



**SUSTAINABILITY  
REPORT 2023**

**GREENING BKT KOSOVA**



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## Executive summary of the report

The first Sustainability report has been developed as part of the Greening BKT Kosova project, which is supported by the Green for Growth Fund (GGF) and European Fund for Southeast Europe (EFSE). The primary purpose of this report is to present all relevant and significant activities and initiatives of BKT Kosova, as well as future plans related to the implementation of the ESG (Environmental, Social, and Governance) concept within the Bank's business operations. This report adds value to BKT Kosova by highlighting its commitment to business development and innovations. It is crucial to emphasize that the observed report is actually a baseline and direction for the development of future sustainability reports in the coming years, which will have more content regarding the implementation of new initiatives and activities.

This Sustainability report reflects the BKT Kosova efforts and commitments for the sustainable transformation of its business and alignment of its operations and clients' portfolio with growing ESG regulatory requirements and trends. Content of the report highlights the main environmental, social and governance activities/initiatives throughout the previous period, as well as key sustainability pillars defined as part of the ESG Strategy, overview of key material topics, qualitative and quantitative ESG key performance indicators with provided current values and values for 2024 and 2025. Beside the implemented activities, Report outlines the envisaged ESG activities for upcoming period, which aim to have a positive impact on ecosystems while reducing environmental pressure, creating a sustainable society with the development of local communities, and optimizing and transforming internal processes and operations within the Bank.

## Executive summary of the report

## Commitments to SDG goals

Throughout the development and integration of BKT Kosova ESG strategy and with rehashing and enhancing its business activities, the Bank has committed to align its business with UN Sustainable Development Goals 2030 (UN SDGs 2030).



SDG 1: No poverty; Ensuring that the poorest and most vulnerable have equal rights to economic resources.



SDG 3: Good health and well-being



SDG 5: Gender equality - Achieving gender equality and empower all women and girls



SDG 6: Ensuring availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all



SDG 7: Affordable and clean energy; Increase use of renewables contribute to climate change mitigation



SDG 8: Decent work and economic growth; Promoting sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth



SDG 10: Reduced inequalities; reduced inequality within and among countries



SDG 11: Sustainable cities and communities



SDG 12: Responsible consumption and production



SDG 13: Climate action; Aiming to reduce emissions of climate-harming greenhouse gases

## Message from the CEO



Suat Bakkal  
CEO & Board Member

BKT Kosova, a financial institution deeply committed to responsibility and sustainability, has set forth ambitious objectives to drive the Bank's business forward. These pivotal goals encompass expanding our portfolio, meeting the evolving needs of our clients and stakeholders, and ensuring steadfast alignment with Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) principles.

In today's global landscape, environmental and social challenges transcend borders and demand the attention of companies worldwide. From the urgent matter of climate change to upholding human rights, stakeholders are increasingly vocal about the necessity for companies to take meaningful action on various ESG topics. These issues are not merely theoretical; they represent the tangible impacts and risks of our economic activities. As such, BKT

Kosova recognizes its responsibility to enhance its positive environmental impact, proactively address any negative impacts and deepen its important role and contribution to the society and community.

The Bank is resolute in its commitment to measure, disclose, and enhance its environmental and social performance across all its operations. This commitment extends from evaluating our internal environmental practices to scrutinizing the ESG aspects of all clients and suppliers. Our overarching mission compels us to not only elevate our own sustainability but also to influence the environmental and social performance of those we collaborate with.

Central to our strategic focus is the seamless integration of ESG principles into our business strategies and plans. We emphasize a sustainable transition that doesn't compromise profitability, efficiency, or competitiveness. Through the implementation of targeted ESG actions, our aim is to meet the diverse requirements of stakeholders, including clients, partners, regulators, local and international financiers, NGOs, local communities, and other associates.

Simultaneously, BKT Kosova places a significant emphasis on capacity building for its employees in sustainable finance and ESG across various banking functions and sectors. This involves providing opportunities for our team to participate in relevant education programs and seminars tailored to different departments within the Bank. Our employees gain specific knowledge on topics such as green financing, sustainable loans, environmental management, social responsibility, ethics, diversity, inclusion, gender equality, and occupational health and safety. Recognizing that the knowledge and dedication of our employees are instrumental in driving positive change, we are committed to their ongoing development.

In recognition of the global significance of sustainability, BKT Kosova has embraced the goals of the Net-zero Banking Alliance (NZBA) concerning decarbonization and climate neutrality. Additionally, we are actively exploring the possibility of becoming a member of the UN Global Compact to align our activities and operations with principles related to human rights, labor, environment, and anti-corruption. This strategic step will empower us to take actions that contribute to broader societal goals.

Our employees are already demonstrating a profound understanding of the importance of taking tangible steps toward sustainability and innovation. We remain dedicated to making genuine progress on critical issues such as environmental impact, climate change, social inclusion, and corporate responsibility. As the CEO of BKT Kosova, I take pride in the significant strides we have made and the journey we are embarking on towards a more sustainable and responsible future. We pledge to maintain transparency in communicating our progress through regular Sustainability Reports, underscoring our commitment to accountability and positive impact. We express gratitude for your continued support and partnership in our sustainability journey.

## BKT Kosova Sustainability Mission

“Utilizing our talents and energy to develop solutions that contribute to the improvement of our joint ecosystem, both environmental by preserving our nature and its resources as well as societal by contributing to our communities, providing our people and stakeholders with peace of mind, convenience and numerous possibilities within the banking sector.”

## BKT Kosova Sustainability Vision

“Pursuing the improvement and advancement of business practices and procedures in order to promote sustainability, by making a beneficial environmental difference through internal business operations and financial activities, embracing important social values while enriching the lives of individuals we encounter, refining policies and procedures in alignment with ESG trends and benchmarks, and incorporating revolutionary innovative strategies.”



## Key sustainability business pillars

In order to continue its path towards sustainable development and the adoption of ESG principles, the Bank has defined key pillars of sustainability that are fully aligned with the Bank’s strategic goals and ambitions in terms of business development and following trends and innovations. Key pillars include:

### Responsible Contributor to our Environment

- Integrating environmental principles in Bank’s Activities.
- Monitoring & managing specific climate and environmental risks.
- Developing “green products programs to tackle specific environmental issues.

### Responsible social provider

- Optimizing employees labor conditions and caring about their well-being.
- Adopting inclusion, diversity and equality in the workplace.
- Social performance for Bank’s Clients and Stakeholders.

### Sustainable governance and strategy

- Upgrading internal policies and procedures with ESG segment.
- Compliance with local and EU regulatory requirements.
- Governance structure alignment with ESG.
- Regular non-financial sustainability report.



## Responsible Contributor to our Society

- Focusing on environmental-friendly activities within the Bank and increasing the environmental awareness of the employees;
- Putting focus on the energy management within the Bank's premises by measuring the consumption and determining the goals for the reduction of energy consumption and monetary savings;
- Putting efforts to eliminate the use of single-use plastics, by implementing campaign within the Bank, etc.;
- Setting ambitions on introducing green lending framework and implementing the Eco-loans for increasing the energy efficiency in households and buying the efficient and environmentally friendly household appliances.



## Responsible social provider

### Strengthening Sports and Youth Development

The partnership between BKT Kosova and the Kosovo Olympic Committee epitomizes a shared vision for empowering Kosovo's youth through sports. With a 10-year extension of sponsorship agreement, BKT Kosova solidifies its position as a vital supporter of Kosovar athletes, contributing 3 million euro towards the development and promotion of sports.

BKT Kosova, beyond the sponsorship to the Kosovo Olympic Committee, made a step further by launching the initiative "Be a Hero." This concerted initiative is contributing to Kosovo's remarkable achievements in international sporting events, showcasing the power of collaboration and collective action in driving positive change. Initiating broader initiatives that include all segments of the community, BKT Kosova, through the "Be a Hero" campaign, commits to extending its influence. The success of this campaign is dedicated to Kosovar sports and the country in general, where 1% of every payment made with the BKT VISA Credit Card at BKT Kosova POS terminals goes directly to the account of the Olympic Committee of Kosovo. These funds are dedicated to the athletes who will represent Kosovo at the 2024 Olympic Games in Paris. This percentage of the payment is covered by the bank. This collaborative approach highlights BKT Kosova's commitment to promoting a collective sense of responsibility and empowerment, ensuring that the benefits of our partnership are comprehensive and for the benefit of the entire country.

### Humanitarian Engagement

BKT Kosova's commitment to humanitarian causes goes beyond financial contributions, as evidenced by its active involvement in events like the Humanitarian Mini-Marathon "Vrapo Babadimër." This event aimed to assist children hospitalized in the Oncology Ward at the University Clinical Center of Kosovo and to support 250 families in need during the holiday season. Many employees from BKT Kosova's Head Office and branches in Prishtina participated in this impactful marathon, lending their support to this noble cause. BKT Kosova supported this initiative financially and through the engagement of its employees, emphasizing its dedication to making a tangible difference in the lives of those in need.

Additionally, BKT Kosova and the National Blood Transfusion Center continued their blood donation initiative, a longstanding tradition of the bank. The significant participation of bank employees in this blood donation activity underscores Bank's commitment to creating a positive impact and setting an example in society. "Donate blood save life" is an integral part of the Bank's social responsibility program, founded on the principle of "Contribute to society." This initiative reflects BKT Kosova's commitment for charitable activities and its dedication to making a difference in the lives of those in need.

### Health Awareness and Support

In the realm of health awareness, BKT Kosova spearheads initiatives aimed at promoting breast cancer awareness and prevention among its employees and the broader community. By organizing informative event and providing essential health resources, BKT Kosova empowers individuals to prioritize their well-being and take proactive steps towards disease prevention.

