candidate. This includes as well any kind of political influence and/or attempt to use third parties to influence final decisions about awarded grantees. Any attempt of political interference during all stages of the selection procedure will be reported immediately to MEI, EUO and other competent authorities.

Positive discrimination is to be understood by the fact that women, minorities and people with disabilities are particularly encouraged to apply. A targeted outreach campaign is aimed at attracting minorities with a particular focus on RAE groups. Between equally qualified candidates (ie, two applicants with the same final score) the principle is that women, members of minorities and candidates with disabilities will be preferred and given priority in order to ensure a balanced outcome of the competition'.

People with disabilities will be kindly invited to notify to the YCS Secretariat, on the Scholarship Application Form, their needs at the moment of applying for the Scholarship so that the Secretariat can



take the necessary measures to ensure access to the premises of the exams and to ensure equal conditions as any other candidate to succeed in the selections.

B) Sectors of the Scholarship and number of grants available

Under Round XI of the YCS Scholarships **up to 45 grants** will be awarded for specialisation in different sectors. The **sectors** and the number of scholarships available have been defined by the Government of Kosovo in close cooperation with the European Union Office to Kosovo, and they are the following:

- 1) Law – up to 25 scholarships available
- 2) Public Administration – up to 10 scholarships available
- 3) Economics – up to 10 scholarships available

A relevant novelty under this year's RXI selections is that **this round is organised not as a mixed competition between sectors but rather as a separate competition within each sector** (i.e. each grantee will compete only within the sector he applied for). Therefore, **there will be three separate rankings (one for each sector) and the scores for written exams and interviews will be taken into account for each sector separately**. Nevertheless, these Rules of Procedure define a minimum threshold for both written exams and interviews scores for all sectors though (see below p.19-20).

This means that Applicants do not compete in a single ranking for all Sectors due to the very different nature of each of the sectors. In other words, those applying for a Scholarship in Law sector will only be competing for a grant in Law, those applying for Public Administration will only be competing for a grant in this Sector, and those applying for Economics will only be competing for a grant in this third Sector.

Thus, the final distribution of grantees between the three sectors will depend both on the quality and number of candidates and on their capacity to pass the minimum thresholds defined for each phase. If these thresholds will not be passed and/or if not enough suitable candidates will be available under each sector, according to the number and quality of received applications, the project reserves the right to redistribute the available grants between other sectors which have more and/or better candidates.



However, the general aim of the project is to increase as much as possible (considering also available financial resources) the total number of grants maintaining the same level of quality as in the past.

The precise definition of eligible sub-sectors for each sector, as well as the prerequisite degrees for applying for a specific sector, are detailed in **Annex I** to these Rules. **Applicants are required to carefully read and understand Annex I before submitting an application in order to avoid disappointment at a later stage. Applicants without the specified academic background or an equivalent professional experience (where applicable and as specified in Annex I) for the sector they intend to compete in, will be rejected during the pre-selection stage (please see below, II.2.a, Pre-selections).**

Specialisation of grantees in the above sectors will be achieved by each grantee engaging in pursuing such specialisation both in his/her Master Programme and in his/her final Master paper or dissertation. This engagement will be included in the grants' contract and will become legally binding upon grantees at the moment of signing the contract. This means that the grantees will also have to share and to agree with the YCS Scholarship Programme (and its stakeholders) the topic of their Master paper (final paper/thesis/final project).

Applicants **must** indicate in their YCS Application Form the sector they intend to apply for and **make sure** that sub-sectors they are interested to apply for if they are awarded with a grant is among those listed in Annex I. No changes of sector are allowed, **unless it is directly proposed by the YCS Stakeholders where and if exceptional circumstances apply** (i.e., where and if a suitable candidate has a relevant academic background for a Sector he/she did not apply to and not enough suitable candidates have emerged within that Sector – performance in the written exams is also taken into account in such cases). **Applicants who do not indicate in the Application form their sector of choice will be rejected at the Pre-selection stage.**



C) Choice of EU Universities

Grantees have in principle the opportunity to apply to master programmes at EU universities of their preference as far as their choice is in line with available financial resources, sectors, eligible sub-sectors and requirements made by MEI, even if the final decision for their destination is taken by the EUO and MEI under the advice of the YCS Secretariat.

Grantees have the obligation to apply to up to maximum 3 Master programmes in 3 different EU Universities at the same time. It is forbidden to apply to more than 1 University in the same EU Member State. Only if no application out of the initial three is successful each grantee will be allowed to present 3 more applications in 3 different EU countries. In this manner avoiding the unlikable practice chosen by some students insisting with one country more than with others and basing their choices more on personal preferences rather than on academic and scientific considerations.

