



PROGRESS REPORT – ALTERNATIVE ENERGY

PROJECT DETAILS:

1. Title: *The Entrepreneurial Discovery Process in Albania: Partnership with the quadruple helix actors for developing the country “Smart Specialization Strategy” – The Alternative Energy*

2. Date and Venue: The roundtable on alternative energy was held at the Tirana International Hotel on the same day as the event for the renewable energy industry, being November 16th 2022. This decision was made due to the insufficient time to organize the events separately, and the significant number of quadruple helix actors that are representative of both fields.

3. Panel Members and A Brief Description of Their Professional Commitments: There were no panel members, given the small size of this sector compared to the rest, also reflected in the total number of representatives present at the event.

4. Event Organizers

With the support of the European Commission's Joint Research Center (JRC) and the Policy Answer Project (Horizon Europe GA 10105887) Future Center organized this activity in collaboration with Inter-Institution Working Group, particularly Mrs. Albania Tole, who has played a key role in identifying and engaging strategic actors from the public sector and academia; and the Albanian Manufacturing Union (AMU) which was selected by Future Center to assist in reviewing the contact lists prepared for the business helix and to urge the representatives from this helix to participate at the event.

5. Event Participants

In this event, there were seven representatives from the business helix (Albanian Renewable Energy Association, Albanian Manufacturing Union, recycling sector, and so-called heavy industries), one from academia (Karl Gega Vocational School), two from the public sector (Ministry of Education and Sports), and one from civil society.

Businesses: 7 Participants; Academia: 1 Participants; Government: 2 Participants; Civil Society: 1 Participants.

ACTIVITIES & OUTPUT

1. Planning

During the planning phase, the aspects covered included the design of an action plan for the logistics coordination and moderation of the activity, the preparation of advertising materials from both a content and design point of view, coordination with the EDP working group for reviewing the event's contact list, determining the date of the activity, the approximate number of participants, and the role of each individual within the working group. In addition, another aspect that was covered during this phase was also the identification of relevant business organizations to support in the organization of this activity, for which we decided to collaborate with the Albanian Manufacturing Union and the Albanian Renewable Energy Association as both organizations have expertise in this field and have contributed to the implementation of alternative energy related projects, especially the Albanian Manufacturing Union, which is currently supporting one of the largest alternative energy projects in the country.



As for the identification of strategic actors from the business helix which was also addressed during this phase, Future Center encountered many challenges due to 1) the considerably low number of active enterprises in the country that produce or consume alternative energy and 2) the tendency for this activity to be a support mechanism rather than the primary focus of the business activity, which in return makes it difficult for to identify such companies through desk research. Given these considerations, Future Center required the assistance of the business organization chosen to support in the organization of this activity to identify 1) active enterprises in the country that are now implementing, are interested in, or have the potential to produce alternative energy and 2) recycling companies, given the impact that the production of alternative energy from waste has in the performance of their sector. As for the remaining quadruple helix actors, they were identified simultaneously with the renewable energy sector, given their cross-cut nature.

2. Coordination & Promotion

As for the coordination and promotion phase, the first step was to make some final adjustments to the contact list created for this event, which was done with the support of Mrs. Albana Tole. From there, we took care of every detail related to the conference hall, made sure that everyone on the guest list received an invitation, and sent out a final reminder with all the event details.

3. Execution

The activity was organized on November 16th at the premises of Tirana International Hotel throughout which Future Center handled all of the event's logistics, including keeping a list of attendees, taking notes on comments and suggestions made during the event, photographing the event's key moments, coordinating the event's participant as well as moderated the roundtable discussion according to the predefined format that has been used for all previous roundtables.

During this roundtable, an issue that was encountered was the low number of participants compared to the previous roundtable, which to some extent was expected given the small size and low interest of this sector in Albania. On the positive side, however, not only was this roundtable able to collect pertinent feedback from the participants, but in addition it was also notes that with a reduced number of participants the ability to have a more in depth analysis was much higher, which is something to be taken into consideration for the organization of the other EDP activities.