### Environmental Sustainability

As a Premium Member of the Kosovo CSR Network, BKT Kosova champions sustainable business practices and environmental stewardship. By endorsing initiatives such as the use of eco-friendly tote bags, BKT Kosova demonstrates its commitment to reducing plastic waste and safeguarding the environment for future generations.

### Support for Special Needs Individuals

BKT Kosova remains steadfast in its support for individuals with special needs, partnering with organizations like NGO 'Autizmi' to foster inclusivity and support within Kosovar society. Through financial assistance and advocacy efforts, BKT Kosova promotes a more inclusive social environment where every individual is valued and supported.

On World Down Syndrome Day, BKT Kosova reaffirms its dedication to advocating for the rights and well-being of individuals with Down syndrome in Kosovo. By providing financial support to organizations like Down Syndrome Kosova, BKT Kosova amplifies the voices of marginalized communities and works towards creating a more inclusive and supportive society for all.

Furthermore, BKT Kosova is extending its support to children with special needs by donating a van to facilitate their transportation to school and assist with their daily needs. This initiative underscores the bank's commitment to enhancing accessibility and inclusivity for all members of society, ensuring that children with special needs have the resources they need to thrive and pursue their education.



## Sustainable governance and strategy

- Focusing on incorporation the sustainability requirements in the Bank's business models, complying with the EU requirements on sustainable banking;
- Integrating ESG issues and topics in decision-making processes within the Bank's departments;
- Incorporating ESG criteria in the investment procedures with increasing the share of sustainable investments;
- Transforming the segments of the Bank to build its strategies by changing the approach to market and providing customers with greater convenience and access;
- Empowering its partners, stakeholders in terms of joint work on ESG implementation;
- Consistent application of relevant laws and other regulations in order to ensure safe and responsible work;
- Upgrading the BKT Kosova Code of Business Ethics with specific ESG requirements for the employees.



## Cooperation with Green for Growth Fund (GGF) and European Fund for Southeast Europe (EFSE) to deliver environmental and socio-economic impact

Finance in Motion has been a partner of BKT Kosova since 2013, providing dedicated financing to micro, small, and medium enterprises in the agriculture, manufacturing, and service sectors, thereby supporting the development of Kosovo's economy. In 2019, Bank initiated a collaboration with GGF, focusing on facilitating investments in renewable energy, energy efficiency, and resource efficiency projects.

As part of the valuable partnership with GGF and EFSE, Bank has received technical assistance support from the Development Facility (DF) and Technical Assistance Facilities (TAF) of the respective funds. Through these technical assistance projects, Bank has managed to:

- develop and introduce green products,
- improve its internal environmental and social risk assessment practices,
- enhance the capabilities of Bank's staff in green lending and environmental and social risk assessments.

This includes conducting thorough analyses of intricate green projects and ensuring effective monitoring and reporting of green products.

Recognizing sustainability integration and green lending as key pillars for BKT Kosova's business development in the coming years, Bank is currently collaborating with GGF TAF and EFSE DF under the Deep Greening Mainstreaming Initiative. Bank's aim is to streamline its sustainability approaches, expand its green lending capacity, develop new green products for various sectors, strengthen Environmental and Social Management Systems (ESMS) approaches, and enhance staff expertise. With the support of this technical assistance project BKT Kosova aims to leverage the business development and risk management benefits of green projects and position itself as a forward-looking institution committed to sustainability goals and effectively communicating clear sustainability values to both internal and external stakeholders.



## ESG Activities of BKT Albania

As an advanced and innovative bank, BKT Albania prioritizes caring for the environment and society. Bank strives to respect and protect the environment in daily operations and implement sustainability initiatives, and aims to improve business practices by integrating green practices. BKT Albania sees its human resources as its top asset and provides fair labor practices, competitive pay and benefits, merit-based culture, and training for growth and specialization. Bank has developed its Corporate social responsibility program, which aims to support further society development and local community. BKT Albania has committed to t conduct its operations in alignment with following UN Agenda SDG 2030 goals: SDG 1 – No poverty; SDG 2 – Zero hunger; SDG 4 – Good education; SDG 5 – Gender equality; SDG 7 – Clean energy; SDG 8 - Decent work and economic growth; SDG 9 - Industry, innovation, and infrastructure; SDG 11 - Sustainable cities and communities; SDG 13 – Climate action; SDG 17 - Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development. Among the ESG initiatives, Bank has implemented following:

Bank has installed solar panels on both its Head Office and Main Archive buildings in order to generate electricity that will meet **30% of the Bank’s annual energy requirements**. Solar Control and Energy Saving measures within their premises, which will have a positive effect on: reduction of internal temperature; reduction of heating and cooling costs; thermal insulation and solar protection throughout the year.

Bank’s Mortgage and Consumer Finance Department developed **a green loan for energy efficiency, (Green-loan)** which is intended for individuals and businesses that plan to enhance their residential and business premises, while achieving energy savings and CO2 emission reduction.

As part of the cooperation with ADGF (Albanian Development Guarantee Foundation), Bank facilitates the landing conditions of projects which aims the development of the agricultural, production sector, while contributing to energy savings.

BKT Albania as part of the **United Nations Global Compact** implements 10 Basic Principles of this organization and beyond, Bank works in full compliance with the Global Compact Labour principles. Bank also strives to create a secure and positive workplace environment, and to implement a transparent and equitable approach for its employees.

BKT Albania is a signatory of the **Women Empowerment Principles (WEP)**, and also joined the initiative of UN Women in Albania “16 days of activism against gender-based violence against women and girls.”

BKT Albania and the Embassy of the United Kingdom in Albania signed a cooperation agreement for the co-sponsorship of the **“Chevening” scholarship program**. Also, Bank has cooperation with “Université de Poitiers” in France as part of the Erasmus programme.

Bank has introduced **digital solutions** to simplify and optimize its processes. The Bank has invested in technical and physical infrastructure to allow customers to make fast and secure transactions. By promoting digital transactions, the Bank has greatly reduced paper consumption. At present, over 80% of Bank transactions are conducted through digital channels online.

BKT Albania has motivated its employees to participates in **humanitarian and voluntary activities**, where employees collected and donated basket products as well as toys and clothing, and the 100 packages were distributed to families in needs by the Red Cross in Tirana.






## Commitments to the ESG implementation within the Bank's activities


As part of its ambitions to the ESG integration, the Bank is committed to conducting actions and initiatives in order to establish and develop its path towards sustainability and business transformation. Therefore, the Bank has already implemented specific activities related to the ESG in the previous period, and in the same time determined future initiatives that will be implemented in the near future (up to 2 years) and long term targets (by 2030). While, creating goals for future enhancement of its business, Bank put significant focus on the positive environmental impact, striving to minimize emissions and resource consumption within its internal operations and to encourage clients to reduce negative impacts on ecosystems through the optimization of their business and industrial activities. The Bank has carried out a range of sustainable business and ESG efforts in the past, which will be presented in the following sections. Furthermore, the Bank has revealed its upcoming plans for ESG activities, to be elaborated on in the next Sustainability report. Also, these individual sections offer a comprehensive look at the Bank's achievements in meeting specific ESG key performance indicators. The subsections delve into the current status and progress of these indicators, highlighting the Bank's successful outcomes in these areas.

### Environmental segment

Specific environmental issues have been recognized as crucial for addressing as part of BKT Kosova's internal operations and business with clients. The Bank is aware that the use of fossil fuels, unsustainable energy management, inadequate waste management and the use of single-use plastics significantly damage and threaten ecosystems and additionally contribute to increasing the carbon footprint. Therefore, BKT Kosova committed to conducting specific environmentally friendly initiatives within its internal business operations in order to create a positive environmental impact and increase awareness of its personnel and to indicate to partners that the Bank operates in accordance with environmentally responsible principles. In addition to internal activities, BKT Kosova also created specific green products for its Retail/SME/Corporate clients to support the client's transition plans towards a green economy and in general the sustainable development of the Kosovo market.



Commitments to the ESG implementation within the Bank's activities



## Overview of implemented activities

Bank purchased the Eco multi-use cups, Eco Notebooks and Pencils for all the staff in 2023.

Bank donated many printers to Economy and Arts faculty in 2023.

Bank has purchased 3 hybrid vehicles in 2022 for Bank's fleet.

Bank has purchased 4 fully electric vehicles in 2023 and contributed to reducing gas consumption and air pollution.

## Campaign on preventing the use of single-use plastics within the Bank's premises

The growing generation of plastic waste and its build-up in landfills and the natural ecosystems is acknowledged as a grave environmental issue by BKT Kosova. One major issue is the widespread use of single-use plastic in everyday life, including households, organizations, companies, and even within the Bank's operations (such as specific events and the use of plastic cups and utensils). Hence, BKT Kosova pledged to decrease the usage of single-use plastics in its premises with the aim of effectively promoting eco-consciousness and inspiring its staff members. Alongside this, the Bank aims to demonstrate its commitment towards environmental responsibility and showcase its support for various initiatives that benefit Kosovo ecosystems to external parties such as partners, donors, and customers. As part of its commitments, in 2023 the Bank started an initiative on preventing the usage of single-use plastic within its premises.

In December 2022, the Bank informed its Head Office staff that disposable plastic cups would no longer be provided due to environmental considerations. This prompted the Bank to switch to personalized cups for all their purposes within their buildings. Despite using 126,000 plastic cups in 2022 alone, the Bank has now achieved the remarkable feat of completely eliminating plastic cup usage in 2023.

BKT Kosova proudly highlights the remarkable triumph of this endeavor in engaging employees in eco-friendly initiatives, resulting in heightened awareness of the issue of disposable plastics and the vital role of sustainable waste and material management.

BKT Kosova has taken a significant step towards improving waste management practices and promoting the use of sustainable, renewable materials by launching this dedicated campaign. This initiative not only addresses the crucial issue of waste management but also lays the groundwork for implementing circular economy activities in all aspects of the Bank's premises and operations. The efforts put into this campaign demonstrate the Bank's commitment to creating a more environmentally responsible society and contributing towards a greener future. Through strategic actions and collaborations, BKT Kosova is actively working towards building a more sustainable world for generations to come.