Nonetheless, a pool of receiving EU Universities, highly ranked in their educational and research performances, will be given by the YCS Secretariat, in agreement with EUO and MEI, to the grantees depending on their sector (eg, *the Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, in Belgium, Maastricht and Leiden Universities, in the Netherlands, Central European University in Budapest, Sussex University in the UK, and other Universities that were part of previous YCS Rounds*). These are Universities highly specialised in the sectors of this call that have received YCS Grantees in the past with excellent feedbacks. **Please note that, if in conflict with the preferences given by the grantees, application is compulsory to the study programmes that are advised to grantees by the project.** Grantees will be supported in the application process for advised Universities by the YCS Secretariat.

Grantees must also respect the following merely indicative financial limits when applying to Universities:

- **EU Law** sector: tuition fees must be no more than **16,000 EUR** in value
- **Public Administration** sector: tuition fees must be no more than **17,000 EUR** in value
- **Economics** sector: tuition fees must be no more than **18,000 EUR** in value;



Please note that the above limits do not need to be attained and that excellent Master programmes can also charge lesser fees. The level of tuition fees is not an indicator of academic excellence but only of the education policy of a given country. The above limits have been established based on average tuition fees in the respective sectors under previous Rounds and they reflect current fee levels in Universities across the European Union, even if it has to be pointed out that currently great differences continue to exist between a country and another. In any case the final decisions for each university will be taken by MEI and EUO jointly during a dedicated PSC.

Grantees will also receive **12 months of living allowances up to an average of 1.400 EUR/month** based on OSCE indicators concerning the cost of living in EU countries (ie, students in Belgium will receive 1.400EUR/month, those in countries with a more expensive cost of living will receive relatively more, and for those in countries with a less expensive cost of living it will be relatively less). Anyhow it has to be assumed that the applied oscillation limit is in the order of 15-20% if we take 1.400 EUR/month as an average amount.

Depending on the overall financial sustainability of the YCS Scheme and on the actual costs of the grants based on the effective number of grantees, EUO and MEI may decide to increase the above limits if resources allow for this and only where and if such financial sustainability can be preserved.

Grantees' final destination will be decided only by EUO and MEI upon advice from the YCS Secretariat, following the criteria below (in order of importance for consideration):

- 1) The Master Programmes considered are in line with both contents of specialisation sectors and sub-sectors – as defined in Annex I of these Rules - and grantees academic background;
- 2) The academic value of the programmes and the Universities offering them;
- 3) The overall financial sustainability of the YCS Scholarship programme;
- 4) The wishes of the grantee.

Where and if the wishes of the grantees do not correspond to the advices of the YCS Secretariat a stakeholders committee is convened, prior to the final allocation of programmes, where grantees can



present their reasons and motivation for their preferred programme. The decision ensuing from the stakeholders committee is final. In order to enforce the application of the **principles of equal treatment, fairness and transparency grantees who try to influence or lobby for the programme of their preference in any other way or manner, including external attempts of political or other nature made by third parties, will be subject to a disciplinary procedure that may lead to the withdraw of the scholarship.**

Grantees are allowed to apply to different Master Programmes until **15th May 2018**. Applications made after that date will not be taken into consideration by the YCS Secretariat. On the other hand, **applications made to Universities before the end of Round XI selection process** might be taken into account only where and if they respect the definitions of Sectors and sub-sectors in Annex I and are approved by the stakeholders. Potential applicants, after reading Annex I to these Rules, and where they have a specific University and programme in mind that fulfil the definition of their sector, are also invited to apply to such Universities as soon as possible if the applications deadline would expire before the end of the selection process (this is the case for Universities in Scandinavian countries or, eg, in several Dutch and Belgian Universities). Applicants must note however that no reimbursement can be offered for costs engaged in applications to Universities prior to the award to the YCS Scholarship.

D) Undergraduate Applicants

Applications to Round XI Scholarships are accepted also from undergraduates attending their last year of bachelor studies (ie, **undergraduates due to finish their bachelor degree by 31st July 2018**).

Undergraduates who are awarded a YCS grant **must complete all requirements to obtain their degree by 31st July 2018**. If by that date the grantee is not in a position to prove he/she has completed all requirements to obtain his/her degree then the YCS grant will be withdrawn and assigned to the next candidate in the reserve list for that sector. The wording “**Completion of all requirements**” has to be understood inclusive of all exams and presentation of the Final Degree Paper (or thesis).



Undergraduates must enclose their most updated University transcripts (in original with stamp of the University, or a duly certified copy – on “certification of documents” please see below paragraph 2.a) together with their application form for a YCS grant.