4. Summary of comments and suggestions

- ✓ Throughout the roundtable organized for the alternative energy sector, the quadruple helix actors indicated that, although this sector represents significant potential for the decarbonization of the economy and the rapid transition from a linear to a circular economy, this sector in Albania remains largely untapped.
- ✓ Furthermore, the business helix indicated that, given the significant environmental and economic benefits attributed to the production and consumption of alternative energy, there have been some initiatives from their end to invest in the field of the alternative energy which unfortunately, have not been able to succeed or create the desired impact primarily as a result of a lack system that enables waste segregation at source. Precisely the concrete example presented during the meeting was the "Waste to Energy" initiative undertaken by Titan Cement, which aims to replace combustible fuels with alternative fuels such as RDF,SRF etc. that can be created utilizing industrial waste such as leather, plastic, etc. Unfortunately, according to the company's officials, in the lack of a proper waste segregation system at the source, this initiative has not been able to have the expected effect despite the company's complete commitment to produce and use alternative resources.

- ✓ Representatives from the recycling sector raised the same concern, arguing that the absence of a waste segregation system and the legal ban on waste imports in the last few years has led to 1) a reduction in the number of recycling companies in the Republic of Albania, 2) an inability for existing firms to operate at full capacity as well as 3) higher market prices. Regarding this last point, the actors of the business helix emphasized that the cardboard boxes used to ship agricultural products are currently brought in from other countries at a much higher cost than what they could be made in Albania by recycling companies if they had more secondary raw material at their disposal. In addition, representatives from the recycling industry noted that in the past, certain regions attempted to create a waste separation system, which according to them failed not due to a lack of investment for waste segregation at the source or a lack of citizen awareness, but rather due to the lack of micro coordination of the waste collection vehicles.
- ✓ During the meeting, the installation of solar panels for self-consumption was also discussed for which the business helix representatives noted that despite their high interest in investing in this direction, especially in the wake of the recent energy price increases, they are not allowed to make investment in solar panels whose production capacity goes beyond 400-500 kv per hour, which is significantly lower than their current energy consumption. In contrast, the business helix reports that in other countries of the region, such as Montenegro, even small businesses can produce 2mgv per hour.
- ✓ In response to the aforementioned issues, the first measure proposed by quadruple helix actors was the implementation of a successful waste segregation system, which would not only benefit the recycling industry but also the alternative energy sector by utilizing the remaining waste for energy production. In particular, a representative of the recycling business proposed that garbage be separated into two categories, namely wet and moist waste, with a portion of the dry waste being sent for recycling and the moist waste being used for gasification and the production of organic fertilizers. In addition, the business helix also emphasized the necessity for this measure to be accompanied by a proper citizens awareness campaign. Last but not least, in order to assure the creation of a well-functioning and effective waste management system, the quadruple helix actors highlighted the importance of developing and implementing a suitable "Extended Producer Responsibility" model.
- ✓ Regarding scientific research, the quadruple helix actors emphasized the need to 1) provide research institutes and university departments with the autonomy to manage their own funds for scientific research and 2) for more research to be made on how to improve the Albanian alternative energy and recycling industry' performance.
- ✓ Representatives of the private sector and the Ministry of Education also proposed the establishment of a form of agreement amongst them according to which, on the one hand, the Ministry of Education will be responsible for mobilizing its staff to ensure that the waste is segregated at source, whereas the recycling companies will be responsible for providing all the necessary materials required to segregate and collect this was once it has research a certain level. schools also claimed that they had motivations to develop a similar arrangement but underlined the need for a revision of the existing legislative framework, which does not explicitly specify the method in which these money generated from public schools may be utilized by them.
- ✓ The production of alternative energy from olive bourses, livestock remains , kinetic power of air and water, as well as zero-cost financing for enterprises making the transition from industry 3.0 to industry 4.0, now implemented across all Europe, were some of other suggestions made by the participants during the event.