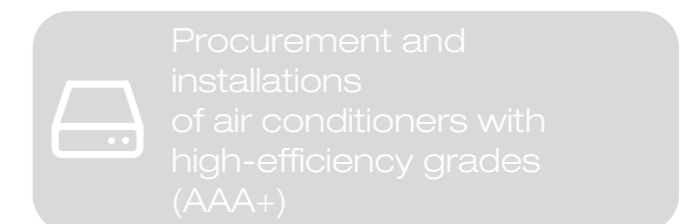
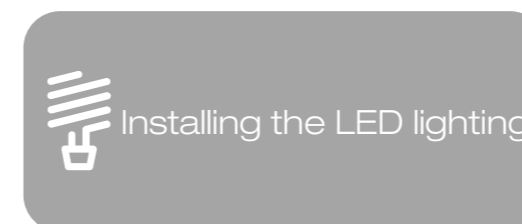
## Reducing paper consumption within the Bank's activities

BKT Kosova has recognized that an important part of environmentally acceptable business is related to the implementation of activities that result in the reduction of paper consumption. Considering the large number of administrative processes taking place in the Bank, the representatives of the Bank have decided to implement certain measures regarding the reduction of paper consumption. By reducing paper consumption, the Bank is aiming to streamline operations and improve efficiency in handling administrative tasks.

In an effort to promote sustainable practices and reduce its environmental impact, the Bank's representatives announced in February 2022 that all staff need to adhere to a new policy of printing documents double-sided. This initiative has been successful in significantly reducing paper consumption by 50% during the previous period. In order to further decrease paper usage, the Bank has decided to limit printing activities only to necessary documents. This decision reflects the Bank's commitment to responsible resource management and aligns with Bank's values of promoting sustainability and reducing waste. Also, Bank has defined target for the reduction of the paper use by 2% until the end of 2024. BKT Kosova urges all employees to support this eco-friendly approach and make a conscious effort to use paper sparingly.

## Energy efficiency in Bank's premises

BKT Kosova recognizes the importance of sustainable energy management and decarbonization for the overall well-being of the environment. Therefore, Bank has taken proactive steps towards addressing these needs by implementing relevant activities aimed at efficient energy management and reduction of excess electricity and heat consumption within its premises and branches. Sustainable energy management encompasses the seamless integration of energy-efficient measures and cutting-edge technologies, while fostering a culture of conscientious consumption among Bank's employees. Therefore, the Bank has appointed the selected staff for the purpose of monitoring the energy consumption and financial expenses for the energy management. Also, Bank determined to implement following energy efficiency measures as part of its premises and rented branches:



During the 2023, total electricity consumption in the BKT's head office premises and branches amounted to 1.1 GWh. By implementing some of the energy efficiency measures Bank intends to reduce the electricity consumption by total of 5% in headquarter office and Pejton branch compared to 2023.

The implementation of these specific activities aimed at reducing the carbon footprint is a significant move towards a more sustainable and responsible banking sector. Also, by integrating energy-efficient practices into operations, Bank is not only contributing to the fight against climate change but is also setting a precedent for corporate responsibility. The responsible energy management will align with EU requirements on GHG emissions, achieving a 5% reduction in Scope 1 and Scope 2 CO2 emissions through decreased use of electricity and fuels, and increased reliance on renewable energy sources and electric vehicles. This will position the banking sector as a pioneer in the sustainable development of the financial industry.



## Green products

### Eco loans for the retail clients

During 2023, it was noticed that green products have exhibited robust performance and reflected a growing trend in financing environmentally friendly activities and initiatives. Bank witnessed a notable increase in the issuance of green products, where different financial institutions and organizations have been directing substantial funds to banks to support the eco-friendly projects and initiatives. The increase in funding allocated to green products has risen due to the heightened understanding shared by lenders and borrowers regarding the critical nature of embracing sustainable practices and resolutions. The shift towards green lending in Kosovo is a reflection of a growing global trend where financial institutions are recognizing the significance of environmental sustainability. The positive performance of green and other sustainable loans underscores the financial industry's commitment to foster environmentally responsible practices and align with global sustainability goals and ambitions.

Bank had contributed to increasing the green financing actions by implementing Eco-loans for energy efficiency measures in 2023. The loan was purposed for the retail clients and the main objective was to invest in energy efficient household appliances, houses or apartments, and achieve environmental protection and energy savings by supporting businesses. Some of the measures that are applicable within the Eco Loan:

- Insulation of exterior wall and roof buildings;
- Replacement of exterior windows for homes or businesses;
- Replacement of exterior doors for homes or businesses;
- Installation of new radiators in combination with the installation of thermostatic valves;
- Replacement of irrigation systems.



## Green Deposit

In order to additionally contribute to sustainable financing in Kosovo, Bank has unveiled its groundbreaking initiative – the Green Deposit, which was launched in December 2023, as part of the Bank's unwavering commitment to sustainability. This innovative product does not only underscore BKT's dedication to environmental responsibility but also proudly establishes itself as the first of its kind in the Kosovo financing market. Main distinctive feature of this financial product is that allows clients to invest their advance deposit in the diverse range of EcoFriendly products. Also, this means that clients applying for the Green deposit will not only secure their deposits but also gain access to the advanced deposit offering with exceptionally competitive interest rates.

By offering attractive incentives and interest rates, Bank aims to attract a substantial volume of green deposits, further reinforcing its dedication to fostering a greener, more sustainable future. With launching the Green Deposit to the Kosovo market, BKT Kosova wants to empower its clients to contribute more actively to a greener, sustainable future and environmentally friendly practices, by channeling their funds into projects that promote sustainability and mitigate climate change. As part of its financial growth, Bank has ambition to pioneer positive changes in Kosovo and support eco-friendly initiatives through innovative and exclusive financial programs and offering. This approach to sustainability does not only aligns with the evolving consumer preferences but it also positions Bank as a leader in driving positive environmental impact through responsible financial solutions.



## Specific ESG initiatives

### Educational sessions on the topic of ESG

In the recent period, BKT Kosova has prominently acknowledged the significance of the ESG concept across the financial and commercial sectors. This realization comes with a special focus on how crucial it is to support both corporate and SME clients in aligning their operations with sustainable practices. In light of this, the Bank has firmly decided to channel significant efforts towards the education of its workforce on sustainability-related topics. This initiative is not just about enhancing the Bank's internal understanding of ESG principles but also about embedding these values deeply within its corporate culture. As a strategic move to elevate the level of ESG awareness, the BKT's Corporate Group has taken proactive steps. This involves a comprehensive approach to equip the Bank's employees with vital information, varied training programs, and educational support specifically designed to enrich their understanding of ESG principles. The training modules have been meticulously developed to cover a wide array of subjects relating to environmental sustainability, social responsibility, and ethical governance, ensuring that the staff grasps the full spectrum of ESG considerations. This will enable trained staff members to provide insightful guidance and support to business clients, helping them to navigate the complexities of integrating ESG principles into their operations. Through this, BKT Kosova aspires to foster a broader understanding and implementation of sustainable practices within the business community it serves, marking a significant stride towards achieving greater environmental stewardship, social equity, and governance transparency in its sphere of influence.

Besides, the educational support on the topic of sustainability is also provided to clients from the SME and agriculture portfolio in order to achieve the best outcomes from the green initiatives. In doing so, Bank included providing training on environmental sustainability and energy efficiency advantages to employees of different companies in all the regions where BKT Kosova operates.

Bank has also taken into account that businesses/companies in Kosovo are facing day-by-day various problems caused by unstable supply of electricity, where work stoppages can cause huge losses for businesses and make them less competitive in the market. Also, many companies face difficulties in terms of frequent fluctuations in electricity prices, which certainly affects their business. Most of these mentioned issues are motivating businesses in Kosovo to start with their own energy production. Therefore, BKT Kosova in cooperation with the GROW (Green Recovery and Opportunity Window) project provided training and technical assistance for businesses that want to invest in renewable energy and energy efficiency. BKT's engagement in GROW project is realized as part of the agreement with the Kosovo Credit Guarantee Fund (FKGF), which was signed in November 2023. Through this agreement, Bank and FKGF endeavor to drive the expansion of crucial investments in energy efficiency in Kosovo, empowering small and medium-sized enterprises to make investments that will stimulate economic development and enhance energy stability.

The GROW project implementation will continue to assist micro, small, and medium-sized businesses in securing financial support for their investments in renewable energy and energy efficiency. The Bank's steadfast commitment to the GROW project is poised to foster enduring progress, profoundly enhancing both energy efficiency and Kosovo's economy. Bank will continue to provide environmentally and socially responsible solutions through this creative strategy. GROW project is funded by Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) and Millennium Foundation Kosovo (MFK).

## Specific ESG initiatives

## POS Campaign

In furtherance of BKT Kosova's efforts to promote the significance of energy efficiency, Bank Corporate Group orchestrated a campaign focused on evaluating the point of sale (POS) efficiency of the Bank's clients, known as the POS Campaign. This campaign ran throughout the year 2023 and aimed to highlight the importance of energy conservation in a practical and tangible manner.

POS Campaign was organized from July 2023 - December 2023, where total of 43,584 clients were eligible to participate in the random selection process as part of the giveaway campaign. Main condition for campaign participation implied that the clients paid by card in the BKT Kosova point of sale (POS) systems. The awarding process was implemented in such way that three award winners were announced every month by the Bank's representatives. During the campaign, a total of 18 rewards were distributed to the winners that paid by card in BKT Kosova POS. Main awards for the winners of the POS campaign included the eco-friendly gadgets and environmentally friendly electric scooter and electric bicycle.

