



*SUMMARY*

*MONITORING REPORT*

# IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NATIONAL EDUCATION STRATEGY 2021-2026

## TABELA E PËRMBAJTJES

<b>1. INTRODUCTION .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>2. CONTEXT.....</b>	<b>3</b>
Integration .....	3
Demographics .....	3
Labor Market .....	3
Pre-University Education .....	3
Academic Freedom .....	4
Scientific Research .....	4
Higher Education.....	4
Education System Financing .....	5
Legal Framework.....	5
<b>3. METHODOLOGY .....</b>	<b>6</b>
Literature Review .....	6
Data Collection.....	6
Analysis of Performance Indicators .....	7
Evaluation according to time intervals.....	7
Documentation and Reporting.....	7
<b>4. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY .....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>4.1 Main Findings.....</b>	<b>7</b>
A1. Ensuring inclusiveness and participation in pre-university education .....	7
A3. Improving the training and career of teachers .....	8
A4. Implementation of the competency-based curriculum.....	9
A5. Development of the digital competence.....	9
B1. Increase of school performance .....	10
B2. Ensuring the Performance of the Education System through Inclusive Structures.....	10
C1. Quality Improvement in Higher Education.....	10
C2. Promoting Excellence in Teaching and Scientific Research.....	10
C3. Interconnection of Higher Education Institutions with the Labor Market.....	11
C4. Ensuring Academic Honesty and Transparency.....	11
C5. Increase of the Students' Socio-Economic Status.....	11
C6. Internationalization of Higher Education in Albania .....	12
C7. Advancement of Information and Communication Technology Infrastructure.....	12
<b>5. SUMMARY TABLE OF THE APPLICABILITY OF POLICY OBJECTIVES OF PRE-UNIVERSITY EDUCATION .....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>6. SUMMARY TABLE OF THE APPLICABILITY OF POLICY OBJECTIVES FOR MANAGEMENT AND QUALITY ASSURANCE .....</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>7. SUMMARY TABLE OF THE APPLICABILITY OF POLICY OBJECTIVES FOR HIGHER EDUCATION .....</b>	<b>22</b>

Ky publikim është financuar nga Bashkimi Evropian. Përmbajtja e tij është vetëm përgjegjësi e Qëndresës Qytetare dhe nuk reflekton domosdoshmërisht pikëpamjet e Bashkimit Evropian.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The Civic Resistance is an organization focused on strengthening the role of the citizen in society and community with the aim of improving governance through civic engagement and activism. In its activity since 2016, Civic Resistance, through reports, meetings, and roundtables, has been focused in the evolution of the education system development, analyzing the problems and engaging in providing suggestions to the responsible institutions with the aim of improvement in the provision of educational service for young people in the country.

For 7 years, the Civic Resistance has established expertise in monitoring public policies and through permanent reports, monitors the financial expenses carried out by public universities, with the aim of making them open and transparent for the public and students especially. The focus has continuously been on educational policies and their implementation.

This report will consist of monitoring the applicability of the "National Education Strategy 2021-2026" approved by Decision No. 621, dated 22.10.2021 from the Council of Ministers (DCM), as well as to make analytically transparent how this strategy has been applied and implemented for the benefit of encouraging the development of education in Albania and what were the new standards achieved.

We also believe that through this monitoring report, the possibility of orientation and efficiency for all interest groups increases, starting from students, lecturers, teachers, academic or administrative leaders, but also by institutions in charge of education, both at the local and central level. Also, this report can serve as a database for any interested expert focusing on the development of education.

The National Education Strategy is now in its **third year of implementation**, that is, what constitutes half of the term foreseen in the decision from the full applicability of it. This 3-year period serves to make a mid-term analysis and to understand in a more concrete way the progress of the implementation as well as the rhythm with which institutions are implementing the foreseen objectives. An analysis in mid-term level would serve as a reflection of the current situation development both at the infrastructural or curricular level. This whole picture comes as an analysis that will precede and also serve a comprehensive report on the implementation, achievements and challenges in completing the deadlines provided in the approved DCM.

## 2. CONTEXT

### Integration

In 2020 Albania opened the negotiation process with the European Union, in its aspirations for full membership. Following the unification of policies and progress in the process of negotiations with the EU, as well as the continuation of the previous strategic planning, the "National Strategy for Education 2021-2026", was approved on October 22, 2021. This was a continuation of the Strategy for the Development of Pre-University Education 2014-2020, the National Development and Integration Strategy 2015-2020 and a number of other policies nationally important, related to developments in the field of education. For the first time, this strategy includes in the same development plan, the pre-university education as well as higher education.

### Demographics

Education through all its levels is facing challenges, which necessarily affect also the approach and development of policies. The demographics crisis has turned into one evident problem in recent years. According to the figures published in the recent report from INSTAT, in January 2023, it results that Albania has 40,325 fewer young up to the age of 29, compared to one year ago. Referring to official figures from INSTAT<sup>1</sup> from 2020-2023, 112,362 citizens left Albania, which includes cases of legal and measurable migration by the authorities.

### Labor Market

In the fourth quarter of 2023, in reference to figures from INSTAT<sup>2</sup>, it is stated that 22% of young people aged 15-29 are unemployed. Among the youth of the same age group who are economically inactive, the figures show that 1.4% of them are declared as discouraged workers. Pupils or students make up for 72.6% of economically inactive young people. These indicators indicate a difficulty linking educational programs and educational institutions with the labor market.

### Pre-University Education

PISA<sup>3</sup> is an OECD program related to the International Assessment of Students, which measures the ability of 15-year-old students to use knowledge and their reading, math and science skills. Through this testing aimed at addressing a series of educational challenges, such as the interaction of students with the school, as an educational institution as well as with their teachers. PISA test results<sup>4</sup> for the year 2022, marked the lowest indicators

---

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.instat.gov.al/media/11653/popullsia-e-shqiperise-1-janar-2023.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> [https://www.instat.gov.al/media/13102/atfp-tr4-2023\\_press-release.pdf](https://www.instat.gov.al/media/13102/atfp-tr4-2023_press-release.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.oecd.org/pisa/>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.oecd.org/publication/pisa-2022-results/>

compared to all the tests previously completed in this program. Albanian students in mathematics testing scored 69 points less than in 2018, in the reading test they scored 47 points less compared to 2018 and in the science testing they accumulated 41 points less than in 2018. Albania results with the highest drop in ranking regarding measuring indicators, compared to the countries of the Western Balkan Region and Europe.

## Academic Freedom

International reports have specified evident problems related to academic freedom. V-Dem<sup>5</sup> (Varieties of Democracy) is an approach to conceptualizing and measuring democracy by country. In the last published report 2023, the index of academic freedom<sup>6</sup> for Albania is 0.68, marking a decrease compared to 1992 (0.73). The levels of academic freedom are proven to be declining, considering the criticism that academics have expressed, since the 2023 report has also scored low index levels, specifically 0.34, a lower level than in 1992 (0.36). These indicators represent the non-free academic environment on which higher education takes place in the country and the levels on which scientific research is based.

