Background Report on Social Sciences and Humanities Albania

Prepared for the project WBC-INCO.NET

Albania

Authors: Prof. Dr. Ylli Pango, Prof. Dr. Bardhyl Musai, Prof. As. Dr. Pranvera Kamani, Msc. Mirela Muça, Msc. Nada Kallciu, Msc. Admir Duraj

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Co-ordination of Research Policies with the Western Balkan Countries

WBC-INCO.NET, an FP7 funded project running from 2008 to 2013 with a total of 29 project partners, aims at the enhancement of the integration of Western Balkan Countries in the European Research Area (ERA).

Its core objectives are to support the bi-regional dialogue on science and technology (S&T), to identify RTDI cooperation potentials and priorities for take-up in FP and other EU programmes, to enhance participation of WB researchers in EU projects, to analyse innovation needs and barriers in the WBC, to exchange information and best practices on innovation policies and to establish closer cooperation between research and innovation. WBC-INCO.NET is being coordinated by the Centre for Social Innovation, Austria.

Authors: Prof. Dr. Ylli Pango, Prof. Dr. Bardhyl Musai, Prof. As. Dr. Pranvera Kamani, Msc. Mirela Muça, Msc. Nada Kallciu, Msc. Admir Duraj

Executive Summary

This report is developed in April – July 2011 in the content of EC funded project WBC-NCO.NET under the Project's Work Package 2 – Priority setting to structure participation in FP. The first step to identify the state of R&D, problems and challenges on social sciences area has been the organization of a questionnaire with the experts, researchers, administrators and policy-makers.

This report draws on three main ideas. On the one hand, we have attempted to provide a general guideline to mark out the main areas that evaluation activities for Social Sciences Research should consider (on this, the standard for the way ahead is determined by the intention to develop internationally and approve research analysis). On the other hand, being aware of the peculiarities that exist between areas (both in terms of tradition and the existence of comparable levels of excellence), the proposed criteria lay special emphasis on flexibility. This should not however compromise the ultimate goal of international convergence for all areas. Finally, and given the convergence objective, the data and respective concluding remarks set out in this report should be seen as a first step in a dynamic context, which will require interactive updating and rethinking during successive processes.

In virtue of the respective guidelines and for the purpose of this report, a wide range of institutions were contacted with the goal of acquiring data on their structure, functioning and potential problems they encounter in their research. These institutions were selected on the basis of their involvement in research activities, i.e. the ones identified to be the most actively involved in the research in social sciences. Primarily, this included the state-level policy makers, such as the Ministry of Education and Science and the primary research actors, both public and private. But also the thematic and geographic coverage criteria were used, in order to provide a well balanced sample.

According to the National Strategy of Science, Technology and Innovation 2009–2015 the science system in Albania includes the higher education, scientific research, development and knowledge and technology (innovation) institutions. As such it includes not only the public and non-public institutions of higher education and basic research, but also entrepreneurships acting in the field of research, development and innovation. The reforms undertaken in the field of higher education and basic research, first and foremost, are targeted at integrating these two systems, which so far have been entirely separate from one another, and which should be innovative and efficient for the conditions of a small country with limited financial resources.

The current framework governing STI issues has evolved notably in the last few years, through the adoption of the 2007 Law on Higher Education and the Law on the Academy of Sciences (2006, as amended). A 1994 Law on Science and Technological Development was amended several times and needs to be revised to ensure compatibility with international standards and to ensure the opening of national programmes in line with EU priorities, State funding rules for R & D and innovation and animation of researchers, etc. The 2007 Law on Higher Education introduced greater flexibility and objectivity in university funding, while the Higher Education National Strategy sets out a number of ambitious goals to improve the functioning of the university sector. The primary focus of the Higher Education Strategy is on improving the quality of teaching at university and masters levels, but it also formulates a number of orientations concerning academic research, including doctoral and post-university studies. For instance, the HE Strategy highlights the inferior number of students in science programmes, mathematics and engineering (19% compared to approximately 25% in many countries in the region), or the need to bring PhD standards in line with those of the European Higher Education Area. These elements are clearly fundamental to the future potential of the Albanian research system to carry out high quality research comparable to international standards. Hence, the development of research potential in basic and academic research needs to be led by a phased approach with careful consideration over investments in infrastructure or research programmes.