BKT Kosova intends to continue arranging campaigns aimed at improving the welfare of stakeholders associated with the POS performance, including employees and owners of merchants. By implementing this kind of initiatives, Bank strives to more actively involve its clients in developing sustainability and contributing to improved energy management in local communities.

## Overview of planned activities

### Installation of solar panels

The Bank recognized the necessity of employing renewable energy, particularly from its own established systems (solar panels, biomass boilers, heat pumps, wind power plants, etc.). It is well recognized that this manner of energy supply will definitely result in a positive environmental impact and economic benefits. Also, the energy consumption from RES is very beneficial from the aspect of reducing air pollution and preserving environmental protection in local communities in Kosovo, since Kosovo is highly dependent on coal for its energy needs. After recognizing these advantages, BKT Kosova representatives have opted to engage with the Bank's architects for an assessment of the Bank's premises. The engaged architects will evaluate the suitability of the premises for the installation of solar panels, with the main goal of reducing the Bank's energy consumption. In addition to reducing energy consumption, the solar panels will contribute to lowering Bank's carbon footprint given that the majority of currently used electricity is produced in coal-fired thermal power plants.

### Plans for procurement of hybrid vehicles

As part of the decarbonization goals, Bank decided to put efforts on the procurement of hybrid and electric vehicles in order to minimize GHG emissions from its fleet. Regarding the fuel consumption in 2024, Bank plans to have retention of 72,194 liters and no further increase in diesel consumption due to the higher share of the EV in the fleet. Currently the Bank possess 3 hybrid and 4 electric vehicles which were procured during 2023. For 2024, BKT Kosova plans to procure 5 more electric vehicles for the purpose of Bank's internal use. It is estimated that by purchasing hybrid/electric vehicles, the Bank reduces gasoline use and consumption and thereby contributes to a certain extent to the reduction of air pollution.

## Environmental KPIs

In the previous period Bank has managed to achieve following values of specific KPIs related to the environmental management. Besides, Bank's representatives have determined KPIs values for the 2024 and 2025.

### 1. Energy consumption in GWh

- In 2023, Bank measured the total energy consumption for its Headquarter office (HO) and its 21 branches, which amounted to 1.1 GWh.
- For the period 2024 - 2025, Bank will strive to reduce energy consumption by 5% in its Headquarter office in comparison to 2023.
- Also, Bank will put efforts to decrease by 5% the average energy consumption per branch for the period 2024-2025.

### 2. Purchase of hybrid or electric vehicles

- The current fleet of the Bank has a total of 58 vehicles, of which 51 are petrol and diesel vehicles, 3 are hybrid vehicles and 4 are electric vehicles.
- For 2024, Bank plans to conduct procurement of additional 5 hybrid or electric vehicles.
- Also, for 2024 Bank plans to achieve the retention of 72,194 liters of fuel consumption and no further increase in diesel consumption due to the higher share of the EV in the fleet.

### 3. The share of diverted recyclable waste (e.g., paper, plastic, glass) generated within the Bank's activities

- In the previous period, Bank has implemented the installation of the waste separation containers in the HO premises and Pejton branch.
- By end of 2024, Bank plans to increase the share of recycled/ diverted/ reused/ waste from its premises by an average of 10%.


### 4. Reduction of the volume of paper use

- Bank plans to reduce the paper use as part of its operations and business activities by 2% by the end of 2024.



## Social segment


### Overview of implemented activities



#### Diversity and inclusion

BKT Kosova as a socially responsible bank is committed to respecting diversity and inclusion within its internal business organization, as well as part of business and cooperation with clients.

A diverse, equitable and inclusive workplace enables all employees to feel included, respected and supported, leading to increased employee engagement and trust. Bank fosters equal opportunity for all genders, where 56% of the Bank's workforce includes women. Bank has evidenced that the female workforce participation has been increased by 4% in comparison with the previous year 2022. There is a highlighted focus on equal consideration of both genders in processes of hiring and promotion, as well as for other opportunities related to learning, educational courses and participating in the development programs. As part of its gender equality measures, Bank is providing remote workspace for the female employees on maternity leave who want to contribute to tasks, and also to be at home. BKT Kosova emphasizes considerable care for supporting the employees with disabilities, where the Bank has engaged some employees with the difficulties.




#### Workforce health, safety and wellbeing

BKT Kosova recognizes the health, safety and wellbeing as a priority in establishing an optimal working environment within its business organization. As an institution, which takes care of its employees, the Bank promotes safe and healthy working conditions for the employees. Throughout the years, Bank has been performing regular assessments of the employees' satisfaction by implementing specific internal surveys. Analysis of the employees' satisfaction helps the Bank to obtain more information on employee general health, well-being, benefits, management and possibly necessary Bank's support.

Moreover, the annual internal employee engagement survey intends to assess the levels of employees' enthusiasm and their connection with the Bank's values and principles. Mentioned survey is an efficient tool to measure of how motivated and committed employees are to be part of the Bank. Importantly, the key outcomes of the employee engagement survey imply the initiation of specific actions and initiatives, particularly the actions driven by leadership, and managers, so Bank's management continues to commit to the values and elements that enhance employee engagements and address specific issues that could have a negative impact on employees engagement and professional development.

Therefore, BKT Kosova has been putting efforts in terms of providing optimal working conditions and benefits for employees. For the last two years, Bank has implemented the flexible working hours in order to enable the work-life balance for the employees, so the employees could be able to fulfill personal commitments, such as telecommuting, part-time arrangements, and flexible start and end times of work where applicable.



#### Health insurance for employees and their spouses and children

Throughout the years, Bank has shown significant care for the well-being of its employees and BKT Kosova is making efforts to draw attention to employees to take care of their health. In doing so, the Bank ensures that all employees perform regular medical examinations in accordance with national legal requirements. In this manner, employees can regularly monitor their health state and take preventive measures to prevent certain diseases. In 2023, a total of 81 Bank's employees performed the regular medical check-ups.

The Bank offers a comprehensive health benefits package to its employees, which goes beyond just regular medical check-ups. This package includes private health insurance coverage for both employees and their family members, allowing the access to specialized medical care. The mentioned insurance package also provides additional benefits related to the employees' pension contributions.



#### Promoting healthy lifestyle

In addition to the private insurance and other employees' beneficial activities, Bank has introduced useful sports activities to adequately contribute to the employees' health and well-being.

Therefore, in 2023, BKT Kosova has started to organize the regular hiking activities, in addition to other social events that the Bank regularly organizes. These hiking activities for employees were implemented in June 2023, where total of 55 employees participated and express satisfaction that they had the opportunity to relax with this recreational activity. Additionally, BKT Kosova has been an advocate for promoting employee engagement and involvement in diverse sports activities for several years.

In addition to facilitating hiking activities, Bank has extended its support to include various other recreational endeavors, including organizing football and basketball activities exclusively for the employees of BKT.

Throughout the 2023, Bank recorded that total of 30 employees participated in the organized football activities, while total of 25 employees participated in the basketball activities, showcasing their dedication to physical prowess and teamwork. Bank's employees participated very actively and with great passion and satisfaction in sports activities and showed the desire for the Bank to continue with the organization of various recreations in the coming period.

Bank is indeed dedicated to promoting and maintaining a healthy equilibrium between work and personal life for its employees. By prioritizing the well-being and satisfaction of its staff, BKT Kosova aims to create a positive and fulfilling work environment that supports the overall success and happiness of its employees.

## Renumeration policies

As a part of its remuneration and compensation policies, the Bank prioritizes the welfare of its employees by offering competitive wage and incentive programs to ensure their overall well-being and satisfaction.

In relation to the policies and schemes regarding compensation and employee salaries, Bank also provides a variety of additional advantages to its staff. The most important benefits for employees include following topics:



## Measures for the gender pay gap

- BKT Kosova has established the employment relationship on the principals of equal opportunities and fair treatment, where the Bank eliminates discrimination on any basis.
- The Bank's core values advocate the principles of gender equality, and the provision of equal possibilities for achieving business success for both women and men. In doing so, the Bank strictly respects every aspect related to the employment relationship, such as:



- It is significant to mention that BKT Kosova created new wage structure, where the Bank carried out beneficial salary adjustments for most of its employees in accordance with the new wage scheme.
- In Addition, these salary adjustments were also provided for the employees who were on their maternity leave during this period.

## Talent attraction and development

One of the Bank's main goals in its business development efforts is to attract and keep a highly skilled and committed workforce. To achieve this, BKT Kosova has established a talent strategy that emphasizes attracting and retaining talented individuals. The Bank has also developed specific procedures for the employees to enable optimal career development path. Therefore, the Bank's Employee Career Development Procedure is designed to enhance future employees' growth based on employee's performance, specific banking experience, professional qualifications, personal skills, employee self-initiatives, brainstorming ideas, teamwork engagement, taking responsibilities, etc.

During 2023, BKT Kosova continued to support and attract new generations of employees through its internal internship programs for the graduate students, young ambitious people. By implementing internship programs, Bank strives to provide to young population the opportunity to fulfill their ambitions and to further develop their career and professional skills. So far, the mentioned internship programs involved about 67 students from different universities in various fields, including economy, engineering, law, information technology, etc., where the 14 students have been employed as regular staff of the BKT Kosova.

## Trainings and workshops on the topics of ESG for the employees

During the 2023, BKT Kosova organized the trainings on the ESG topics for all Department heads with the cooperation and support of the external experts. Also, the Bank managed to organize internal ESG trainings for the employees of Corporate and Sales department in 2023. For 2024, Bank intends to increase the number of trainings' participants and engage larger number of employees in the ESG topics. Besides, for the upcoming period Bank has envisaged to incorporate the specific ESG segments in the introduction of agenda as part of the onboarding process for the new hired employees. Therefore, the Bank will strive to incorporate ESG agenda in its corporate value and to express to the new employees the importance of the topics of sustainability and green financing.