## Scientific Research

Universities should have scientific research laboratories, but this is still not a reality for Albania. The latest study by Science<sup>7</sup>, a prestigious evaluation for articles published in all European countries in the field of physics, biology, chemistry, mathematics, medicine, biotechnology, engineering and earth sciences, ranks Albania as last in Europe for scientific research. Albania results to have had 6 articles published per 100,000 individuals, ranking as the last country in the Western Balkans region. The results recorded for Albania have a significant difference compared to the indicators achieved by the countries of the region, where Serbia ranks as first with 69 items per 100,000 individuals, followed by Montenegro with 50 articles per 100,000 individuals, North Macedonia with 21 articles per 100,000 individuals and Kosovo with 15 articles per 100,000 individuals. Positive development can be considered the increase in the state budget for 2024 where 1.5 billion Lek have been allocated for scientific research, resulting in an increase of 742 million Lek compared to the previous year.

## Higher Education

Over the years, the quality and transparency of universities has been in the spotlight of international rankings, giving us a comprehensive view of the situation of management and development of higher education in the country. QS World University Ranking<sup>8</sup> is an international ranking which bases its measurement methodology in the reputation of

---

<sup>5</sup> [https://v-dem.net/data\\_analysis/CountryGraph/](https://v-dem.net/data_analysis/CountryGraph/)

<sup>6</sup> [https://v-dem.net/data\\_analysis/CountryGraph/](https://v-dem.net/data_analysis/CountryGraph/)

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.monitor.al/studimi-shqiperia-e-fundit-ne-europe-per-kerkim-shkencor/>

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.topuniversities.com/>

academics, the level of achievement of students after graduation, university partnerships with businesses and student connections with the labor market. These indicators measure the orientation that the university has towards the market and not only the aspect of scientific research it offers. In the Europe ranking, in which there are 688 ranked universities, 6 Albanian universities took part, 4 of which are public. Agricultural University of Tirana ranked 605, University of Durrës "Aleksandër Moisiu" ranked 606 and Polytechnic University of Tirana ranked 658. Also, 2 private universities were part of the evaluation, Epoka University and Bedër University. Albanian universities are ranked in the last tier of European universities, resulting in a gradual decline in the ranking. These reports and international evaluations provide us with indicators that testify to the emergency and challenging situation of all levels of education in country, seeing this in the comparative perspective in relation to the countries of the Western Balkans region, as well as Europe.

### **Education System Financing**

The budget for education is another aspect that has also been systematically decreasing in recent years, where in 2024 only 2.29% was allocated from the Gross Domestic Product. This budget is the main basis on which the implementation of investments and the implementation of policies in education are based.

### **Legal Framework**

The legal aspect of education regulation in Albania is based on the Constitution of the Republic of Albania and special laws regulating pre-university education and higher education. The Constitution defines the right to education for everyone and specifies that general public secondary education is accessible and free. Secondary vocational education and higher education can only be conditioned based on abilities of pupils and students.

Law no. 69/2012 on pre-university education emphasizes the right of every individual to education without discrimination, establishing principles that support inclusiveness and equality in education. This law provides protection for students and employees from discrimination, violence, and ill-treatment, promoting human rights and children. Also, the law foresees special support for students from families in need and for those with disabilities.

Law no. 80/2015 on higher education guarantees academic freedom and financial autonomy of higher education institutions. This law ensures that any individual who successfully completes secondary education and meets the admission criteria, has the right to attend higher education, offering economic support and social benefits from the state for those who meet the admission criteria.

### 3. METHODOLOGY

The methodology of this monitoring is designed to evaluate the implementation and the effectiveness of the National Education Strategy 2021-2026 in Albania, while including a comprehensive and systematic approach, where the study aims to analyze in detail the achieved progress of all levels of education in the country. The methodology includes the collection of data from official sources, the analysis of performance indicators defined in the strategic document, monitoring and periodic evaluation, stakeholder involvement, and documentation findings and recommendations in a transparent and accessible manner for all actors involved in the education sector.

#### Literature Review

For the development of this monitoring, the "National Education Strategy 2021-2026" document has been reviewed, as well as the report developed by UNICEF, "Evaluation of the Pre-University Education Strategy 2014-2020", which analyzes the applicability of the previous education strategy. Also, the OECD report on the evaluation of education in Albania was consulted, to deepen perspectives of international monitoring on indicators of the state of education in Albania. For the development of this report, the documentation of public institutions regarding the periodic monitoring of policy progress educational was also examined, as well as the annual statistical reports reported by the Ministry of Education and Sports.

#### Data Collection

Data was collected from various sources to provide a comprehensive picture of the implementation of the National Education Strategy. These resources include the Ministry of Education and Sports, Regional Directorates of Pre-university Education, Public Institutions of Higher Education, international agencies that monitor education, as well as stakeholders.

Data were collected through 30 direct information requests sent to the aforementioned institutions. The data collected includes statistics on the number of students and teachers, enrollment and completion rates of studies, the quality of teaching, the results of national and international tests, and other relevant indicators for assessing the quality of different educational levels.

Legal and strategic documents were used to understand the context and the regulatory framework of education in Albania. This includes analysis of key laws, government decisions and education policies. Stakeholder involvement was ensured through informal meetings with teachers, students and parents, where it was discussed about the quality of services received.

## Analysis of Performance Indicators

This monitoring report analyses the applicability of strategic objectives, focusing on the fulfillment of the action plan, the applicability of the measurable indicators defined in the strategic document as well as in the analysis of changes according to time intervals to understand trends in performance change, in relation to the predetermined objective. This analysis includes comparison of key performance indicators before and after the strategy implementation.

## Evaluation according to time intervals

Monitoring and evaluation were carried out at regular intervals to ensure that necessary changes and improvements were made in time. Periodic reports have included detailed data analysis and have been used to evaluate progress towards achieving the set objectives.

## Documentation and Reporting

Data and analysis were clearly and systematically documented to ensure that they are understandable by all interested parties. Submission of data was also done in tabular and graphic form to better understand trends and changes.

The conclusions and recommendations of the study are documented in detail, including an executive summary, analysis of key findings, and recommendations for further improvement of the strategy. The report aims to provide a clear and comprehensible overview to all interested parties.

# 4. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## 4.1 Main Findings

### A1. Ensuring inclusiveness and participation in pre-university education

In the last two years, a decline in student participation in the pre-university education system has been observed, including a decrease of 7.8% in preschool education and 3.8% in primary pre-university education. In primary education, there was a decrease of 8.5% students from 1<sup>st</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> grade, while in the upper secondary education, the decrease is more sensitive, specifically 11.3%. Initiatives to reduce early dropout proved to be unsuccessful as in the years 2021-2023 it turned out that 2830 students dropped out of pre-university education. It is also ascertained from the monitoring carried out that pre-university education institutions do not have a standardized early dropout prevention system in place.

The number of students in collective classes has decreased by 7.8% in the last three years, and the number of collective classes decreased by 5.6%. Projections show that by 2026, the number of students in collective classes will decrease by 9.3% and the number of classes by 13%, indicating that teaching in collective classes will continue. On the other hand, it turns out that the decision-making for covering transport costs was comprehensive, giving the possibility of benefit to some categories that were not foreseen in the strategic document.

