

“Priorities and possibilities for cooperation with Albania - Current trends and challenges”

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Presentation Structure

- ❑ Higher education landscape in Albania
 - ❑ Higher education and research reform
 - ❑ New law on higher education
 - ❑ Challenges
- ❑ Albanian HEIs in Tempus and Erasmus+
 - ❑ Lessons learned from Tempus
 - ❑ Opportunities for the Erasmus+
- ❑ National Priorities for Erasmus+
- ❑ Cooperation areas with EU and the region
- ❑ Q&A

Higher Education Landscape – Albania

- ❑ Higher education in *perpetuum reformation*

- ❑ Transformation processes:
 - ❑ Implementation of **Bologna Charter** and becoming part of the European Higher Education Area

 - ❑ **Liberalization** of higher education system: private HEIs as an alternative to the state HEIs

 - ❑ **Massification** of higher education: Too much education beyond capacities or public policy relevant to the democratic processes?

Perpetum reformation....

- ❑ Far from achieving HE **objectives on standards of quality** and excellence in teaching, student services, research and links with socio-economic stakeholders;
- ❑ Massification and liberalization were not accompanied by appropriate **review and control mechanisms** to ensure standards of quality;
- ❑ **Investments** in HE both in terms of capacity development and research have been very low – focused only on ‘inputs’;
- ❑ Relatively limited **internationalization strategies** of HEIs

Current reform and new Law

- ❑ Higher education – moving towards quality in the entire sector
- ❑ 2014 – Commission for Reformation of Higher Education and Research in Albania
- ❑ Broad consultation processes in 2014-2015
- ❑ **Law passed in September 2015** – public debate still ongoing
- ❑ New law on HE to be implemented from 2016-17
- ❑ Control of the legality of HEIs in summer 2014 – 18 HEIs closed, 13 HEIs suspended until improvements implemented
- ❑ *Moving beyond the dichotomy: state vs private HEIs*
- ❑ HEIs offering a public good and working on quality
- ❑ Government – active role in review, control and maintaining quality standards
- ❑ Linking to the current developments of Albania society
- ❑ Better funding scheme focused on outcome/performance

Challenges...

- New bylaws, rules and regulations for HEIs from 2016 onwards
- Governance and management of HEIs
- Funding system for HEIs
- Innovative teaching and training methodologies
- Curricula development – joint degrees
- Linking to the socio-economic stakeholders – relevance to Albanian development and challenges
- Internationalization: Mobility of staff and students
- Quality assurance
- Students engagement
- Links to the Labor Market
- ICTs in Higher Education
- Innovative policy development – EU accession

Albanian HEIs in Tempus

- ❑ Albania has been part of the TEMPUS Programme since 1992
- ❑ Tempus programme - promoting cooperation between Albanian and EU HEIs as well as Albanian and regional HEIs;
 - ❑ Implementation of Bologna process;
 - ❑ Academic staff professional development and mobility opportunities;
 - ❑ Infrastructure improvement;
 - ❑ Life Long Learning courses including Civil Society and Public Administration.
 - ❑ All Albanian public universities and some private ones have participated in **141 Tempus projects in total**; (21 ongoing)
- ❑ From 28 applications in 2011, Albania has submitted 65 applications in 2013, which is the highest number of proposals since 1992;
- ❑ The number of the selected projects has notably increased from 5 projects in 2012 to 9 projects in 2013;
- ❑ 22 project applications in Erasmus+ 2014-15 and 5 successful projects (no coordination role; only as partners)

Opportunities for the Erasmus+

❑ Challenges:

- ❑ Management of the project: contracting and financial aspects (VAT)
- ❑ Human resources – circulation
- ❑ Leading projects and management of consortia
- ❑ Willingness/resources of HEIs towards networking/project development
- ❑ Incentives for staff to participate in projects – HR remuneration schemes
- ❑ Structural constraints – state universities

❑ Opportunities:

- ❑ HEIs are better prepared to develop projects for Erasmus+ (IR units, Projects Offices; Centres of Research)
- ❑ Project Development Competences (institutional and personal)
- ❑ International Offices
- ❑ Networks with HEIs in the region and EU
- ❑ Links with other stakeholders: socio-economic, civil society and public authorities
- ❑ Grant application practices and incentives introduced in some HEIs

National Priorities – Capacity Building

Curricula development projects

- Social and behavioral science: political sciences, economics, anthropology; development studies;
- Journalism and information
- Finance, banking, accounting
- Business management, marketing
- Law
- Life sciences
- Computing and engineering
- Manufacturing
- Agriculture; food science and technology; forestry; fisheries
- Social services
- Environmental sciences
- Personal services: sports, tourism, catering

National Priorities – Capacity Building

- ❑ **Quality of education and teaching**
 - ❑ Bologna system: credit transfer, diploma supplement, cycle system
 - ❑ Learning and teaching tools using ICTs
 - ❑ Teaching methodologies
 - ❑ Virtual and real mobility
 - ❑ Self-assessment and quality assurance

National Priorities – Capacity Building

Management and governance of HEIs

- Strategic planning
- Human resources
- Financial management
- University services, academic affairs, student support, mobility
- Internationalisation of HEIs
- International and networking capacities
- Recognition mechanisms for mobility
- Quality assurance
- Project development
- Research management and activities

National Priorities – Capacity Building

- ❑ **Links with the society at large**
 - ❑ Life long learning
 - ❑ Vocational courses
 - ❑ University – enterprise cooperation
 - ❑ Employability of graduates
 - ❑ Alumni systems and tracing graduates in the labor market
 - ❑ Qualifications framework
 - ❑ Knowledge triangle: business, research and education

Thank you!

Q&A