## Contribution to the community

For many years, BKT Kosova has shown its dedication to social responsibility by actively supporting a wide range of socially beneficial and humanitarian events and activities. Furthermore, the Bank has forged partnerships with multiple non-governmental and humanitarian organizations in Kosovo, all of which share a common goal of improving living standards and fostering community development in the region.

Overview of implemented local community projects, humanitarian actions:

- Main partner of the Olympic Committee of Kosovo,
- Supporting the Down Syndrome Association Kosova,
- Yearly support of the children with Autism,
- Donating gifts to orphans and those with economic difficulties,
- Sponsoring the Humanitarian Mini-Marathon “VRAPO BABADIMËR” 7th and 8th Edition,
- Gold Sponsor at the Annual Charity Gala Dinner organized by the American Chamber of Commerce,
- Yearly actions for Blood donation “DONATE BLOOD, SAVE A LIFE”,
- Linja e Jetës – Suicide Prevention Call Center,
- Breast Cancer Awareness Month,
- BKT Kosova has officially become a Premium Member of the Kosovo CSR Network.

### **BKT Kosova and the Kosovo Olympic Committee Sign 10 Year Sponsorship Agreement**

BKT Kosova and the Kosovo Olympic Committee (KOK) announced in 2023 the renewal of their sponsorship agreement, solidifying their partnership for additional 10 years. The extended partnership between BKT Kosova and the Kosovo Olympic Committee aims to strengthen collaboration for the enhancement of Kosovo’s youth. Additionally, it signifies a joint commitment towards the historic Mediterranean Olympic Games Prishtina 2030. With the renewed sponsorship agreement, BKT Kosova solidifies its position as the largest sponsor of the Kosovo Olympic Committee, making a sustainable contribution to the prosperity of sports in the country.

The total value of the contract for the 10 year period is 3 million euros, which will contribute to the development and promotion of sports and athletes at the highest level, who consistently demonstrate excellence in their respective fields. By doing so, these exceptional athletes effectively assume the role of esteemed representatives, showcasing the prowess and potential of Kosovo’ sports development to the world. The success of Kosovar athletes has echoed around the world, and sport is now becoming the biggest export of Kosovo. The achievement of this long-term agreement today makes us, at BKT Kosova, proud to be part of new success stories in the coming years.

As one of the biggest supporters of sports in Kosovo, supporting many projects that have had a positive impact on the field of culture, sports, and especially on young people and children in their efforts to achieve great things, BKT Kosova is committed to actively serve as a strategic partner for the Kosovo Olympic Committee. Initiating broader support activities that include all segments of the community, BKT Kosova, through the “Be a Hero” campaign, commits to extending its influence, where the success of this campaign is dedicated to Kosovar sports and the Kosovo development in general. As part of this campaign, it is determined that 1% of every payment made with the BKT VISA Credit Card at a BKT Kosova POS goes



## Contribution to the community



directly to the account of the Olympic Committee of Kosovo, where this percentage of the payment is covered by the Bank. These funds are dedicated to the athletes who will represent Kosovo at the upcoming 2024 Olympic Games in Paris. Reflecting on this campaign, Bank's CEO emphasized the importance of a collaborative approach, showcasing BKT Kosova's dedication to fostering a shared sense of accountability and empowerment. This partnership aims to provide widespread benefits for the entire country.

### **BKT Kosova a Premium Member of the Kosovo CSR Network!**

BKT Kosova established crucial momentum in its journey towards sustainable development by officially becoming a Premium Member of the CSR Kosovo Network. By joint cooperation, Bank will be reinforcing its shared commitment to Corporate Social Responsibility and sustainable business practices. CSR Kosovo Network recognized the Bank as financial institution which can leave strong positive impact on community and has a tremendous role as an innovator in the field of sustainability, taking the lead in bringing about constructive change. Given that financial institutions typically serve as catalysts for ethical, economic, social, and environmental behaviors that are necessary for a sustainable future, Bank recognizes its critical role in sustainable development.

The Bank is pleased to support the many projects, initiatives of the CSR Kosovo Network, in keeping with the BKT's commitment to sustainability. One of the particularly creative championing initiatives of the CSR network is the use of tote bags as an eco-friendly alternative to plastic bags. By endorsing this initiative, BKT Kosova also contributes to reducing plastic waste and fostering a more sustainable environment. This effort strongly reflects Bank's commitment to responsible banking and aligns with the broader goals of the CSR Kosovo Network in promoting environmentally friendly practices.

In general, by consistently putting corporate social programs into place and striving to give the best service possible to partners, customers, and the community in order to meet their expanding ESG needs, BKT Kosova has significantly aided in the development of the local economy. Furthermore, Bank's business model strives to tackle the country's environmental and social pressing issues.

BKT Kosova's unwavering dedication to enhancing the well-being of society underscores its strong sense of social responsibility. Through ongoing contributions to various charitable endeavors, Bank strives to make a meaningful difference in the lives of those in need. The Bank's consistent involvement in humanitarian projects demonstrates its genuine concern for the welfare of the community it serves. BKT Kosova's dedication to building strong partnerships with like-minded organizations underscores its commitment to working together for greater good. Also, Bank's sustained efforts to promote social changes highlight its belief in the power of collective action in creating a better world for future generations.

### **Sponsor of the Humanitarian Mini-Marathon "Vrapo Babadimer" 8th Edition**

For the second year in a row, on December 17, 2023, BKT Kosova took part in the annual Humanitarian Mini-Marathon known as the "Vrapo Babadimer," which is organized by the NGO Projekti 5cent. The primary goal of this event is to provide assistance to children who are receiving treatment in the Oncology Ward at the University Clinical Center of Kosovo, as well as to offer support to 250 struggling families in the community during the festive holiday season. Total of 43 employees from BKT Kosova's Head Office and the Prishtina

branches participated in the marathon, showcasing their dedication to the important cause. Their involvement in the marathon was not only impactful but also served as a symbol of their unity and commitment to social responsibility.

BKT Kosova continues to demonstrate its commitment to playing an increasingly significant role in the community in which it operates by consistently providing support for various humanitarian causes, showcasing its efforts for making a positive impact.

### **Linja e Jetës - Suicide Prevention Call Cent**

As part of unconditional care for the mental health of the population in Kosovo, BKT Kosova has extended its support to "Linja e Jetës" the first call line against suicides in Kosovo. In Kosovo, one of the largest factors that influences someone's ability to seek help is the stigma surrounding mental health. Often those in need of help continuously suppress themselves due to reactions from family or friends and a general disregard to their hardships. With the onset of COVID-19, these problems have only been exacerbated, as those already struggling were cut off from their support systems and found new challenges in having to cope with the fear of a global pandemic.

"Linja e Jetës" stands as the inaugural suicide prevention call center in Kosovo, offering free emergency services to every caller in need since its establishment in November 2019.

In addition to volunteers, "Linja e Jetës" also has active supervisors during operating hours. The primary responsibility of supervisors is to provide support and advice to volunteers during and after calls with the individuals seeking assistance.

During calls, volunteers focus on de-escalation and providing emotional support to enable each caller to assess their situation in a rational manner. Furthermore, at the conclusion of the call, volunteers refer callers to trusted psychotherapists and psychiatrists for long-term assistance.

### **Breast Cancer Awareness Month**

During the previous period, the Bank expressed significant care regarding the health of its employees, and in addition provided impactful support to activities related to the prevention of breast cancer, where Bank emphasizes the importance of timely check-ups and controls as part of the adequate prevention. During Breast Cancer Awareness Month, BKT Kosova, with the support of the Kosovo CSR Network, organized an awareness event with the aim of contributing to well-being and health preservation, especially for women.

This event was organized at the Head Offices of BKT Kosova in Prishtina, where Dr. Gazmore Bardhi-Morina, an Oncology specialist, shared advice and recommendations that every woman should follow to prevent the potential development of breast cancer. The presence of an Oncology specialist added a valuable dimension to the event. Her expertise and insights were provided to the 95 female employees who participated with essential advice and recommendations on breast cancer prevention. Dr. Bardhi-Morina discussed various aspects of disease prevention, including regular screenings, self-examinations, and lifestyle factors that can contribute to reducing the risk of developing breast cancer. Therefore, the Bank's employees have become more aware of the importance of regular check-ups with the doctor and self-examination and how important it is to be adequately informed

about this disease. One of the immediate outcomes of the event was a significant positive impact on the female employees with the increased awareness regarding the importance of breast health and cancer prevention. The information shared by Dr. Bardhi-Morina has definitely empowered the participants to take proactive steps in safeguarding their health. This included adopting healthy lifestyle choices, scheduling regular check-ups, and being vigilant about any changes in their breast health.

Furthermore, the event has fostered a sense of community and support among the female employees. The shared experience of attending the event and receiving important health information has encouraged open conversations about breast health within the workplace. This, in turn, contributed to a more supportive and health-conscious work environment for female employees.

### **BKT Kosova Continues Its Support for Children with Down Syndrome and Autism Once again**

BKT Kosova reaffirms its commitment to helping individuals with special needs in Kosovo. Recognizing the importance of encouraging people with special needs, BKT Kosova continues its support for the NGO 'Autizmi', the Down Syndrome Association Kosovo, and individuals with special needs in Kosovo. Through its collaboration with these organizations, BKT Kosova remains dedicated to fostering a more inclusive social environment for children with autism and Down syndrome. By supporting these initiatives, BKT Kosova is helping to create a society where all children can thrive and feel valued.

### **BKT Kosova and its employees donated gifts to orphans and those with economic difficulties**

In the spirit of the end of the year holidays, BKT Kosova and its employees gave gifts to orphans and those with economic difficulties, aspiring to bring joy and warmth to those who need it most.

BKT Kosova personnel believes believe that success is not measured only by professional achievements, but by the positive impact we have on the lives of the people around us. This holiday season, as we celebrate the spirit of giving, we are reminded of the deep responsibility we bear to our community.