## **A2. Ensuring the social and emotional well-being of students**

The participation of students with disabilities in upper secondary education has decreased with 3.9% and it turns out that 86% of them do not attend primary education and upper secondary education. While the number of assistant teachers has increased by 13%, this is used to complement the rate of teachers' working hours due to the changes in demographics.

The number of Roma students in primary education has decreased by 5.4%, and the number of Egyptian students has dropped by 3.4%. Only 30 teachers have been trained for the integration of Roma culture in teaching curricula.

Lack of optimal conditions in offices for psychologists and social workers and the lack of security officers in schools contribute to an unsafe environment for students and staff. Number of psychologists and social workers has increased by 30%, but one psychologist is responsible for 506 students. From the reported data it is observed that 53% of educational institutions do not have optimal conditions for the development of the activity from social workers. Likewise, 54% of higher secondary education institutions do not have security officers. Only in the academic year 2022-2023, 796 cases of physical violence, 912 cases of psychological violence and 954 cases of bullying were reported.

The initiative "Let's do our homework" (Të bëjmë detyrat e shtëpisë) has been implemented in only 13.4% of educational institutions and includes 2.6% of students of pre-university education. By 2026, according to projections, it is expected to extend to 27% of institutions and include about 6% of students. Whereas, in regards to the initiative "School as a Community Center" it results that 54% of educational institutions are not profiled as Community Centers, which proves a lack of equality among students in different regions of Albania in receiving the same services within schools.

Teaching in shifts will continue to be present in public educational institutions. In the Municipality of Tirana, it turns out that in order to eliminate teaching with two shifts, it is foreseen that 21 schools need to be built, so far it turns out that only 17 new schools have been planned to be built, which makes it impossible to achieve the strategic objective.

## **A3. Improving the training and career of teachers**

The number of teachers has decreased with 291 teachers in the 2023-2024 academic year, compared to two years ago, while the student/teacher ratio results in public primary education with 15.1 students for one teacher, while in private education it's 15.2. In the

public secondary education, the ratio is 7.9 students for one teacher and 8 in private institutions, and in public upper secondary education, the ratio is 11.5 students for one teacher and 9.1 in private institutions. A decrease in public institutions and an increase in private institutions is seen, compared to the academic year 2021-2022. Lack of significant improvements in programs of initial training and delays in the realization of strategic objectives are disturbing. The salary increase for teachers is planned to reach 40%, but is still far from this objective, since until the end of 2024, a teacher's salary will increase by 32.5% and specifically, a teacher's salary in primary education by 27.4%. Also, the lack of Erasmus+ programs and the low number of registered diaspora teachers suggest that teacher training and incentive policies show the need for a more consistent and coordinated approach. ASCAP has submitted for accreditation 76 training modules and 6 modules for diaspora teachers, which are still in the accreditation process.

#### **A4. Implementation of the competency-based curriculum**

According to the data, only 71 thousand pupils from the 1<sup>st</sup> to the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade benefit new books for free, while 242 thousand students in total benefit free books (new and used). Books can be reused for up to three years, depending on the scale of their consumption.

Monitoring of educational institutions is limited. During the three years of its strategy implementation, only 23% of primary educational institutions and 16% of upper secondary education were monitored.

It is established that there is a contradiction between the results of the national tests and international ones (PISA). The National Program for "Art, Craft, Sport" is implemented in only 14.3% of institutions, not offering equality for all students. Participation in English language learning and extracurricular activities is limited and needs further expansion to improve the quality of education and the development of students' competencies. During the 2021-2022 academic year, 30,164 first graders have started learning English language, while in 2023 this number has decreased to 28,572 students.

#### **A5. Development of the digital competence**

Only 71.5% of pre-university educational institutions are equipped with computers in the ratio of 1 computer for 20 students and only 46% of educational institutions report to have been equipped with internet connection. Lack of implementation of the SELFIE platform and delays in the development of online learning guides negatively affect the development of digital competences. Improvement of ICT infrastructure and the provision of quality ICT services are necessary to support the teaching and learning process in all education levels. Only 46% of public institutions of the pre-university education in Albania has internet and only 5.3% have a wireless network.

## **B1. Increase of school performance**

The "School of Directors" has certified 908 directors/principals until 2023, but only 27.6% of institutions are led by certified individuals. There is a lack of use of human capital trained and prepared for the management of educational institutions.

Monitoring of private kindergartens shows problems with licensing, where 60% of them operate without a license. This situation indicates the need for an immediate improvement in the management and direction of schools to guarantee quality and institutional autonomy.

## **B2. Ensuring the Performance of the Education System through Inclusive Structures**

Ensuring the performance of the education system through building a comprehensive evaluation structure and improvement of capacities for its implementation has been a key priority. Pre-University Information Management System (SMIP) has been implemented and is used for student assessment, by generating quarterly and annual electronic reports, so that parents are kept informed. On the other hand, the System for Information Management in Higher Education (SMIAL) has had a lack of transparency and is still inactive, not respecting the deadlines of the action plan. The methodology for the education system evaluation was drafted and approved beyond the deadlines, while the performance indicators are defined through an official order from the Ministry of Education.

## **C1. Quality Improvement in Higher Education**

Improvement of quality in higher education through the restructuring of study programs, modernization of academic infrastructure and implementation of high standards for the institutional assessment has started, but with delays and lack of transparency. Codification of study programs is in process, but only the University of Arts has completed it so far. Meanwhile, investments in infrastructure have been carried out in some universities, but they are insufficient. Out of five planned campuses, only a few student residence buildings have been built for the University of Tirana and the Agricultural University of Tirana. ASCAL has not restructured the Quality Assurance System and has remained out of the EQAR membership, showing non-compliance with deadlines and lack of implementation of the strategic document.

## **C2. Promoting Excellence in Teaching and Scientific Research**

Promoting excellence in teaching and research has included the creation of centers for training in teaching and research, but with delays and lack of budget. In 2023, the Ministry of Education and Sports declared a lack of funds for these measures. The Polytechnic University of Tirana financed 81 participants in conferences and 19 scientific publications, increasing international participation from 7 in 2021 to 80 in 2023. The University of Arts

had a decline in participation in international exchange programs from 31 in 2021-2022 to only 2 during the academic year 2023-2024. The University of Tirana and Agricultural University of Tirana reported increase of international participation.

### **C3. Interconnection of Higher Education Institutions with the Labor Market**

The lack of a central registry for graduate students has hindered harmonizing the programs with the demands of the labor market. Only two public universities have implemented STEM programs, while career offices have been ineffective in some universities. The University of Shkodra, University of Arts and University of Tirana do not have data on employed students. The University of Gjirokastra has suffered a decline in the number of employed students, while the University of Vlora has increased its number of employed students in the public sector.

### **C4. Ensuring Academic Honesty and Transparency**

Structures such as the Ethics Council, the Academic Personnel Promotion Commission and the Permanent Commission for awarding the "Doctor" title have been established, to monitor the implementation of academic integrity codes and regulations.