The Ministry of Education and Science (MoES) financed national projects in social sciences in the framework of the social sciences programme (2007-2009). Projects in social sciences cover a three-year period (2007-2010). There are 7 projects in place, with a total cost of 13.315.000 ALL, and over a 3 year period they have accounted for around 2% of the total expenditures for science and technology by MoES.

Table of contents

Introduction

Social science has had an ambiguous relationship with social policy throughout its history. When the term and concept of social science first began to be used in the middle of the nineteenth century, the initial organizations that emerged to promote social science were not located in the universities but in the public sphere. They brought together not only scholars but persons active in the political arena, clergymen, and business people, and the primary objective of these associations was to promote reform, that is, what they considered to be more adequate social policies to ameliorate what they designated as social problems. The social problems of which they spoke were for the most part those associated with the expanding urban centers and the newly-emerging manufacturing sector of

the economy. These associations felt that accumulating various kinds of data on these issues, usually statistical data, would illuminate the directions in which the State might proceed, by means of various new policies/reforms, to alleviate the ills that these associations perceived. To this end, the national research capacity is very significantly linked to country's readiness to design and implement successfully evidence-based policies that tackle and respond to public concerns and social problems. This report represents a modest effort to measure achievements and shortcomings in developing capacities and the related research practices in social sciences and humanities in Albania.

1 Purpose of the national background report and methodology/summary of the consultation process

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Research Methodology
In virtue of the respective guidelines and for the purpose of this report, a wide range of institutions were contacted with the goal of acquiring data on their structure, functioning and potential problems they encounter in their research. These institutions were selected on the basis of their involvement in research activities, i.e. the ones identified to be the most actively involved in the research in social sciences. Primarily, this included the state-level policy makers, such as the Ministry of Education and Science (MoES) and the primary research actors, both public and

private. But also the thematic and geographic coverage criteria were used, in order to provide a well balanced sample.

Quantitative and qualitative research techniques - The analytical work towards this assessment report consisted of an analysis of both primary and secondary data. This involved an overview of the available literature and the data collection from research and academic institutions, and also interviews with Albanian researchers working in the scientific/academic field, as well as a survey of around 46 research entities and public and private universities across the country.

Desk Review - The research team reviewed the existing institutional and policy framework related to the research in social sciences, as well as the elements of the national system and the research-related policies.
Questionnaire – Explanatory notes were prepared and made available to target subjects in Albanian, distributed by the research support team to a sample of 46 key stakeholders in the research in social sciences, in order to obtain information related to their capacities, work profile and research funds. The questions referred mainly to the activities conducted since 2009/10. Communication was established with 22 of 46 contacted institutions.

Additional data were collected by reviewing relevant documents (policy papers and legal framework) and also official documents from the stakeholders involved in the sample. The questions asked in interviews with social scientists and policy-makers related to the research in social sciences in Albania in general, the research capacities of the institutions and the identification of drawbacks and grounds for improvement.

2 The SSH S&T system in Albania

According to the National Strategy of Science, Technology and Innovation 2009–2015 the science system in Albania includes the higher education, scientific research, development and knowledge and technology (innovation) institutions. As such it includes not only the public and non-public institutions of higher education and basic research, but also entrepreneurships acting in the field of research, development and innovation. The reforms undertaken in the field of higher education and basic research, first and foremost, are targeted at integrating these two systems, which so far have been entirely separate from one another, and which should be innovative and efficient for the conditions of a small country with limited financial resources.

For the purposes of this report, the social science research system in Albania can be regarded as the sum of the following components:

- Human capital: the numbers of educated, trained and employed social scientists plus the postgraduate and undergraduate social science student population who will provide a sustained national research effort.
- Infrastructure and research funding: the buildings, facilities, archives and libraries, support staff and information technology that provide researchers with space and facilities. Here infrastructure includes direct or indirect financial support from governmental or other agencies.
- Connectivity: social science research is an important part of enhancing the public good, and research results must be made public through dissemination in publications or by other means. Connectivity also includes direct and unimpeded access to collaboration with government agencies, public institutions, industry, private individuals and organizations, international peers and professional bodies for the purpose of sharing ideas and information.