Bank express its gratitude towards the Red Cross, the Pristina branch and SOS Fshati for joining us in this initiative, giving meaning to our success and the will to contribute to bring joy to everyone at the end of the year.

### **Gold Sponsor at the Annual (2023) Charity Gala Dinner organized by the American Chamber of Commerce Foundation**

In line with its commitment to social responsibility, the Bank proudly served as a Gold Sponsor at this year's Annual Charity Dinner organized by the American Chamber of Commerce Foundation.

The American Chamber of Commerce in Kosovo orchestrated its yearly Gala Charity Dinner to raise funds for various causes, including the Scholarship Fund for Roma, Ashkali, and

Egyptian Communities, the Scholarship Fund for SOS Village Children, and the "Adopt a Village - School Library Project."

Bank's representatives are very grateful for having the opportunity to support such important causes and look forward to seeing further great work from this Foundation. BKT Kosova continues its unwavering support for significant causes, thereby playing an increasingly pivotal role in the community it serves.

## Overview of planned activities



### **Eco Print Challenge:**

For the next year, Bank is embarking on the Eco Print Challenge! The goal is simple: print less paper. This competition aims to foster sustainability, reduce Bank's environmental footprint, and create a positive impact on the environment in the local community. Bank's department with the highest overall score at the end of each month competition will win a day trip of their choosing.



### **Tree Planting Day:**

Coordinate a tree-planting event in collaboration with a Prishtina Municipality. This hands-on activity not only contributes to the enhancement of the reforestation activities and the natural ecosystem in Kosovo, but also provides a bonding experience for the team.



### **Upcycling Craft Party:**

Arrange a crafting session where employees can upcycle old or discarded items into new, useful products. This creative outlet not only reduces waste but also fosters a sense of accomplishment and teamwork.



### **June 1: Children's Day Family Picnic.**

BKT Kosova will celebrate Children's Day with a special family picnic. This event aims to create a joyful and inclusive environment for staff and their families to bond and enjoy quality time together. Among the exciting activities, the games, entertainment, and delicious food are envisaged to make this day memorable and wonderful for children and adults alike.



### **Staff Retreat in Albania**

Bank's team will embark on an enriching staff retreat in the picturesque landscape of Albania. This retreat is designed to foster team building, collaboration, and relaxation. Through workshops, team activities, and leisure time, Bank aims to strengthen the bonds among Bank's staff, promoting a positive and cohesive work environment.



### **Chess Tournament for All Staff**

In an effort to encourage strategic thinking and friendly competition, Bank will organize a chess tournament open to all staff members. This event provides a platform for intellectual engagement, teamwork, and camaraderie, fostering a sense of community within the organization.



### Community Clean-Up Day:

Mobilize the team for a community clean-up day in a local park or neighborhood. This not only contributes positively to the environment but also fosters a sense of community engagement among the staff.



### Hiking Twice a Year

The Bank's team will go on hiking trips to promote health and well-being, strengthen relationships, and connect with nature. These excursions will be planned to cater to different fitness levels, ensuring everyone can participate.



## Social KPIs

In the previous period Bank has managed to achieve following values of specific KPIs related to the social aspects within the Bank. Besides, Bank's representatives have determined KPIs values for the 2024 and 2025.

### 1. Educational sessions for Bank's staff

- In the previous period Bank organized 2 workshops on the topic related to basic criteria of ESG client application for the branch Corporate sales staff, where total of 45 participants from the Bank were present.
- Also, Bank organized the workshop on Green Economy & Green Finance for its Business lines leaders, HR and Risk assessment department with the specific topic related to "How do we shape our future?", where total of 6 participants were present.
- Bank organized the tailored educational session for middle managerial staff on the topic of broader ESG management (with a brief review of the introduction to green lending), where total of 36 participants were presented.
- For the 2024 and 2025 Bank will strive to increase the number of training for Sales staff. Bank will also organize at least 2 trainings per year for all staff..
- Also, Bank will plan to organize at least one training related to importance and awareness of green financing.
- By the end of 2024 Bank plans to organize 2 trainings on social actions' importance.
- Also, by the end of 2025 Bank plans to organize 4 trainings on social actions' importance.

### 2. Well-being activities

- During the 2023, Bank organized hiking activities for its personnel, where total of 55 employees participated and express high satisfaction.
- Also, total of 30 employees participated in the football activities organized by the Bank, and 25 employees participated in the basketball activities.



## Governance segment

As part of its business organization and activities, BKT Kosova has clearly and adequately established management processes, procedures and policies, which ensure the efficient performance of duties and obligations within all Bank's sectors and organizational units. Responsible corporate governance has been reflected in established Bank's policies which advocate adequate implementation of business activities in accordance with crucial ethical principles and constituents defined by the Code of Ethics, then in accordance with anti-corruption measures and policies to prevent money laundering, as well as ensuring fair relations with employees, clients, partners and other stakeholders. With adequately established internal governance system Bank is striving to preserve its reputation, integrity, people orientation, quality and other values. As part of its management activities, Bank has been also introducing different innovation projects in order to optimize its daily operations.



## Current governance structure

Monitoring and ensuring proper implementation of management policies and processes are the responsibilities of the Board of Directors and Senior Management of BKT Kosova. Board of Directors is consisted of six main members, including the Chairman of the Board, Vice Chairman, 3 Board members and 1 Board member performing the role of the CEO.

Main responsibilities of the Board of directors include:

- Determining strategic plans and establishing committees for executive direction.
- Approving internal policies, business procedures, and ensuring appropriate internal controls.
- Supervising business operations and bank's performance.
- Ensuring internal and external audits are performed to maintain transparency and accountability.
- Submitting an annual report to the General Management of Shareholders, encompassing business operations, audit reports, board activities, future business plans and proposing dividend distributions.
- Appointing the CEO and Senior Management as well as determining their remuneration and responsibilities. Additionally, overseeing transitions in these key roles as necessary.

By focusing on these key areas, the Board of Directors aims to ensure that BKT Kosova operates sustainably, ethically, and efficiently, with the long-term success and value for all stakeholders as its primary objective.

CEO and Senior Management lead bank's operation under the following group structures:

1. Corporate and Business Banking Group
2. Finance and Administration Group
3. Internal Audit Group
4. Risk Management Group
5. Central Operations, Information Technology and Human Resources Group
6. Treasury, Financial Institutions and Private Banking Group
7. Loan Management and Legal Group
8. Retail Banking Group

## Overview of implemented activities

### Business ethics and compliance

BKT Kosova has taken significant steps to ensure compliance with regulations and ethical practices in its banking activities. Furthermore, Bank has also dedicated efforts to fostering innovation and enhancing business optimization through the implementation of various projects.

### Code of Ethics

BKT Kosova created its Code of Ethics containing the integrated values of the Bank such as fairness, remote work, reputation, people oriented, innovation, agility, sustainability, integrity, confidentiality, transparency and also the work principles such as teamwork, open communication, customer focus. Also, Code of Ethics includes confidentiality and the responsibilities for the customers. As part of its responsibilities towards clients, Bank highlights that it is essential to work with a proactive understanding that responds focusing to the customer satisfaction and meeting the needs and demands of customers as soon as possible and most appropriately.

BKT Kosova highly values the adherence and implementation of regulations and laws, encompassing not only the literal interpretation of these rules, but also the underlying principles they embody. This includes a wide range of regulatory framework that govern the banking sector, as well as accepted practices, industry-recognized standards, and codes of conduct. Also, the Bank recognizes the significance of these specific requirements in ensuring ethical and responsible behavior within the banking industry and is committed to upholding them in all aspects of its operations.

### Anti-corruption and Anti-money laundering

BKT Kosova is committed to conducting its business activities with integrity, in particular to complying with high standards of anti-money laundering (AML), anti-bribery and corruption (ABC), anti-fraud and other punishable offenses.

Anti-money laundering activities include the implementation of measures to detect and prevent the use of Bank's products and services for money laundering or other illegal activities. Some of the Bank's key AML activities include: developing and implementing robust

policies and procedures, applying customer due diligence measures that are commensurate with the level of risk, using advanced technology for customer screening and monitoring of transactions, cooperation with the local financial intelligence unit (FIU) and the regulatory authority to report and address issues related to AML, providing a comprehensive training program for employees, etc. Regular internal and external audits are also an integral part of Bank's AML compliance framework to assess the effectiveness of the AML program and ensure ongoing compliance.

Anti-Corruption activities focus on preventing and mitigating corrupt practices within the Bank. This involves establishing and enforcing policies to ensure ethical behavior, conducting regular training on anti-corruption measures, implementing internal controls to detect and prevent corrupt activities, and collaborating with relevant authorities to report and address any cases of corruption. Throughout the previous period, Bank's staff from the AML department held several trainings specifically on anti-money laundering activities and others as follows:

- Identification and reporting of SAR (Suspicious Activity Reports),
- Identification of ultimate beneficial owners (UBOs),
- Implementation of sanctions, one staff from AML Department
- "Tools and Techniques for Effective Detection and Prevention" together with representatives from the Central Bank of the Kosovo, and from the Financial Intelligence Unit of Kosovo, one representative from AML Department.

All of the training sessions proved to be incredibly beneficial for the employees of the Bank, enabling them to gain a deeper understanding of AML specific protocols and the unique regulations of the EU market.

### Business engineering project - Making Bank's processes more efficient

One of the most exciting and prominent project of the year 2023 was the implementation of Robotic Process Automation (RPA) technology in loan origination. RPA presents a technology that uses software robots to automate repetitive and rule-based tasks within business processes. As part of the banking functions, these robots are used to extract, validate, and process data, but most importantly they are used to integrate data with existing IT systems and databases, enabling seamless data exchange between different platforms.