Law no. 80/2015 and DCM no. 777/2018 require Higher Education Institutions to set up anti-plagiarism systems. Only the University of Medicine, University of Arts and Polytechnic University of Tirana use the Akademia platform, while 7 out of 11 universities do not have such a platform. University of Tirana, University of Sports, University of Durrës, University of Korça and University of Vlora do not have electronic anti-plagiarism programs, violating academic integrity and not implementing the strategic document.

The strategic document also foresees the completion of the drafting of ethical codes until 2023. Only the University of Medicine and the University of Korça have approved codes of ethics in 2022, while most universities have previously approved codes.

### **C5. Increase of the Students' Socio-Economic Status**

Increasing the socio-economic status of students through quality services and financial assistance is another aspect where efforts have been made. Law no. 80/2015 and DCM no. 903/2016 provide financial support for students with an academic average 9-10 and for those in need. The Polytechnic University of Tirana has distributed 700 scholarships, while the University of Tirana and the University of Medicine have signed 3-party agreements for financial support, but with a low number of students who continue to receive support.

During the academic year 2022-2023, 34 students from the University of Tirana signed agreements, but only 11 continued to receive support in 2023-2024. The University of Medicine signed 3-party agreements with 47 students in 2022- 2023, but only 4 continued in 2023-2024. In the academic year 2023-2024, 56 new students signed agreements. The Agricultural University of Tirana had an increase of beneficiaries from 11% in 2022-2023 to

23% in 2023-2024. The University of Korça approved 24 quotas out of 150 registered students.

Most higher education institutions have signed cooperation agreements with public and private organizations to provide internship opportunities for students. However, student card services have not received sufficient financial support and have not been fully implemented or provided truly facilitating services for students. Various support services are offered through the official websites of universities and offices of academic secretaries.

## **C6. Internationalization of Higher Education in Albania**

The internationalization of higher education in Albania is still at low levels. Only 0.6% of students are foreigners, and the number of Albanian students who participate in international exchange programs is usually less than 1%. Universities have dedicated budgets for international projects, but a major part of their funds remains unspent.

## **C7. Advancement of Information and Communication Technology Infrastructure**

Advancement of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) infrastructure and digital services for public higher education institutions is partial. Only a few universities have digitalized laboratories, and the equipment of university premises with wireless internet distribution system remains incomplete. The University of Durrës and the Polytechnic University of Tirana are among the few who offer these services, indicating the need for improvement of ICT infrastructure.

### **Main Recommendations**

- **Addressing demographic and migration challenges:** Policies must be more focused on addressing the challenges caused by demographic movements and migration, to ensure sustainable participation at all levels of education.
- **Raising Awareness and Funding for Education:** Organizing campaigns raising awareness on the importance of pre-school and pre-university education as well as increasing funding for school programs and improvement of infrastructure.
- **Standardization and Unification of the Structure for the Early Prevention System:** Standardization and unification of the structure for the Early Prevention System in all Local Education Offices for Pre-University Education (ZVAPs) for a coordinated and effective approach.
- **Policy and Strategic Plans for the Reduction of Collective Classes:** Drafting specific policies and the creation of strategic plans for the reduction of continuous collective classes.
- **Clear and Measurable Indicators for Strategic Objectives:** Use of clear and measurable indicators in the design of strategic objectives for assessing the level of impact of the measures taken.

- **Support for Students with Disabilities and Roma and Egyptian Communities:** Creating dedicated support programs in the teaching curricula for students with disabilities and students from Roma and Egyptian communities.
- **Improving Premises Conditions for Psychologists and Social Workers:** Investment in improving the infrastructural conditions of the premises for psychologists and social workers.
- **Increasing the Number of Security Officers in High Schools:** Increasing the number of security officers in upper secondary schools to provide physical and psychological protection for students and educational staff.
- **Construction of New Schools in Tirana:** Accelerating the construction of new schools in Tirana and the increase in the budget dedicated to infrastructure, in order to eliminate teaching in two shifts.
- **Increasing Investments for the Accessibility of Students with Disabilities:** Increased investments in improving school infrastructure for the accessibility of students with disabilities.
- **Transparency on School Infrastructure Improvements:** Delivery of transparency regarding the condition and improvements in school infrastructure, including accessibility for students with disabilities.
- **Continuous Training for Teachers:** Investment in ongoing training for teachers, to prepare them for the demands of an education system in continuous development as well as increasing the diversity of training modules.
- **Transparency and Communication for International Programs:** Improving of transparency and communication about opportunities for participation in international programs for teachers and students.
- **Improving the Recruitment and Training Process for Directors of Educational Institutions:** Improving the process of recruitment and training for directors of educational institutions, ensuring appropriate certifications.
- **Adoption of Electronic Anti-Plagiarism Platforms:** All institutions of higher education should adopt and use electronic anti-plagiarism platforms to ensure academic integrity.
- **Support for Participation in Scientific Conferences and Publications:** Increasing the financial and logistical support for the participation of academic staff in conferences and scientific publications.
- **Improving Transparency and Management of International Projects:** Improving the transparency and management of international projects by regularly publishing reports on expenses and results achieved.
- **Creation of a Unified Digital System for Public Universities:** The Ministry of Education should initiate the creation of a unified digital system for all public universities.
- **Investment in Wireless Internet Infrastructure and Digitalized Laboratories:** Universities must invest in wireless internet infrastructure and the modernization of digitalized laboratories for all fields of study.

## 5. SUMMARY TABLE OF THE APPLICABILITY OF POLICY OBJECTIVES OF PRE-UNIVERSITY EDUCATION

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE	FEASIBILITY	RECOMMENDATIONS
<p><b>Specific Objective 1</b></p> <p><b>Ensuring inclusiveness and participation in preparatory classes and obligatory education, as well as increasing access in preschool and upper secondary education.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) The increase of access in preschool education</li> <li>b) Increasing participation in pre-university education</li> <li>c) Rationalization of the school network</li> </ul>	<p><b>-Decline in Participation in Preschool and Pre-University Education:</b> In the last two years, the number of children in kindergartens fell by 7.8%, and the number of students attending pre-university education decreased by 3.8%.</p> <p><b>- The decline in Primary and Secondary Education:</b> Primary education has seen a decrease of 8.5% of pupils registered from the first grade until the fifth, while upper secondary education has seen a decrease of 11.3% in the last two years.</p> <p><b>- School Dropout:</b> 2830 pupils have dropped out of the pre-university education between the years 2021-2023, and institutions have interacted to address this issue.</p> <p><b>- Early Prevention System:</b> This system is not standardized and unified in all Local Education Offices of Pre-University Education, addressing the problem of school drop-out in different ways.</p> <p><b>-Transport Policies:</b> The decision-making in covering transport costs has been comprehensive,</p>	<p>- Awareness campaigns must be organized on the importance of preschool and pre-university education. Also, attention should be paid in increasing financing on the school programs and infrastructure.</p> <p>-This situation highlights the need for a standardization and unification of the structure of the Early Prevention System in all Local Education Offices of Pre-University Education, to provide coordinated and effective access.</p> <p>-More specific policies should be drafted and strategic plans must be developed, in regards to the continuous reduction of collective classes.</p> <p>-In designing strategic objectives, clear and measurable indicators should be used, to allow the rational assessment of the level of impact of the measures taken. General terms such as "growth" and "decrease" should be substituted with concrete and well-defined figures. This will ensure that institutions can exactly monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of policies and of their actions.</p>