II) Selection Schedule, Stages and Rules of Procedure

1. Schedule and Deadline for Application

- **9th January 2018 (Tuesday)**: Pre-notice of the call for applications published on most important national newspapers, selected news web-portals, radios, social media and on the official YCS website www.yckosovo.eu (as well as on www.mei-ks.net) and further disseminated via partner agencies.
- **15th January 2018 (Monday)**: Opening of the Call for applications. Application package will be received by email upon personal registration at the official YCs website www.yckosovo.eu
- **5th February 2018 (Monday) @ 17h00**: Deadline for the receipt of complete applications. Application must be submitted, no later than by 17h00 on Monday 5th February 2018, in a sealed envelope in person or by registered mail/express courier, at:

Young Cell Scheme – Round XI Applications
British Council
Perandori Iustinian, 6
Pejton
10000 Pristina
Kosovo

NB: If the applicant decide to send the application by registered mail/express courier (in Albanian: *letër rekomandë/postë eshpejtë*; in Serbian: *preporučenom poštom/ po kuriru*) he/she will do it at his own risk as the project will not take into account as for the final deadline the date on the envelop but the date when the envelop has been effectively received by the project (i.e. if the envelop is send on February 3rd but it is physically received by the project on February 6th this application will be excluded during pre-selections). Therefore no complaints and/or appeals will be accepted by the project under these circumstances.

NB: Applicants must remember to write their address and the above address on the sealed envelope.

- **9th February 2018 (Friday)**: Long-listed applicants who passed the pre-selection phase are invited to the written exams by email. Lists of long-listed applicants will be published online on the scholarship website www.yckosovo.eu and on www.mei-ks.net.
- **17th and 18th February 2018 (Saturday and Sunday)**: Written tests, full days of exams (eligible candidates who passed pre-selection phase will be divided in two groups according to alphabetical order, the first one will take written exams on 17th February and the other one on 18th February).
- **2nd March 2018 (Friday)**: Publication online on the scholarship website www.yckosovo.eu and on MEI website www.mei-ks.net of the results of written exams and invitation to the interviews for up to the first 90 candidates (who will be divided in the 3 different sectors as explained below), as per score in the written tests.
- **12th – 16th March 2018 (Monday to Friday)**: Interviews made by a panel constituted by 5 EU Academics (the 90 candidates who passed written exams will be divided in 5 groups made of 18 students each and will be invited to sit oral exams to be held in the British Council premises).



- **19th March 2018 (Monday)**: Publication on the scholarship website www.ycskosovo.eu and on MEI website www.mei-ks.net of the final ranking of RXI selection procedure divided per sector and communication of the results to the selected YCS Round XI grantees.

2. Selection Stages and Rules of Procedures

The selection will be carried out in 3 stages:

- a) Pre-Selection of applications
- b) Written exams (English Language Knowledge Test, EU General knowledge Test and Verbal & Numerical Reasoning)
- c) Interviews

a) Pre-selection of applications (Eligibility of Applicants and Complete Applications)

The initial selection of applications is to ensure that applicants are eligible for the scholarship and that their applications are complete in all parts.

A panel composed by the YCS Secretariat (2 members) and MEI (1 member) will longlist eligible candidates to be invited to the written exams.

Candidates are pre-selected base both on eligibility criteria (i.e., **exclusion criteria** like eligible graduate or undergraduate bachelor studies, for example no BA in Engineering) aimed at ensuring the **eligibility of applicants** and formal criteria related with the presentation of **complete applications** (ie, with all required – and certified if needed- documents, and with the YCS RXI Application Form duly filled in and signed). This means that **applications from non-eligible candidates** and/or **incomplete applications will be rejected** (NB: this may also include applications that have not been signed by the applicant).

Eligible applicants are:

- **Kosovo's citizens** with a valid Kosovo passport or ID card issued by Kosovo Authorities or those who provide proofs of birth and of residency in Kosovo (**NB: both birth certificate and residence certificate** are required where any form of Kosovo ID cannot be provided).
- University graduates holding a bachelor degree in one of the areas of study pertaining to the sectors (please refer to Annex I to these Rules). Undergraduate students may also be eligible provided that they obtain their degree no later than 31st July 2018 (see above point / D) *Undergraduate Applicants* for further details).
- **Fluent in English** and Albanian or Serbian. Knowledge of other EU languages will not be considered an asset.
- Available to travel and to move abroad from August 2018 to October 2019, and to undergo intensive training from the second half of March 2018 onwards.
- Born on 4th February 1983 or later.