This seamless integration empowers Bank to effortlessly automate tasks that have traditionally relied on human intervention, thereby enhancing the overall efficiency and precision of operations by minimizing the likelihood of any potential human error. The RPA project was first successfully piloted in the loan origination and disbursement, where this task required obtaining information from the loan origination system and disbursing it through the core banking system. It is important to highlight that this task contributed to enabling the staff to focus on sales instead of the repetitive task of disbursement. In addition to reducing the time-consuming repetitive tasks for the BKT's sales staff, this project also improved the efficiency of the overall process, by reducing the processing time by 80% and also decreasing the number of mistakes. Also, positive results included the improved turnaround time for loan approvals, providing customers with a more streamlined experience.

BKT Kosova has also continued with expanding the automation use in other areas, where Bank successfully implemented two other projects which resulted in the automation of the loan and overdraft status change. Previously, completing this task would require a considerable amount of time from the dedicated efforts of two Bank employees, often taking up to three entire working days towards the conclusion of each month. However, the implementation of

RPA technology has dramatically improved and fully automated this process. The undeniable success and transformative impact of these innovative ventures have greatly impressed the Bank, heightening its acute recognition of the profound significance and value of RPA. Precisely, the Bank plans to expand the use of automation in other areas such as chargeback management, card fraud alerts and collateral reporting to Ministry of Trade and Industry (MTI).

## Innovations and digitalization activities – new initiatives



**PEGA-Personal Loan (Non-Collateralized)** - Pega is a BPM that enables integration with other systems and webservice. Since its implementation, BKT Kosova has been able to offer digital products such as Digital Loan, Digital Overdraft, Digital Credit Card, apart from other services. The project is highly effective in reducing operational costs and improving customer satisfaction.



**Pika-Saving Account for Public Institution** - Unique Saving Account that may be accessed digitally by using E-Banking and Mobile banking, digital Account opening. It is only saving account in the market to offer daily credit of interest. The interest is added up to the principal balance so that the next day interest earned will be higher. This feature allows customers to grow their savings faster and enjoy more financial flexibility.



**Mobile Banking 4C** – Bank has implemented its newest version of Mobile Banking, completely new UX/UI beneficial for the customer. The application offers a range of features and functions that make banking easier, faster, and more secure. Customers can access their accounts, transfer funds, pay bills, deposit checks, with just a few taps on their mobile devices.



**Non-Life Insurance** - Bank is leading the way in offering voluntary insurance sales through digital channels. The customer is able to purchase using Mobile banking three insurance products, Travel Insurance, Property Insurance, Personal Accident, all of which are digital and 100% paperless. These products offer thorough protection and convenience for customers seeking to safeguard themselves and their assets from a range of potential risks.

## Governance KPIs

In the previous period Bank has managed to achieve following values of specific KPIs related to the governance aspects within the Bank. Besides, Bank's representatives have determined KPIs values for the 2024 and 2025.

### 1. ESG goals and activities defined in the ESG Strategy at the management level in the Bank

- During 2024 Bank will develop its first Sustainability Strategy as part of the Greening BKT Kosovo project implementation.

### 2. % of Bank's policies are reviewed and updated from an ESG perspective

- By the end of 2025 Bank will develop and adopt ESG policy, and then integrate the ESG factors into all relevant acts of the Bank.

### 3. Transparent, continuous, and up to date ESG reporting that contains the most important ESG-KPIs

- From 2024 Bank plans to conduct the regular ESG reporting and publish the annual ESG reports.

### 4. Established Sustainability Committee and position of ESG coordinator within the Bank

- Until the end of 2024, Bank will open the position of the ESG coordinator and will strive to form the Sustainability Committee, which will include the CEO and additional three members.

### 5. Management training in ethics, anticorruption, and other key governance areas

- Bank plans to organize a training on specific governance topics where at least 90% of Bank's employees will participate during the end of 2024.

### 6. Number of activities related to the sustainable supply chain management

- During the 2024, Bank plans to create and integrate ESG supplier guidelines for its vendors within its internal Procurement Procedure.



## Stakeholder engagement

Understanding the need to engage the whole ecosystem to collectively urge for changes and create possibilities for sustainable and prosperous growth, and in its continuous efforts to nurture relationships with its stakeholders, the Bank has recognized the importance of hearing the feedback and voice of its stakeholders in an attempt to better serve them and meet their growing ESG needs. As such, as part of the Greening BKT Kosova project, in order to gain an understanding of the most material ESG topics pertaining from the Bank's business operations and its impact on the ecosystem and community, the Bank has undertaken an ESG materiality assessment via stakeholder engagement activity.

As such, the Bank began the stakeholder materiality assessment task by identifying internal stakeholders such as department heads, branch managers and diverse selection of employees at various levels, including shareholders - representatives from Çalık Holding and BKT Albania. Furthermore, the Bank also identified external stakeholders that encompassed regulators, public institutions, financial institutions, various types of clients, suppliers, civil society organizations, NGOs, and local community representatives.

After the identification of the relevant stakeholders, Bank developed tailor-made questionnaires for the internal and external stakeholders. As part of the questionnaires, Bank defined several topics related to the Environmental, Social and Governance aspect, which internal and external stakeholders should rank in order of priority and evaluate as material. Based on the questionnaires analysis, total of 52 internal stakeholders and 27 external stakeholders filled out the questionnaires.

Regarding the results of the questionnaires, it was evaluated that out of 52 surveyed internal stakeholders about 54% possess the basic understanding of the ESG concept, while 24% has a moderate understanding of the ESG concept. As for the surveyed external stakeholders, about 37% of them has a basic understanding, while 26% has a moderate understanding of the ESG concept.

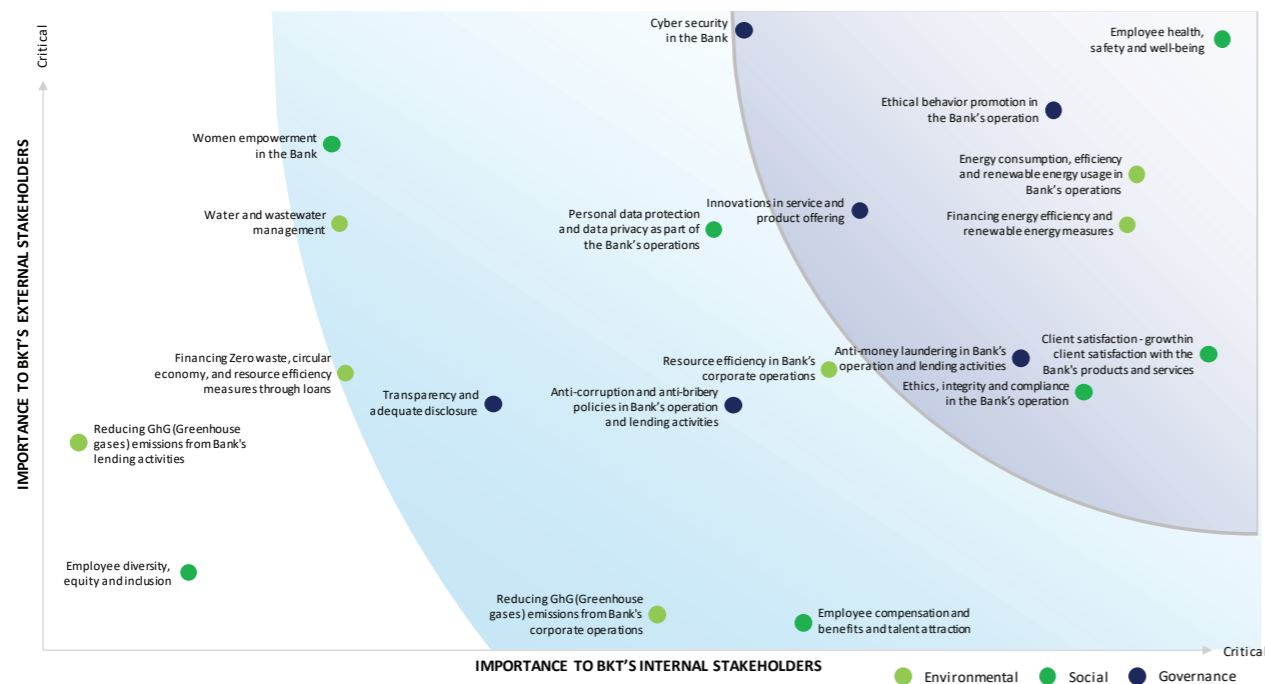
However, it is important to highlight that the majority of both internal and external stakeholders understand that the BKT's sustainability transformation and integration of ESG principles in its business values is of great importance.

Both internal and external stakeholders evaluated and ranked specific environmental, social and governance topics. It was concluded that very similar ESG topics were rated as high priority by internal and external stakeholders, which is clearly visible in the following graphics.

## Stakeholder engagement

## Stakeholder's analysis - overview of key material ESG topics

Based on the stakeholders materiality assessment and conducted surveys, both internal and external stakeholders selected key ESG material topics for the BKT Kosova. These material topics are presented in the picture below.



## Opportunities with clients and partners

### Overview of the ESG related loans

BKT Kosova's team has been diligently communicating with its clients about the advantages and significance of environmental protection actions and initiatives. Bank emphasized clients' role and contribution to resource conservation, efficient energy management and CO2 emissions reduction. This type of collaboration has yielded an exceptionally positive response from Bank's clients, which indeed demonstrated the increased customers' eagerness and readiness to advocate for the sustainable financial products and encourage others to join these environmentally friendly efforts.

Bank has recognized some of the key beneficial outcomes of incorporation of the sustainability as part of the loan portfolio.

- BKT's ESG related loans have gained significant focus in developing and providing different financing options for MSME and Agro businesses committed to sustainable practices.
- Clients' feedback indicate a growing demand for sustainable financial products and innovations, where the success stories underscore the tangible benefits that arise when companies integrate ESG principles into their financial and business strategies.
- Many success stories among BKT's business clients were related to the integration of ESG principles into their financing strategies.