	<p>providing the opportunity of benefit to some categories that were not foreseen in the strategic document.</p> <p><b>-Collective Classes:</b> Number of students in collective classes has fallen by 7.8% in last three years, and the number of collective classes has decreased by 5.6%. Projections show that until 2026, the number of students in collective classes will fall by 9.3% and the number of classes with 13%, showing that teaching in collective class will continue</p>	
<p><b>Specific Objective A2</b></p> <p><b>Providing social, emotional and physical welfare of all students, in order to reduce drop-out levels and to enable students to reach their full potential.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Ensuring quality education for children from vulnerable groups.</li> <li>b) Increasing the quality of psychosocial services for all students.</li> <li>c) Consolidation of safe and child-friendly environments in schools, through drafting and approval of the</li> </ul>	<p><b>-Decline of Number of Students with Disabilities:</b> Number of students with the disabilities in the upper secondary education fell by 3.9%, and 86% of those attending primary education do not go through upper secondary education.</p> <p><b>-Increase of Number of Assistant Teachers:</b> Number of assistant teachers has increased by 13% compared to last year, but this is used to complete the rate of working hours for teachers because of demographic changes.</p> <p><b>-Decrease in Participation of Students from Roma and Egyptian Communities:</b> Number of Roma students in primary education decreased by</p>	<p>-Dedicated programs must be drafted in order to support students with disabilities and students from Roma and Egyptian communities, to ensure continuity of education, from primary education to upper secondary education.</p> <p>-There should be investments in improving physical conditions of the labs dedicated to psychologists and social workers, to provide a suitable working environment.</p> <p>-In reference to the improvement of security in pre-university educational institutions, the number of security officers in upper secondary schools should be increased to ensure physical and psychological protection of students and educational staff.</p>

<p>action plan for safe schools.</p> <p>d) Improvement and adaptation of school infrastructure.</p> <p>e) Education on reaction in cases of civil emergencies and natural disasters.</p>	<p>5.4%, and the number of Egyptian students decreased by 3.4%.</p> <p><b>-Implementation of the Initiative "Let's do our homework":</b> This initiative is implemented only in 13.4% of educational institutions and includes 2.6% of students of the pre-university education. Until 2026, it is expected to spread to 27% of institutions and include about 6% of students.</p> <p><b>-Lack of Optimal Conditions for Psychologists and Social Workers:</b> Number of psychologists and social workers has increased by 30%, but a psychologist is responsible for 506 students. 53% of educational institutions have no optimal conditions for such activity.</p> <p><b>-Security in Educational Institutions:</b> 54% of upper secondary educational institutions do not have security officers. Only during the school year 2022-2023 there were reports of 796 cases of physical violence, 912 cases of psychological violence and 954 cases of bullying.</p> <p><b>-Implementation of the Initiative " School as a Community Center":</b> 54% of educational institutions are profiled as Community Centers, which proves a lack equality among students in different</p>	<p>-The construction of new schools planned in Tirana to eliminate teaching with two shifts should be accelerated, for it to meet the strategic objectives.</p> <p>-In regards to the accessibility of students with disabilities in schools, investments should be done to improve the infrastructure of schools, including the construction of ramps and other necessary infrastructure.</p> <p>-Public institutions should provide transparency in regards to the condition and improvements of school infrastructure, including accessibility for students with disabilities.</p> <p>-Strategic objectives must be drafted, with clear and measurable indicators, by substituting general terms such as "growth" and "decrease" with concrete and well-defined figures.</p>
--	---	---

	<p>regions of Albania in receiving the same services within schools.</p> <p><b>-Teaching in two shifts:</b> In the Municipality of Tirana, in order to eliminate schools with two shifts, it is expected for 21 schools needed to be built, and so far, it turns out there are only 17 new schools planned to be built, which makes it impossible for the strategic objective to be achieved.</p>	
<p><b>Specific Objective A3</b></p> <p><b>Creating opportunities for quality teacher training and improving the career system that encourages them to develop higher levels of teaching skills.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Improving the quality of initial training programs for teachers.</li> <li>b) Increasing opportunities for professional development of teachers.</li> <li>c) Providing a more prestigious position for teachers through increase of salaries and the system of qualification based on the evaluation standards of teachers.</li> </ul>	<p><b>-Decrease in the number of teachers:</b> In the 2023-2024 school year, 24,109 teachers were employed in the primary/secondary education system, a decrease of 291 teachers compared to two years ago.</p> <p><b>-Student/teacher ratio:</b> In the public primary education system, the ratio is 15.1 students for one teacher, while in the private education system it's 15.2. In the public secondary education system, the ratio is 7.9 students for one teacher and 8 in the private system.</p> <p><b>-Changes in the ratio student/teacher:</b> In the public upper secondary education system, the ratio is 11.5 students for one teacher and 9.1 in the private system, a decrease in the public education and an increase in the private education, compared to the year 2021-2022.</p>	<p>-New policies for recruitment and support of teachers should be developed, offering professional development opportunities and advancement in career as well as specialization programs in fields which lack it.</p> <p>-Investments should be done in continuous training for teachers to prepare them for the requirements of a continuous developing education system, making sure that they are always updated and capable.</p> <p>-Strategic objectives with clear and measurable indicators should be developed, in order to rationally evaluate the level of impact of the measures taken, by avoiding generalized terms such as "improvement".</p> <p>-A variety in training programs for teachers should be ensured, and attention towards their specific needs should be</p>

	<p><b>-Lack of improvements in the initial training phase:</b> There is no unified improvement in initial training programs and the deadlines of the action plan for strategic objectives have not been met.</p> <p><b>-Teacher training:</b> In the year (2023), 24,260 teachers, directors and psychosocial workers were trained. ASCAP has submitted for accreditation 76 training modules and 6 modules for diaspora teachers, which are still in process of accreditation.</p> <p><b>-Lack of Erasmus+ programs:</b> Pre-university education does not benefit from Erasmus+ programs due to the lack of financial resources, consolidated partnerships and insufficient focus from policy makers.</p> <p>-Participation of diaspora teachers: Only 80 teachers are registered in the diaspora state register. 120 teachers participated in the Albanian language teaching and Albanian culture seminar in the diaspora in 2023.</p> <p><b>-Teacher salary increase:</b> By the end of 2024, the teacher's salary will increase with 32.5% and the salary of teachers in primary education with 27.4%, but this remains far away from the strategic objective for a gross increase of 40%.</p>	<p>increased, by including new and accredited modules.</p> <p>-Transparency and communication should be improved in regards to opportunities for participation in international programs, by creating a dedicated platform to information and application for programs like Erasmus+, to ensure equal access to all teachers.</p>
--	---	---