NB: previous YCS grantees who have benefited from funding and already attended a Master programme abroad are not eligible to re-apply to the scheme, as well as candidates who already obtained a Master degree in EU countries or already benefited from similar scholarships awarded by other donors in Kosovo.



Complete applications are composed of:

- a) **YCS Round XI - 2018 Application Form, in English, completed and signed**, Make sure to include a valid email address. Communication with applicants will be conducted only and exclusively through email,
- b) **Europass CV**, in English (the project will provide all applicants with an updated Europass CV template within the application package they will receive by email),
- c) **Letter of Motivation**, in English, signed and dated,
- d) **Copies of Valid Kosovo ID and/or passport** or original proof of birth and of residency in Kosovo (or certified copies of such proofs). NB: originals or certified copies of both birth certificate and residence certificate must be enclosed with the application where any form of Kosovo ID is not available,
- e) **Copy of University degree of at least 180 ECTS plus Original Transcripts of exams** (signed and stamped by the University). This means that BOTH documents MUST be enclosed with the application form. We draw the attention of the applicants that Transcripts MUST be in original, signed and stamped by the University. Undergraduate applicants MUST enclose with their application original transcripts (or a similar certificate) from current academic year (ie, 2017/2018 academic year) with the list of exams already passed and those still to pass plus a signed statement by the applicant with the indication of the date by when the applicant expects to complete the degree (in any case not later than 31st July 2018 as specified above). In case original transcripts cannot be enclosed with the application, it is possible to enclose a certified copy of transcripts (see paragraph below). NB: Undergraduate applicants must read and fully understand the paragraph “Undergraduate applicants” above in these rules of procedures to avoid mistakes and disappointment.

NB: Certified copies of documents are those copies whose conformity to the original document has been notarised by a notary (additional information on this can be given by the YCS Secretariat if needed).

NB: Applicants who at the end of the selections are awarded a YCS Grant and who are graduates from non-public Universities in Kosovo or who are graduates from a foreign University must legalise their degrees at the Kosovo Ministry of Education. The legalisation of the degree is required by the Kosovo Civil Service Legislation and it will be compulsory for all Round XI grantees. This means that all future Round XI Grantees who do not possess a degree from a Kosovo Public University must legalise their degrees or ensure prior to their application to the YCS Selections that their degree has been accredited by the Kosovo Accreditation Agency.

A check-list has been included for the applicants' convenience in the YCS Round XI - 2018 Application Form. Please make sure to have included all demanded documents to avoid disappointment and exclusion by failing to include required documents or for presenting them in the incorrect form (eg, a CV or a Letter of Motivation not in English, or a YCS Round XI - 2018 Application Form that has not been filled-in or signed, etc). No applicants, under any circumstances, will be allowed to complete an incomplete application after submission (however, the YCS Secretariat, in agreement with EUO and MEI, may demand applicants to complete their applications at a later stage if the missing documents are not of substantial nature). Applications submitted after the deadline will not be accepted under any circumstances.

NB: Documents submitted with the application will not be returned to applicants under no circumstances.



Incomplete applications are at this stage rejected.

On the other hand, complete applications from eligible candidates instead are then formally accepted and the applicant is invited to sit the written exams.

A minimum number of eligible and compliant candidates must be selected for each of the sectors indicated in the call for application. This minimum number of candidates is equal to a 3 to 1 ratio, i.e. at least 3 times the number of available scholarship in each sector. No upper limit is set.

If not enough suitable applications are found within each sector, as defined by the call for applications, then EUO and MEI, may decide to accordingly reduce the number of available scholarships so that at least it is kept a ratio of 3 applications every scholarship awarded (i.e., at least 135 applicants invited to the written exams for 45 scholarships, or less for less scholarships).

b) Written exams

The written tests consist of multiple-choice questionnaires on:

- 1) Knowledge of English Language.
- 2) General Knowledge on EU Affairs (EUGK);
- 3) Verbal and Numerical Reasoning (VNR);

Anonymity of applicants will be ensured by numerical codes given to each applicant on the day of written exam to be written in the answer sheets. Overall the written exams accounts for up to 50% (or 50 points) of the total maximum score of the scholarship's selections (100 points).

The "Knowledge of English Language" test aims at ascertaining the level of English knowledge of candidates. The test however does not count towards the final ranking of candidates (i.e., it does not accumulate points towards the final ranking). This test is an "in or out" threshold exam. This means that applicants are required to pass the 65% threshold of correct answers, specified below (see p. 19), in order for the results of the other 2 written tests to be considered.