BKT's ESG-related loans have gained significant focus in developing and providing different financing options for **MSME and Agro businesses** committed to sustainable practices.

Clients' feedback indicate a growing demand for **sustainable financial products** and innovations, where the success stories underscore the tangible benefits that arise when companies **integrate ESG principles** into their financial and business strategies.

It is concluded that many success stories among BKT's business clients were related to the **integration of ESG segment** into their business plans and further developments of their operations.

### Successful collaboration with the Drena SHPK company

- One of the highly productive and successful examples of the sustainability integration is the cooperation with the Drena SHPK, where the BKT Kosova played a pivotal role in providing the financial support not just the company but also to the entire value chain of local farmers.
- This financial support enabled the local farmers to modernize their traditional farming practices, as well as to invest in advanced equipment and to remain committed to sustainable and responsible farming practices.
- This cooperation with dairy company was the first of its kind in Kosovo, providing an appropriate response to the needs for access to individual loans to increase production capacities, and to demonstrate how banks can be drivers of the green transitions.
- Drena SHPK expressed that will continue with its efforts to further implement sustainable and innovative farming practices, aligning with the Bank's vision for a brighter, greener future.
- Thanks to the support of BKT, Drena SHPK not only became a leading name in the dairy industry but has also positively impacted the living standards of local farmers in Kosovo.

### Successful collaboration with the E-Taxi Tesla SHPK

- E-Taxi Tesla SHPK is taxi company operating in Prishtina region, which is responsible for providing passenger transport services. As part of the BKT's innovative approach toward environmentally responsible banking practices, Bank has provided a Green loan for the E-Taxi Tesla SHPK to fund the procurement of electric cars to signal a commitment to the sustainable transformation of the company's vehicle fleet and its carbon footprint reduction.
- This green finance venture has not only positively transformed the client's business but also produced an enormous positive effect on the environment and society at large.
- This Green loan not only supported the acquisition of electric vehicles but also proved the successful financial performance for E-Taxi Tesla SHPK. By reducing operational costs associated with electric cars procurement and gaining conditions for potential incentives for eco-friendly practices, the company witnessed the notion that sustainability and profitability can successfully coexist.
- The most significant triumph of this green financial agreement lies in its contribution to environmental preservation and the conservation. Procurement of the electric vehicles can significantly reduce the company's GHG emissions, while aligning with current global efforts to mitigate climate changes and embrace the low-carbon development. E-Taxi Tesla SHPK emerged as a champion of clean and eco-transportation practices in Kosovo.
- As company committed to transforming its fleet with electric cars, it contributed to a broader societal shift toward sustainable living transformation. Therefore, the increased presence of electric cars not only encouraged other businesses to enhance their vehicle fleet, but also inspired other individuals to consider cleaner, greener transportation options for them and their families.
- This success story showcases how a strategic commitment to green finance can successfully transform businesses, benefit the environment, and inspire positive changes on a broader scale.

### Successful collaboration with BUQUKU SHPK


- BUQUKU SHPK was founded in 1850 with the main activity of producing meat products, where the same tradition has been followed also from successors who have gradually advanced their business.
- Throughout the years, the company has received many different prizes such as "Superbrands" and "Qudal" for quality of products. The Company is also certified from "HACCP" and "Kosovo Halal Institute".
- Recently, the Company embarked on a significant modernization initiative, supported with the BKT Kosova loan from the GGF Fund with specific environmental, and operation implications. This action is aimed at enhancing efficiency, sustainability, and compliance with different environmental standards.
- The financed initiative involves upgrading existing machinery and equipment in order to improve production efficiency and reduce energy consumption.
- Modernized equipment will lead to higher operational efficiency, quality improvement, and faster processing times.
- This agreement between BKT Kosova and BUQUKU also enhances the company's reputation as an environmentally responsible entity.
- The Green loan financing for BUQUKU's modernization project is a strategic decision that generates financial, environmental, and operational benefits for the company. In addition, it sets a precedent for other local companies in Kosovo to embrace sustainable practices through innovative financing solutions.





## Awards

- The Banker - Bank of the Year 2023 in Kosovo
- EMEA Finance – Europe Banking Awards 2022
- Global Finance – The Innovators 2023: Top Financial Innovations: Consumer Finance; Top Financial Innovations: Foreign Exchange
- Global Brands Magazine: Most Admired Retail Banking Brand, Kosovo – 2023; Best Digital Banking Brand, Kosovo 2023
- Euromoney Global Private Banking Awards 2023: Best Bank for High Net Worth Individuals in Kosovo
- Global Finance: The Best Bank in Kosovo for 2023
- Finance Derivative Magazine: Best Digital Bank Kosovo 2023
- Cosmopolitan The Daily: Best Bank in Kosovo 2022
- World Business Outlook Awards 2023: Best Retail Banking Award Kosovo 2023
- World Business Stars Magazine: Best Bank In Kosovo 2023



## Memberships and Partnerships

Throughout the previous years, Bank's work and valuable commitments have been recognized by different Kosovo's and international institutions and organizations that are involved in the development of the financial sector and economy in the country. Therefore, the BKT Kosova became the member of several important institutions and also developed a solid partnership and productive cooperation. In doing so, Bank has been obtaining significant support for its business transformation, but also has been positively contributing to the economic development activities in Kosovo. The main institutions/organizations, of which the Bank is a member or has an established partnership, are as following:

- BAFT (Bankers Association for Finance and Trade)
- Finance in Motion
- Kosovo Banking Association
- Kosovo CSR Network
- Keiretsu Forum Southeast Europe
- AmCham Kosovo
- Kosovo Türkiye Chamber of Commerce

It is crucial to emphasize that the Bank's primary objective continues to be the establishment, maintenance, and enhancement of international connections with esteemed institutions. BKT Kosova's active involvement and active participation in prominent global events like SIBOS (SWIFT International Banking Operations Seminar) and Euromoney have significantly bolstered the Bank's global footprint and exerted a substantial influence on the local and regional financial landscape through the creation of strategic alliances.

By positioning itself as the most innovative, committed to customer satisfaction, continuous technological advancements, cutting-edge services and strategic initiatives in the Kosovo financial sector, the Bank has been also internationally recognized by reputable and prestigious institutions and magazines such as the Banker, as well as by the Financial Times, EMEA,

Euromoney, Global Finance etc. These awards do not only highlight the Bank's outstanding performance but also affirm its strong position as a market player in the banking industry. BKT Kosova went a step further by becoming a member of CSR Kosovo and Bankers Association for Finance and Trade (BAFT). The CSR Kosovo membership initiative fosters the positive commitment that the Bank has towards the environment and community development. At the same time, BAFT membership presents a good opportunity for the BKT Kosova to be part of a global network of financial institutions, banks and service providers by benefiting from collaborative initiatives, best practices on the trade finance landscape. This serves as proof that the Bank is highly engaged on upholding industry international standards.

In the future period Bank will put more efforts to continue its business transformation, to adopt sustainability principles and actions within its operations and cooperation with clients, to maintain existing and establish new partnerships. Bank will strive to provide for its clients enhanced and innovative products and services and to highly position itself on the regional and EU financial market. BKT Kosova will continue with integrating ESG initiatives and activities and further support Kosovo's development by being one of the drivers of the sustainable transformation in the country.

## Annex: GRI standards index

BKT Kosova Sustainability Report based on GRI Standards developed by the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI), which represents an international, independent, nonprofit entity that provides a widely recognized framework for sustainability reporting. Report is develop based on the latest version available as of 30 June 2022. The following table reflects specific GRI indicators with which the Bank's activities and processes were compliant in the past period.

GRI standard	Specific disclosure indicator	Location in the document
GRI 1: Foundation	Statement of Use	pg. 50-51
GRI 2: General Disclosures	GRI 2-6 Activities, value chain and other business relationships	pg. 9, 10, 11, 45, 46 and 47
	GRI 2-9 Governance structure and composition	pg. 37 - 38
	GRI 2-11 Chair of the highest governance body	pg. 37-38
	GRI 2-19 Remuneration policies	pg. 28
	GRI 2-22 Statement on sustainable development strategy	pg. 6 - 9
	GRI 2-28 Membership associations	pg. 48, 49
GRI 2: General Disclosures	GRI 2-29 Approach to stakeholder engagement	pg. 43-44
	GRI 3-1 Process to determine material topics	pg. 44
GRI 203: Indirect economic impacts	GRI 203-1 Infrastructure investments and services supported	pg. 45-47
GRI 205: Anti-corruption	GRI 205-2 Communication and training about anti-corruption policies and procedures	pg. 39
GRI 302: Energy	GRI 302-1 Energy consumption within the organization	pg. 19-20
	GRI 302-4 Reduction of energy consumption	pg. 19 and 20
GRI 305: Emissions	GRI 305-1 Direct (Scope 1) GHG emissions	pg. 24
GRI 306: Waste	GRI 306-2 Management of significant waste related impacts	pg. 18-19

GRI 401: Employment	GRI 401-1 New employee hires and employee turnover	pg. 29
GRI 403: Occupational health and safety	GRI 403-1 Occupational health and safety management system	pg. 26
	GRI 403-5 Worker training on occupational health and safety	pg. 26
	GRI 403-6 Promotion of worker health	pg. 27
GRI 404: Training and Education	GRI 404-2 Programs for upgrading employee skills and transition assistance programs	pg. 23 and 29
	GRI 404-3 Percentage of employees receiving regular performance and career development review	pg. 26 and 29
GRI 405: Diversity and Equal Opportunity	GRI 405-1 Diversity of governance bodies and employees	pg. 26
	GRI 405-2 Ratio of basic salary and remuneration of women to men	pg. 28 and 29
GRI 413: Local Communities	GRI 413-1 Operations with local community engagement, impact assessments, and development programs	pg. 10-11, 31-36