<p><b>Specific Objective A4</b></p> <p><b>Full implementation of the competency-based curriculum, through effective teaching and utilization of high-quality resources.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Equipment of schools with teaching tools for the implementation of the competency-based curriculum and commissioning for 2 years of free use of textbooks.</li> <li>b) Continuous support for teachers for the implementation of the new curriculum.</li> <li>c) Improving skills of students in reading and writing, mathematics and science.</li> <li>d) Insurance of reliability of national exams/assessments.</li> <li>e) English language learning since the first grade.</li> <li>f) Teaching of crafts, arts and sports in pre-university education.</li> </ul>	<p><b>-Free books and reuse:</b> During the 2023-2024 school year, 71 thousand students from 1<sup>st</sup> grade to 3<sup>rd</sup> grade benefited from the free new books, while 242 thousand students in total benefited from the new &amp; free books. The books can be reused up to three years, depending on the degree of their consumption.</p> <p><b>-Monitoring of educational institutions:</b> During the three years of implementation of the strategy, only 23% of the primary educational institutions and 16% of the upper secondary institutions were monitored.</p> <p><b>-Minimum student skills:</b> In 2024, 99% of primary education pupils and 99.84% of pupils who conducted the National Examination of Primary Education own the minimum level of skills in Albanian and mathematics. However, the PISA test shows that most of pupils do not possess the minimum level in "Reading", "Science", and "Mathematics".</p> <p><b>-Learning English:</b> During the 2021-2022 school year, 30,164 pupils in 1<sup>st</sup> grade started to learn English language, while in 2023 this number went down to 28,572 pupils.</p> <p><b>-The National Program "Art, Crafts, Sports":</b> This</p>	<p>-The policy of the reuse of books should be reviewed, to provide access to books in good condition for all pupils, avoiding the disadvantages of books being consumed and increasing the quality of education.</p> <p>-Transparency and accountability should be increased, in relation to the distribution of teaching resources, to ensure the resources needed in all educational institutions and to provide a qualitative and equal education.</p> <p>-The number of inspections should increase and expand their extent in all levels of pre-university education, to monitor progress and challenges in the implementation of the competency-based curriculum.</p> <p>-Inspections should be used, to identify good practices and problems, while enabling corrective and remedial measures in time from the Ministry of Education and ASCAP.</p> <p>-There must be adequate funding, training for teachers and infrastructure support for elective (free choice) curricula and integration programs such as "Art, Craft, Sport", to maximize their impact and to develop skills of pupils.</p>
---	---	---

	<p>program is implemented only in 14.3% of pre-university educational institutions and only 2.9% of registered pupils benefit. Limitations come as a result of lack of resources, qualified staff and adequate infrastructure.</p>	
<p><b>Specific Objective A5</b></p> <p><b>Developing digital competence through better use of information and communication technology for teaching and learning.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Creation of appropriate infrastructure for the use of ICT in schools and its maintenance</li> <li>b) The development of digital competence through the increased use of ICT in all subjects at all levels of education starting from the first grade of primary education</li> <li>c) Providing quality ICT services for the pre-university education system</li> </ul>	<p><b>-Computer equipment:</b> Only 71.5% of pre-university educational institutions have computer equipment, with a ratio of 1 computer per 20 students in 2023.</p> <p><b>-Implementation of SMIP:</b> The Pre-University Information Management System (SMIP) has been implemented in all pre-university educational institutions for data collection and generation.</p> <p><b>-The SELFIE platform:</b> The SELFIE platform has not been implemented within the deadline for 2023, hindering the improvement of the use of digital technologies in teaching and negatively affecting the equality of opportunities for students.</p> <p><b>-Internet access:</b> Only 46% of public institutions of pre-university education in Albania has Internet, and only 5.3% has a wireless network.</p> <p><b>-Guidelines for Online Learning:</b> ASCAP has not published any guidelines for the development of online learning, although it was expected to be in place by 2023.</p>	<p>-Investments in ICT equipment and laboratories should be increased to improve students' access to information and communication technology.</p> <p>-Ensure equity in access and use of digital technology across schools to ensure an equitable learning experience for all students.</p> <p>-Adhere to the action plan for the implementation of the national education strategy according to the predetermined deadlines, ensuring that investments in digital infrastructure are inclusive and accessible in all premises of educational institutions.</p> <p>-ASCAP should publish guidelines for the development of online learning to assist teachers and students in the effective use of technology in the teaching process.</p>

## 6. SUMMARY TABLE OF THE APPLICABILITY OF POLICY

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE	FEASIBILITY	RECOMMENDATIONS
<p><b>Specific Objective B1</b></p> <p><b>Increasing the performance of a school through professional and responsible leadership and management, ensuring quality and institutional autonomy, is an important challenge and a major goal in education.</b></p> <p>a) Increasing the performance of schools through professional and responsible leadership and management and quality assurance, as an autonomous school.</p> <p>b) Guaranteeing the performance of the education system through the construction of a comprehensive evaluation framework and capacities for its implementation.</p>	<p><b>-Lack of certified directors:</b> Only 27.6% of educational institutions are led by individuals certified by the "School of Directors".</p> <p><b>-Evaluation of directors:</b> Only 25.6% of all directors have been evaluated, until the end of 2023.</p> <p><b>-Licensing of private kindergartens:</b> A significant proportion of private kindergartens operate without a license, with only 6.3% of preschools educational institutions monitored until 2023 and 60% of them resulting without a license.</p> <p><b>-Unutilized human capital:</b> There is a lack of utilization of human capital trained and prepared for leadership in educational institutions.</p> <p><b>-Need for increased monitoring:</b> Monitoring and evaluation of educational leaders and institutions should be increased to ensure high quality and standards in education.</p>	<p>-The recruitment and training process for leaders of educational institutions should be improved, ensuring that all of them have the appropriate certifications from the 'School of Directors' within a specified period.</p> <p>-Strengthening of monitoring mechanisms and increase of the number of inspections for private kindergartens, ensuring that all institutions are licensed and meet the standards required for operation.</p> <p>-The monitoring of the direction of educational institutions in pre-university education should be increased.</p> <p>-There should be better use of trained human capital for leadership by creating a database of certified individuals and providing incentives to institutions that appoint qualified and certified leaders.</p>
<p><b>Specific Objective B2</b></p> <p><b>Ensuring the performance of the educational system through the development of a comprehensive evaluation structure and</b></p>	<p><b>-Successful implementation of the Pre-University Information Management System (SMIP):</b> The Pre-University Information Management System has been implemented and is used to</p>	<p>-Responsible institutions must increase transparency and ensure the full functionality of the SMIAL web, meeting the deadlines provided in the action plan and guaranteeing access</p>

<p><b>the improvement of capacities for its implementation.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Full functionalization of the Pre-University Information Management System (SMIP)</li> <li>b) Full functionalization of the System for Information Management in Higher Education (SMIAL)</li> <li>c) Determination of national indicators of education</li> <li>d) Capacity building for the system performance evaluation</li> </ul>	<p>generate student evaluations and inform parents on an ongoing basis.</p> <p><b>-Lack of transparency and functionality in the Higher Education Information Management System (HEIM):</b> There is a lack of transparency and an inactive website for the HEIM, indicating that this objective has not been achieved within the planned deadlines.</p> <p><b>-Delayed design and approval of the evaluation methodology of the educational system:</b> The methodology for the evaluation of the educational system was drafted and approved after the foreseen deadlines.</p> <p>-Unification of the performance evaluation indicators: Performance evaluation indicators have been calculated through an official order from the Ministry of Education.</p>	<p>and proper use of the system by all users.</p> <p>-The Ministry of Education must ensure the regular implementation and effective monitoring of the evaluation methodology of the education system, respecting the foreseen deadlines and guaranteeing that all educational institutions follow the unified performance evaluation indicators.</p> <p>-The Ministry of Education should continue to improve and expand SMIP, ensuring that all schools and parents have full and continuous access to student and subject assessment information, to improve transparency and communication in pre-university education.</p>
--	---	---

