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Department of Youth Established

PRISTINA--SRSB Bernard Kouchner has signed a regulation establishing the administrative Department of Youth. The department will be responsible for the overall management of all matters concerning youth in Kosovo. With more than half of the population in Kosovo below the age of 25, young people are a major force in the creation of post-war civil society.

The regulation 2000/48, which set up the department, assigns tasks to the Department of Youth such as: developing programmes to address specific youth groups, including: out-of-school, the illiterates, the unemployed, returning refugees, drug abuses, from single families and as single parents; developing programmes to identify and address the needs of young women. The department will also co-ordinate and co-operate with other organisations in order to promote policies and resources in such matters: job training and vocational services, sport and recreation, regional and international exchange programs, health and education, juvenile justice, and the promotion of youth and human rights.

The department's mandate also includes promoting the formation of youth clubs, groups and associations throughout Kosovo and the region, and overseeing their development. It wants to encourage democratic decision-making and broad based participation and consultation at all levels within such clubs, groups and associations.

The two Co-heads, Bernardo Cocco and Driton Lajci, will be responsible for staffing, organising and administering the department and issuing administrative instructions and operating guidelines on any matters pertaining to the functions of the Department.

The Department of Youth, which is located in EximKos Building, has already been active. It is organising a Youth Week, from 1 to 7 October 2000. The theme will be "Tolerance, No violence".