The other two components of the written test count respectively 20 points (EU test), and 30 points (Verbal & Numerical reasoning) of the total score for the written test (50 points). A cumulative total of maximum 50 points is awarded for the written exams. The 3 different written tests will take place on the same day.

The minimum threshold to be admitted at oral exams is 11 points for EU General Knowledge test and 16.5 points for Verbal and Numerical Reasoning test (i.e. each candidate MUST score at least 11 points in EUGK test and 16.5 points in VNR test to be admitted to sit interviews, which means 55% of correct answers to each test)

Before entering the examination rooms all candidates must prove their identity and be checked against an accredited list, sign for their admission while their presence is validated by a member of the YCS secretariat.



Upon admission to the examination room candidates will be asked to leave personal belongings (e.g. coats, mobile phones – turned off, electronic equipment, bags etc.) at a designated point in the room. TOTAL silence is demanded from the candidates.

Once the examination has commenced any candidate who has a question must raise his/her hand and wait for an invigilator to respond to his/her needs. Candidates requiring the use of restrooms will be accompanied by a same gender member of staff.

Upon completion of their tests candidates will be required to remain seated until the designated examination time has expired.

As mentioned earlier any candidate contravening the rules of the written exams (i.e. caught talking, copying or cheating in any form) will be asked to leave the room and have his/her papers marked “expelled”.

1) Knowledge of English Language

The English Language Test aims at ascertaining at least a strong upper-intermediated level of English, as such defined by the IELTS and TOEFL examining and scoring protocols that will be used as guidelines for the test. This test is therefore foreseen as determining the candidate’s level of English and his/her overall suitability of joining the programme.

The English tests will be composed of **3 different sections**:

- a) listening comprehension,
- b) reading comprehension
- c) grammar tests.

Each section will take ca. 1 hour to sit. To be admitted to sit oral exams and to get their scores in other two written tests (i.e. EUGK and VNR) candidates must score at least an average of 65% of the possible correct answers in the 3 combined English tests (this score is equivalent to a IELTS Band of 5.5). Any candidates with less than 65% of the possible correct answers in the English Language tests will be eliminated at this stage, unless not enough suitable candidates are to be found within this threshold. In such a case, those candidates with at least 55% of the possible correct answers (equivalent to an IELTS Band between 5 and 5.5) might be conditionally rescued, upon the obligation to follow intensive EN training in the case they were to be eventually awarded a grant, with no more than 10% of missed classes allowed. These candidates would therefore receive, should they pass the interviews and be awarded a scholarship, a “conditional grant”, which may be withdrawn should the candidate not respect his/her obligations in terms of English training attendance.

If not enough suitable candidates are found within individual sectors as indicated in the call for application then candidates invited to the oral examination may be recruited from the other lists, if there are enough suitable candidates. Accordingly, and dependant on the written tests results, EUO and MEI may also decide to either increase or decrease the number of available scholarships per individual sectors, or alternatively to reduce the overall number of available scholarships and invite to the interviews fewer candidates than initially planned, and/or they may propose a change of sector for suitable candidates.



If enough suitable candidates are through at this stage, up to 90 applicants will be invited to the third and final selection stage, the interviews. The ratio for the interviews is of in excess of 2 to 1 grant, or two to three applicants for each available scholarship. This means that applicants will be invited to the interviews up to twice the number of available grants for each sector, ie:

Law– up to 50 applicants invited to the interviews for up to 25 scholarships available.

Public Administration– up to 20 applicants invited to the interviews for up to 10 scholarships available

Economics– up to 20 applicants invited to the interviews for 10 scholarships available;

In addition to the above, it must be considered that additional thresholds to be admitted to sit oral exams are set for EUGK (55% of correct answers) and VNR (55% of correct answers) tests (see below for more details).

2) General Knowledge on EU Affairs

The **General Knowledge on EU Affairs** test will be composed by 80 multiple-choice questions (each question will have 4 possible replies, only one is the correct one).

The duration of this written test is maximum 1h30min. Each question is worth 0.25 points and the maximum score in the written test on EU is 20 points. **The threshold to be admitted to interviews for this test is set at 11 points (i.e. 55% of correct answers, which means 44 correct answers out of 80). This test must be taken by all candidates.**

The General EU Knowledge Tests questions will be drawn from the following document published by the European Parliament:

- Selected Chapters of the “Facts Sheets on the EU (July 2014 edition)”, published by the European Parliament, and available online at the following link: <https://publications.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/0b807f93-7bd2-4700-9f0d-36949d220c7f/language-en>

NB: The online edition of the Facts Sheets on the EU can be accessed only at the above internet address.