## 7. SUMMARY TABLE OF THE APPLICABILITY OF POLICY

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE	FEASIBILITY	RECOMMENDATIONS
<p><b>Specific Objective C1</b></p> <p><b>Improving the quality of higher education through the restructuring of study programs, the modernization of the academic infrastructure</b></p>	<p><b>-Lack of information on the implementation phase of the codification of study programs:</b> The process of codification of study programs has started, but detailed information on the implementation phase of this process is missing.</p>	<p>-There is a need to provide transparency and detailed information on the implementation phase of the codification of study programs, drafting regular reports and sharing them with the public and interested parties.</p>

<p><b>and the implementation of high standards for institutional evaluation and study programs</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Higher Education Institution (HEI) programs are built on learning outcomes and are comparable to European HEI programs.</li> <li>b) Improving the academic infrastructure</li> <li>c) Application of high academic standards for the accreditation of HEIs and study programs</li> </ul>	<p><b>-Lack of transparency in designing programs according to learning outcomes:</b> Only the University of Arts has completed the process of designing programs according to learning outcomes, while transparency is lacking for other universities.</p> <p><b>-Delayed implementation and lack of transparency in the review of study programs:</b> The methodology for the review of study programs was implemented beyond the deadlines of the action plan and is characterized by a lack of transparency.</p> <p><b>-Insufficient investment in improving university infrastructure:</b> Some universities have made investments in improving infrastructure since 2021, but this includes a small proportion of higher education institutions. Despite the planning for the construction of five student campuses, only a few residence buildings have been built for the University of Tirana and the Agricultural University of Tirana.</p> <p><b>-Incomplete restructuring of the Quality Assurance System:</b> ASCAL has not completed the restructuring of the Quality Assurance System.</p> <p>-ASCAL's international memberships: ASCAL is an associate member of ENQA, but not of EQAR, thus not respecting the deadlines of the action plan.</p>	<p>-Clear guidelines and mechanisms should be developed regarding the design of programs according to learning outcomes, with clear details and approved by all universities.</p> <p>-There is a need to accelerate the implementation of the methodology for the review of study programs, following the deadlines of the action plan and ensuring transparency at every stage of the process.</p> <p>-ASCAL must complete the restructuring of the Quality Assurance System and fulfill international commitments to join EQAR, following the deadlines and the required standards.</p>
<p><b>Specific Objective C2</b></p>	<p><b>-Implementation of Training Centers:</b> The establishment of training centers for teaching</p>	<p>-A detailed and sustainable plan must be developed for the creation</p>

<p><b>Fostering excellence in teaching and research</b></p> <p>a) Improving the capacity of academic staff for teaching and scientific research</p>	<p>and research began in 2023, following a statement by the Ministry of Education and Sports in 2022 about a lack of budget, this way reflecting a lack of planning.</p> <p><b>-Academic Personnel Participation in Conferences:</b> Polytechnic University of Tirana has supported participation in conferences and scientific publications, increasing the number of participants from 7 to 80 during the period 2021-2023.</p> <p><b>-Decreasing Participation from the University of the Arts:</b> The participation of academic staff in international programs fell significantly from 31 to 2 during the period 2021-2024.</p> <p><b>-Increased Participation from Other Universities:</b> The University of Agriculture in Tirana and the University of Korça marked a significant increase in the participation of lecturers in international programs during the period 2021-2023.</p> <p><b>-Decreasing Participation from the University of Tirana:</b> The number of academic staff who participated in Erasmus+ programs dropped from 214 to 135 by May 2024.</p> <p><b>-Participation from the Universities of Durres and Vlora:</b> The Universities of Durres and Vlora recorded an increase in the number of lecturers in international programs, reflecting an increased commitment to international exchanges.</p>	<p>and support of teaching and research training centers, ensuring proper budget allocation and good planning for the upcoming years.</p> <p>-There should be an increase in financial and logistical support for the participation of academic staff in conferences and scientific publications in all universities. This includes the creation of a sustainable fund for financing participation and publications, including simple mechanisms for applications and approvals.</p> <p>-Efforts should be intensified to increase the participation of academic staff in international programs, identifying and eliminating obstacles that contribute to the decline in participation.</p> <p>-A performance monitoring and evaluation system should be created to follow and analyze the trends of academic staff participation in international programs.</p>
<p><b>Specific Objective C3</b></p>	<p><b>-Lack of a Central Register for Graduate Students:</b> The</p>	<p>-There should be a prioritization in the</p>

**The interconnection of Higher Education Institutions with the labor market.**

- b) Harmonization of HEI programs with the requirements of the labor market
- c) Increasing opportunities for internships during higher education studies
- d) Examining interdisciplinarity and STEM programs

measure foreseen for 2023, which is the creation of a central register for graduate students, has not been implemented.

**-Graduate Student Tracking:** Higher education institutions try to track recent graduates for job profiles through the Career Counseling Office.

**-Adaptation of Study Programs:** Universities have adapted 2-year programs and in-depth professional study programs.

**-Implementation of STEM Programs:** STEM programs have been implemented in 2 out of 11 public universities according to the official publications of the Ministry of Education.

**-Lack of Data and Effectiveness of Career Offices:** Some universities lack data and the effectiveness of career offices is limited, with some universities not having data on employed students.

**-Changes in the Employment Trend of students from public universities:** the University of Gjirokastra has suffered a decrease in the number of students getting employed, while the University of Vlora has increased this number. The University of Korça has seen a decrease in the compatibility of employed students with their profile. The University of Durrës has the majority of students employed in the private sector, and the University of Sports has a very small number of employed students. The University of Medicine employs

creation of a central registry for graduate students to better monitor their status in the labor market and to improve career planning and support.

-There should be a strengthening of the capacity and efficiency of career offices in universities to provide better support and comprehensive data to employed students. This includes staff training and the development of advanced platforms for data collection and analysis.

-There should be a review and adaptation of study programs to ensure better compatibility with the needs of the labor market. There is a need to do a detailed analysis of the requirements of different sectors and to integrate these needs in the study programs.