2.1 Albania's SSH policy framework

The current framework governing STI issues has evolved notably in the last few years, through the adoption of the 2007 Law on Higher Education and the Law on the Academy of Sciences (2006, as amended). A 1994 Law on Science and Technological Development was amended several times and needs to be revised to ensure compatibility with international standards and to ensure the opening of national programmes in line with EU priorities, State funding rules for R&D and innovation and animation of researchers, etc. The 2007 Law on Higher Education introduced greater flexibility and objectivity in university funding, while the Higher Education National Strategy sets out a number of ambitious goals to improve the functioning of the university sector.

The primary focus of the Higher Education Strategy is on improving the quality of teaching at university and masters levels, but it also formulates a number of orientations concerning academic research, including doctoral and post-university studies. For instance, the HE Strategy highlights the inferior number of students in science programmes, mathematics and engineering (19% compared to approximately 25% in many countries in the region), or the need to bring PhD standards in line with those of the European Higher Education Area. These elements are clearly fundamental to the future potential of the Albanian research system to carry out high quality research comparable to international standards. Hence, the development of research potential in basic and academic research needs to be led by a phased approach with careful consideration over investments in infrastructure or research programmes.

The Council for Higher Education and Science (CHES) was created by a 2006 amendment to the 1999 Law on Higher Education. CHES was set up as an advisory body to MoES and to the Council of Ministers. Its main role is to provide advice on strategies, policies and priorities. The Higher Education National Strategy envisaged the setting up of a small but high level group for the Research Strategy under CHES. This selected group was entrusted to develop a research strategy and to monitor its implementation. A major change was introduced in the research system through the amendment of the Law on the Academy of Sciences resulting in the integration of former institutes of the Academy of Sciences into the major public universities since 2007. As in other European countries, the Academy has a representative and advisory role concerning science rather than carrying out research per se. Integration of the former Academy of Sciences research institutes into the university sector and formulation of a research strategy within each institution will clearly take time.

Actually, „research policy" is administered through the Directorate of Scientific Research at MoES. R&D activity is financed through the institutional funding by the government (Fund for Science, as a specific item in MoES budget, section "higher education and science"). Financing is provided in the context of bilateral programmes and international cooperation initiatives. The latter has been introduced recently and is largely financed by donor funding, is thinly spread and may still be regarded at a pilot stage. This policy has not been generalised yet, despite visible efforts to concentrate resources and introduce competitive criteria. In the last decade, MoES still has not developed the capacity to fulfil its policy-making and scrutiny role, or to implement the current, EU funding programmes where Albanian is eligible. MoES policy-making capacity in the area of research needs to be improved.

2.1.1 The overall SSH policy framework

Over the last couple of years, the amendments to the Law No. 9832 on the Higher Education aimed to give special attention to the scientific research as well. The Department of Research and Technology has been identified in the law as a very important unit within the university. Each faculty has the right to coordinate its teaching process and its research. The master degree programmes established in each faculty offer two-level masters: first level master and second level master (according to the Bologna Chart). The second level master is considered a research program, given that one of its key components is research. Every PhD programme in Albanian universities is identified in the law as the third level of study. The PhD programme is fully considered academic research under 3-year supervision. Amendments to the laws on the Academy of Science, Scientific and Technological Research took place over two years and attempted to complete the legal framework and

provide a greater impact to both higher education and scientific research. In 2007, the Albanian government implemented a PhD study supporting scheme i.e. The Excellence Fund, which supported the best PhD candidates to complete PhD studies abroad partially or fully. The Excellence Fund does not have any restricting criteria regarding the field of studies for the PhD programme. As a result, MoES has generated no data specifying the field of focus field of the PhD studies supported by this program. A total number of 45 PhD students were supported by this fund during the academic year 2006-2007. The drafting and approving process of the National Strategy of Science, Technology and Innovation assisted by UNESCO, created every opportunity for establishment of mechanisms to design all the necessary instruments that will set up the foundations for the functioning of the scientific research system in Albania.