NB: The chapters of the “Facts Sheets on the EU” (July 2014 edition) that will be used for the 80 questions of the EUGK written test are Part 1, **HOW THE EUROPEAN UNION WORKS**, (30 questions) Part 3, **THE INTERNAL MARKET** (20 questions), Part 4, **ECONOMIC AND MONETARY UNION** (10 questions), Part 6, **THE EU’S EXTERNAL RELATIONS** (20 questions).

The questions' degree of difficulty is determined not only by the area and specific topic selected, but also by the quality and quantity of options proposed as possible replies, as they can easily be detected as fake or clearly wrong/impossible answer.

This document can also be downloaded from the YCS official website,

http://www.yckosovo.eu/EU_Fact_Sheets.zip (please be aware that this is a 6.4 MB file).



3) Verbal and Numerical Reasoning

The Verbal & Numerical Reasoning test will be composed by 40 multiple-choice questions. The duration of this test is maximum 1h30min. Each question is worth 0.75 points and the maximum score in the Verbal & Numerical Reasoning test is 30. **The threshold to be admitted to interviews for this test is set at 16.5 points (i.e. 55% of correct answers, which means 22 correct answers out of 40). This test must be taken by all candidates.**

The Verbal & Numerical Reasoning test, proposed to candidates only in the English language, requires applicants to read and understand up to 8 short paragraphs and 5 tables and/or diagrams with numerical data. For each paragraph, table and/or diagram applicants have then to answer 3 to 4 multiple-choice questions related to the contents of that specific paragraph, table or diagram and demanding from them to elaborate and work with the information or the data contained in the specific paragraph in order to find the right answers. The use of calculator will not be allowed for the test as the numerical operations required to answer the questions will be of an elementary nature.

c) Interviews

Interviews will be conducted by a **panel composed of an odd number of members** (i.e. **5 EU academic experts** from prominent EU universities); 2 more members representing the EU Office to Kosovo and the Ministry of European Integration will attend the interviews as observers without scoring the candidates.

Prior to each interview panel members will **review the CV and the Motivation Letter** enclosed with the application of the candidate.

The interviews will last for no more than 20 minutes per each candidate and they will consist of a 5 to 7 minutes presentation in English and a 10 to 12 minutes interview in English on the candidate's background and motivations.

Even if specified in his/her CV or motivation letter knowledge of additional EU languages will not be considered as an asset and thus it will not be evaluated by the panel in scoring the candidate. Thus, there is no additional scoring for other EU languages other than English during interviews.

As specified above, each interview will be divided in three phases:

1. Review of the CV and motivation letter.

During this phase and before the candidate enters the interview room, the five (5) members of the panel will take into account the following elements and academic indicators to score the candidate:

- consistency of the CV with proposed sectors and sub-sectors;
- overall quality of the CV;
- level of motivation to attend the programme and professional career prospects (if any) highlighted in the letter of motivation;
- academic results and performance of the candidate (based on copy of transcripts included in their application);
- clarity, consistency and relevance of the motivation letter to the scope of the programme;

2. Presentations

The scope of this part of the interviews is to test the presentation and interpersonal skills of the candidates. Applicants invited to the interviews **MUST** prepare an oral presentation (no PPT or other media or physical supports allowed) linked to public policy making in Kosovo and/or to the process of EU integration of the country. Once invited to the oral examination, the candidates will receive a detailed list of issues that need to be addressed in their presentation. If no presentation is prepared or if the



presentation is not in line with the above or too general, the panel will interrupt the exam and invite the candidate to leave the room, excluding him/her from the selection.

Presentation topics related with public policy making or EU integration of Kosovo, must in addition be a subject within the specific sector where the candidate competes. Candidates who present a topic not related with their sector will be scored 0 on this part of the interview and therefore eliminated from the selection, no matter their presentation skills.

3. Interview

The scope of this part of the interview is to assess the general knowledge of the candidate about some general cultural knowledge and some specific issues related with the sector he/she applied for. Possible question will refer alternatively at several of the following topics (depending also on the sector each candidate applied for):

- EU integration process of Kosovo;
- EU policies and/or juridical principles governing EU action;
- EU objectives and values;
- general knowledge of European history and politics;
- general knowledge of economic trends and theories;
- real motivation to attend the scheme and knowledge about the scopes of the programme;
- readiness to serve in civil service for three consecutive years after the completion of his/her master studies abroad;
- professional career prospects if any and/or ideas about master studies to be enrolled within;
- other academic indicators such as, but not exclusively, conciseness and clarity in expression, logical articulation of thoughts and capacity to tackle a multilevel interview.

Candidates are scored once for the review of the CV and of the motivation letter, once for presentation contents and skills, and once for the results of the interview.