-Customized strategies should be developed to address variations in employment trends among universities of their recent graduates, including more in-depth assistance to them in finding job positions.

	most of its students in the public health sector.	
<p><b>Specific Objective C4</b></p> <p><b>Ensuring academic honesty, transparency and accountability in higher education.</b></p> <p>a) Ensuring transparency and implementing good practices of academic integrity in HEIs</p>	<p><b>-Collegial Structure for Academic Integrity:</b> Structures such as the Ethics Council, the Commission for the Promotion of Academic Personnel and the Permanent Commission for the awarding of the "Doctor" degree have been set up to monitor the implementation of academic integrity codes and regulations.</p> <p><b>-Use of Electronic Anti-Plagiarism Systems:</b> Law no. 80/2015 and DCM no. 777/2018 require HEIs to install anti-plagiarism systems. Only the University of Medicine, the University of Arts and the Polytechnic University of Tirana use the Akademia platform, while 7 out of 11 universities do not have such a platform.</p> <p><b>-Lack of Anti-Plagiarism Programs:</b> University of Tirana, University of Sports, University of Durrës, University of Korça and University of Vlora do not have electronic anti-plagiarism programs, violating academic integrity and not implementing the requirements of the strategic document.</p> <p><b>-Drafting and Approval of Codes of Ethics:</b> The strategic document envisages the completion of the drafting of Codes of Ethics by 2023. Only the University of Medicine and the University of Korça have approved Codes of Ethics in 2022, while the majority of universities have codes approved from before.</p>	<p>-All higher education institutions should adopt and use electronic anti-plagiarism platforms to ensure academic integrity.</p> <p>-There is a need to strengthen and monitor collegial structures such as the Ethics Council, the Commission for the Promotion of Academic Personnel and the Commission for the awarding of the "Doctor" degree, to ensure the effective implementation of academic integrity codes and regulations. This includes increasing transparency and regular reporting of the activities of these structures.</p> <p>-All universities must finalize and adopt Codes of Ethics in accordance with the strategic document.</p>
<b>Specific Objective C5</b>	<b>-Financial Support for Students:</b> According to Law no.	-The Ministry of Education and universities should

<p><b>Increasing the socioeconomic status of students through the provision of quality services and various forms of financial assistance.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>b) Improving services for students.</li> <li>c) Supporting students to improve academic achievement.</li> </ul>	<p>80/2015 and DCM no. 903/2016, students of the first cycle of studies with an average of 9-10 and those in need, benefit from a financial support of 10,000 ALL every month.</p> <p><b>-3-Party Agreements for Financial Support:</b> DCM no. 386/2022 and DCM no. 448/2024 allow students to sign a 3-party agreement for financial support, with the condition of a 3-year contribution to Albania after completing their studies. In the academic year 2022-2023, 34 students from the University of Tirana signed agreements, but only 11 continued to receive support in 2023-2024.</p> <p><b>-Distribution of Scholarships in Universities:</b> The Polytechnic University of Tirana distributed 700 scholarships to students with an average of 9-10 and 449 scholarships for students in need, in the period July-December 2023. In 2022-2023, only 2 out of 21 students who applied for priority branches benefited from the scholarships, while in 2023-2024, 14 out of 65 students received scholarships.</p> <p><b>-Increase and Decrease in Beneficiaries of Agreements:</b> The University of Medicine signed 3-party agreements with 47 students in 2022-2023, but only 4 continued it in 2023-2024. In the 2023-2024 academic year, 56 new students signed agreements. The Agricultural University of Tirana had an increase in beneficiaries from 11% in 2022-</p>	<p>create a system of supervision and support for students who sign 3-party agreements, to ensure that they benefit from financial support and fulfill the conditions of the 3-year contribution in Albania.</p> <p>-Universities should review and improve the process of applying and distributing scholarships, ensuring transparency and equality in the selection of beneficiaries.</p> <p>-The Ministry of Education and Sports, Local Self-Governance Units and universities must ensure the budgeting and implementation of the student card services, providing facilities and real benefits for students.</p>
---	---	---

	<p>2023, to 23% in 2023-2024. The University of Korça approved 24 quotas out of 150 registered students.</p> <p><b>-Student Internship and Student Services:</b> Most higher education institutions have signed bilateral agreements with public and private institutions for student internships. Student card services remain unbudgeted and unimplemented. Institutions offer facilitating services through official websites and university secretaries' offices.</p>	
<p><b>Specific Objective C6</b></p> <p><b>Internationalization of higher education in Albania and inclusion in the European Higher Education Area (EHEA)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Encouraging HEIs to open joint study programs with European HEIs or programs in English</li> <li>b) Encouraging HEIs to participate in international academic cooperation projects</li> <li>c) Providing international study programs in Albania</li> <li>d) Increasing the mobility of students and academic staff</li> </ul>	<p><b>-Study Programs and International Cooperation:</b> Albanian universities offer a limited number of study programs in foreign languages and international collaborations, with the University of Tirana and the Polytechnic University of Tirana being the most active in this regard.</p> <p><b>-Low Percentage of Foreign Students:</b> The percentage of foreign students in Albanian universities is very low, about 0.6% or less of the total number of students, indicating that the institutions are not sufficiently attractive to international students.</p> <p><b>-Low Participation in Exchange Programs:</b> The number of Albanian students participating in international exchange programs is also low, less than 1% of the total number of students, indicating a limited commitment to international academic exchanges.</p>	<p>-Albanian universities should choose and expand the offer of study programs in foreign languages and promote international cooperation.</p> <p>-Higher education institutions should encourage the participation of students and staff in international exchange programs through information campaigns and financial support.</p> <p>-Universities should improve the transparency and management of international projects by regularly publishing reports on expenses and results achieved.</p> <p>-Establishing a clear system for monitoring and evaluating projects will ensure that funds are used efficiently and maximize the positive impact on educational institutions.</p>

	<p><b>-Issues in the Implementation and Transparency of International Projects:</b> Most universities have budgets for international projects, but many funds remain unspent. Institutions are often not transparent about the costs and results of international projects, making it difficult to assess the effectiveness of investments.</p>	
<p><b>Specific Objective C7</b></p> <p><b>Advancement of Information Technology Infrastructure and Communication (ICT) and digital services for public Higher Education Institutions (HEIs).</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Improving ICT infrastructure in HEIs and web visibility</li> <li>b) Encouraging HEIs to organize remote learning and blended learning</li> <li>c) Providing quality digital services to students</li> </ul>	<p><b>-Lack of a Unified System for Digital Services:</b> Public universities of higher education use different platforms such as e-student, UVMS and PITAGORA for managing academic and administrative processes, thus, not having a unified system.</p> <p><b>-Limited Access to Wireless Internet:</b> The wireless Internet equipment in the university buildings is partial and students report difficulties in accessing the Internet within the premises of the institutions.</p> <p><b>-Lack of Digitalized Laboratories:</b> Only a few universities, such as the University of Durrës and the Polytechnic University of Tirana, have digitalized laboratories for improving students' practical skills, which are important for their academic development.</p>	<p>-The Ministry of Education and Sports should initiate the creation of a unified digital system for all public universities, integrating platforms such as e-student, UVMS and PITAGORA in a single platform.</p> <p>-Universities should invest in wireless internet infrastructure to ensure full and quality access to all university premises.</p> <p>-Universities should prioritize investments in the creation and modernization of digitalized laboratories for all fields of study. These laboratories are essential for the practical and academic development of students, improving their technical skills and preparing them better for the job market.</p>



*SUMMARY*

*MONITORING REPORT*



Qëndresa  
Qytetare



Funded by  
the European Union