2.1.2 The elements of SSH research policy making

i.   Science and R&D development commences with academia and the academic community – building up human capacities in teaching staff is key
ii. Absorption, retention and attraction of experts in scientific fields from the diaspora, the WB region, and European academic networks is also imperative (while also paying due attention to gender-balanced representation in academic and scientific communities)
iii. Improving research infrastructure across universities to carry research projects with international standards
iv. Encouraging expansion of academic offers (i.e. joint / dual degrees) by universities with respect to scientific programs and degrees, while encouraging critical thinking, creativeness and teamwork and partnering up with universities in the region provides good ground for higher education institutions to contribute to science and R&D
v.   Creating favourable conditions for instigating a market of innovative ideas at low bureaucratic barriers and low cost of copyrights is another means to promoting research in social science
vi. Creating favourable climate and incentives for partnerships between academic communities, scientific networks and SMEs (private businesses) provides a good basis for scientific innovation

national strategies that exist or that are being prepared/planned
SIS, Social Inclusion Crosscutting Strategy is a component of NSDI. It is the government's strategic document outlining policies to combat poverty and social exclusion across government ministries and agencies. It is modelled on the kind of action plans on social inclusion that Albania will need to produce when it becomes a member state of the EU.
Sector-based strategies relating to social inclusion exist for Social Protection, Social Insurance, Basic Education, Health, Gender Equality and Prevention of Domestic Violence, People with Disabilities, and for improving the Living Conditions of the Roma Community.

- **National Strategy on Social Services 2007** is part of SIS, envisaging concrete objectives for poverty reduction and provision of services for groups in need, in the framework of NSED.
- **National Child Strategy of Albania 2005** is an important document that sets forth the strategic objectives of the Albanian Government's policy in this sensitive area of social development, and is based upon the four principles of the Child Right Convention: survival, protection, development and participation.
- **National Strategy for Improving the Living Conditions of the Roma Minority 2003**. In view of the difficult situation of the Roma community in Albania, the Albanian government commits itself politically to design this strategy towards the upgrading of the status of the Roma community in Albania, through the institutionalization of policies and programs to reduce Roma poverty and to mainstream Roma with the majority, while guaranteeing the preservation and development of Roma ethnic identity.
- **National Strategy on People with Disabilities 2005** was drafted to improve, the access of people with disabilities to social and medical care, education, culture, sports, employment, information, transportation, participation and presentation in social life.
- **Sectoral Strategy on Employment and Vocational Education and Training 2007**. This strategy aims at serving as an instrument for increasing the level of employment in the whole economy for all the sectors in the labour market; enable the gradual transition from passive efforts of unemployment in favour of active employment policy. The strategy defines new methods of business management by enabling them to keep up with the economic changes, globalization, competition etc., through establishing adaptation possibility, security, reformation and expanding long-life forms of vocational training.
- **National strategy on gender equality and domestic violence 2011**. It is directed by the need to upgrade women's status in Albania, to overcome gender-

based hurdles and differentiation, to stick to the long and difficult path towards gender equality, to ensure compliance with gender equality-specific requirements and standards, and their incorporation into public policies and programmes, including the World Conference on Women, held in Beijing in 1995, Beijing +5, +10, the process of bringing the Albanian legislation into line with the EU legislation, and the Millennium Development Goals.

- **National strategy for health in Albania 2007**. The Albanian Health situation in regards to R&D efforts needs a lot of institutional and organizational support. In this regard GoA and health sector has some R&D and innovation priorities for the future that line up with the National Strategy for Health in Albania 2007-2013.

- **National Strategy of Science, Technology and Innovation in Albania** is discussed in further detail below.
- **Pre-University Strategy for 2004-2015** provides a framework for a sector-wide reform in pre-university education. The strategy provides a commonly agreed view to help strengthen the sector performance while serving as a basis to achieve better learning outcomes in a more equitable and efficient manner.

2.2 Overview of SSH research activities
2.2.1 SSH research projects

MoES financed national projects in social sciences in the framework of the social sciences programme (2007-2009). Projects in social sciences cover a three-year period (2007-2010). There are 7 projects in place, with a total cost of 13.315.000 ALL, and over a 3 year period they have accounted for around 2% of the total expenditures for science and technology by MoES. According to the MoES programme (2007-2009), the national social sciences' projects cover the following areas:

- Linguistics
- History
- Albanian culture and tradition
- Albanology
- Social sciences.