The scoring for each part will be the following:

- up to 10 points maximum for CV and motivation letter;
- up to 20 points for their presentation;
- up to 20 points for the interview.

Maximum 50 points (or 50% of the final score) are awarded for the oral examination by each member of the panel in their individual evaluation sheet as the sum of the three parts detailed above.

Each member of the panel will be asked to comment and justify the scores for each part as well as the his/her final score in the individual evaluation sheet.

Anyone **below 27.5 (55% of total points for interviews)** is considered **not to have passed the oral examination**. The partial score for the interview counts for up to 50% of the final aggregate score.

Final score given to each candidate is decided by consensus of panel members according to individual scores given in evaluation sheets. Where and if consensus amongst panel members cannot be reached the final mark of the candidate is calculated by making the mathematical average, without adding the highest and lowest marks.

The final consensus sheet must indicate clear comments and justifications to the overall score given by each member of the panel.

NB: According to the minimum thresholds to be admitted to sit interviews (11 for EUGK and 16.5 for VNR) and to the threshold set above for oral examinations (i.e. 26 points out of 50 max available) **the**



minimum overall score to be awarded a scholarship is of at least 55 points (ie, 55% of the maximum score of 100).

A lower threshold can be agreed jointly by interview panel members and by EUO and MEI representatives who will attend all phases of the interviews if the results will be lower than expected.

Final Results

The final results of the selections will be made public within 2 working days from the end of the interviews stage. A specific ranking will be published for each of the three sectors, with indication of the exact number of grantees (as well as reserve lists) for each sector.

How to calculate the final score?

FINAL AGGREGATE SCORE: The selection of candidates will be made on the basis of points awarded in the written tests and in the interviews, on a 50/50% basis. This means:

The **Pre-selection stage** (eligibility of applicants and complete applications) simply provides **admission to or rejection from** the other 2 stages of the Selections, but does not award any points;

The score on the written tests (EU Knowledge and Verbal & Numerical Reasoning) counts for up to 50% of the final score. Preliminary, candidates must also score at least 65% of correct answers in the English test conceived as threshold to pass to the evaluation of other two tests;

The score on the interview counts for up to 50% of the final score.

In practice this means that, eg, candidate Mr/MrsXY in the Law Sector:

- Pre-selections: Mr/MrsXY is eligible and he/she has presented a complete application, therefore he/she has been invited to the written exams;
- Written tests: Mr/MrsXY obtains 70% of correct answers for English test and thus her/his VNR and EUGK are evaluated. He/she scores 16 points in EU General Knowledge test out of 20 points available (i.e. he/she had 64 correct answers out of 80), and in the Verbal and Numerical Reasoning test he/she obtains 27,75 points out of 30 points available (37 correct answers out of 40);
- In the interview Mr/MrsXY scores an average of 10 points out of 10 available for his/her CV and motivation letter, 15 points out of 20 available for the presentation, and 12 out of 20 available for his interview, for a total of 37 out of 50.
- the final aggregate score is then calculated as follows:

Written tests $(27,75+16=43,75) + (10 + 15 + 12 = 37) = 80,75$.

NB: the minimum overall score to be awarded a scholarship is of at least 60 points (ie, 60% of the maximum score of 100).



III) Indicative Overall Plan

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ACTIVITY	DATE
ROUND XI	
APPLICATIONS and SELECTIONS	9 th January – 19 th March 2018
TRAINEESHIP in Public Administration	(June - August) 2018
LANGUAGE and other COURSES and CERTIFICATION	April-July 2018
Intensive COMPULSORY TRAINING for CONDITIONAL GRANTS	April-June 2018 and, if needed, June-July 2018
APPLICATION and REGISTRATION in EU MS Universities	Mid March-end of May 2018
VISA Application process	To be started as soon as applicants receive offers from the Universities and possibly no later than mid May 2018.
POST GRADUATE STUDIES	June/October 2018 – June/October 2019
(Re)integration of Round XI Young Cell into Kosovo Public Administration or Public Institutions (including local government an municipalities)	From October 2019



YCS Round XI Evaluation Grid:

RXI	PRE-SELECTIONS		WRITTEN EXAMS				INTERVIEWS			FINAL
	RESULT: Admitted or Rejected		50% of the total score or max 50 points available				50% of the total score or max 50 points available			
	Ineligible candidate and/or uncomplete application = REJECTED	Eligible candidate AND Complete application = INVITED to Written Exams	EN tests – NO POINTS awarded 3 tests (reading, listening comprehension and grammar test) Eliminated if less than 65% correct answers (exceptional circumstances, 55%)	EU Affairs General Knowledge test (20%) 80 multiple choice questions (mcq) Up to 20 points	Verbal and Numerical Reasoning test (30%) 40 multiple choice questions (mcq) Up to 30 points	Total	CV and motivation letter UP TO 10 POINTS	Presentation UP TO 20 POINTS	Interview UP TO 20 POINTS	Total UP TO 100 POINTS
Passing threshold	na	na	65% correct answers	55% correct answers (11 points)	55% correct answers (16,5 points)		Minimum threshold is 30 out 50 points (60%)			min 60/100 points TO BE AWARDED A GRANT
Max Points available	na	na	na	20 points for 80 correct answers	30 points for 40 correct answers	50 POINTS				



Annex I – RXI Sectors Definition and Eligible Sub-sectors

LAW SECTOR

Eligible sub-sectors	Scholarships per sector (45 in total)	Eligible BA Degree for this sector:	Aim
<p>MA IN LEGAL STUDIES AND MASTERS OF LAW (LLM): 1. European Law (in its different articulations: EU Law, European Business Law, EU Competition and Regulatory Law, etc.); 2. International Law (public & private); 3. Human Rights; 4. Criminal Law; 5. Public Law; 6. Civil & Private Law; 7. Patent & Intellectual Property Law; 8. Competition Law; 9. International Business Law; 10. International Trade Law and International Commercial Law</p> <p>EXCLUDED: Corporate Law, Corporate Business Law and "pure" Business Law</p>	25	<p>Degree in Law (LLB)</p> <p>NB: This means that only graduates in Law (min 180 ECTS) are eligible under this sector. Graduates from American Univ. with a Major in Legal Studies are NOT eligible under Law sector (it's not considered a BA in Law by EU univ.). Graduates from other faculties than law with programmes focusing on Diplomacy, International Relations, Criminology or other subjects are NOT eligible under this sector; they are under PA sector.</p>	<p>Scholarships under this sector aim to provide grants to future experts in Law (any branch of law). Individuals who will be awarded a grant under this sector will be employed by the Government of Kosovo as legal officers/ legal experts.</p>



PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION SECTOR

Eligible sub-sectors	Scholarships per sector (45 in total)	Eligible BA Degree for this sector:	Aim
<p>MA/MSc: 1. EU Studies (European Affairs, EU policies, European Governance, etc.); 2. Environmental Studies & Policies (Ecology, GIS, Environment Protection, Environmental Policy, Environmental Management, Hydrology & Water Management, Natural Resources Management etc.); 3. Public Policies and Public Administration (Public Policies, Urban Management, Public Health Systems, etc.); 4. International Relations (International Relations, Terrorism & Security Studies); 5. Agriculture & Forestry (Agriculture, Animal Sciences, Aquaculture & Fisheries, Forestry); 6. Journalism & Media (Journalism, Media Management/Studies and Public Relations); 7. Development Studies (eligible only where and if they clearly focus by their courses on South-Eastern Europe and public policies).</p> <p>EXCLUDED: Applied and Hard Sciences, Humanities (Sociology, History, Religious Studies, Literature and Languages, Philosophy), Arts/Design/Architecture/, Engineering, Corporate Communication and/or Corporate Social Responsibility, Natural Sciences.</p>	<p>10</p>	<p>BA Degree in Political Sciences, Social Sciences (INCLUDING Psychology and Journalism), History, Humanities, International Relations, Diplomacy, Criminology, Geography and related studies (i.e. GIS, Geopolitics etc.) and other degrees directly related with the scope of this sector.</p>	<p>Scholarships under this sector aim to provide grants to future officials and experts in Public Administration and management of Public Policies, in particular with reference to the European integration process of Kosovo.</p>



ECONOMICS SECTOR

Eligible sub-sectors	Scholarships per sector (45 in total)	Eligible BA Degree for this sector:	Aim
<p>MA, MSc in: Economics, Econometrics, Statistics, Economic Policy, International or European Economics, Political Economy and Public Finance (NB: only Public Finance, <i>no corporate accounting or corporate finance</i>). EXCLUDED: MBA (Masters in Business Administration), Corporate Finance (ie, programmes in finance that study financial markets, securities, assets management and similar), Accounting and Auditing, Corporate Marketing, Mathematics.</p>	<p>10</p>	<p>Ba Degree Economics, Business Management, Political Sciences and other degrees (eg, Mathematics and Statistics) directly related with the scope of this sector.</p>	<p>Scholarships under this sector aim to provide grants to future officials and experts in the fields of economics, with particular focus on issues related to European Union and European Integration.</p>