History is focusing on the study of monograph and the preparation of historical documents. Researchers are making efforts to shed light on parts of the Albanian history that seems to be still in the dark since the mid- wave until now. In linguistics, projects aim to produce research on the social phenomenon of demographic movement after the 1990s as it relates to the use of the Albanian language in communities of heterogenic population. The Albanian cultural and ethnographic tradition aims at presenting some of the richest traditional Albanian outfits as part of the Albanian identity over time and also to present the art used for producing these outfits/costumes. Social sciences are focused on the research of the specificities of the competitiveness in the different fields, such as social activities, education system and dynamics of divorces. These projects analyse the factors that influence these social phenomena and their consequences on the Albanian society. Our cooperation within the 7th European Framework Programme on R&D (FP7) in the Social Sciences based on proposed projects and applicants is presented in the table below:

Number of proposals submitted (including ineligible)	27
Number of applicants submitted (including ineligible)	27
Number of proposals main listed	1
Applicants in main listed proposals	1
Funding obtained (based on main listed applicants)	5.351

Also for the period of time 2007-2009 there are submitted 6 projects in total, from different faculties in our country.

2.2.2 Key competencies in SSH research fields

The 2009 STI Strategy is the first comprehensive policy document that sets the guidelines for future developments in STI. This document provides for a current picture of the STI situation in Albania. It also addresses the issue of lack of financial resources so far, and the need to increase the overall support in the future. According to this document the areas where research will be focused in the period 2010-2015 are:

- Agriculture and Food

- Information and communication technologies
- Public Health
- Albanology and Humanities
- Natural Resources
- Biotechnology and Biodiversity
- Defence and security.

Moreover, the STI Strategy set forward the goals to be achieved in the midterm, where one of them being to "(…) Increase innovation activity in 100 companies (this figure

may be revised after the results from the first RTDI survey are published), through their participation in R&D through own labs, or via consortiums with the academic research institutes (RI) or in partnership with foreign partners". The STI strategy does not constitute a legally binding document. It is to be construed as a guideline when law, decisions and orders regarding STI are approved and/or issued.

The Strategy states: The process of developing a strategic and co-ordinated research strategy is only just beginning in 2009.

It therefore provides a starting point for examining what other actions need to be undertaken to further develop and complement it. It has a set of strategic goals and corresponding programmes, which are set out below.

Strategic goal	Programme
Increase public spending on research to 0.6% of GDP by 2015. Increase the share of gross expenditure on R&D from foreign sources to 40% of all research spending in the years 2010-1015.	Research Infrastructure Fund
Create 4-5 Albanian Centres of Excellence in Science (ACES)	Creation and Development of 4-5 Albanian Centres of Excellence in Science (ACES) bringing together a minimum of 20 researchers
Double the number of researchers, through "brain gain" and training (graduate schools; train 100 PhDs).	Research Eagle Grants Programme to increase Masters & Doctoral graduates Science Promotion and Education Programme towards young people
Increase innovation activity in 100 companies	Programme for Technology Transfer and Innovation to create consortia of academic research institutes with private or other public sector organisations

There is correspondence between goals and programmes. The decision to focus on a small number of research centres corresponds to the Albanian reality of limited resources and a few sectors, in which there is both research expertise and commercial development. The strategy accepts that the creation of the 4 to 5 centres could take ten years. They will be critical to maximise receipt of EU funding to support R&D. In what specifically concerns the Programme for Technology Transfer and Innovation, this aims at stimulating commercialisation of Albanian S&T results through fostering collaboration between academic research institutes and firms. It builds therefore on a „Technology Push" approach and is seen as a transmission

mechanism from research to commercial exploitation and not as a mechanism to foster innovation stemming from market needs. Hence, a complementary set of actions is necessary to complete an integrated innovation strategy, which involves enterprises, not simply as recipients of knowledge and technology developed, but as transmitters of needs, in iterations of developments and eventually as joint actors in research. The strategy recognises this need and states, „The Ministry of Economy's proposal to develop a National Centre of Innovation and Technology Transfer is complementary to the proposed programmes of the STI strategy."

2.2.3 SSH research infrastructure

Most important relevant institutions (political, administrative, higher education, public/private research institutions)

The higher schools are academic research institutions, which, according to the higher education strategy (2008) ensure tertiary education, scientific research, development and transfer of knowledge and technology. The duration and level of scientific research in the various universities varies. Currently, Albania has eleven higher public schools and 17 private higher schools. The latter are at a young age – the first opened in Albania only six years ago. However, some of these have shown potential even in the field of research.

The national research centres are research-oriented academic institutions whose mission is to carry out scientific research, to educate and deepen university education in the second and tertiary circle of studies, to develop and transfer knowledge and technology. The Albanalogy Study

Centre has been established based on the reorganization of the Albanology Institute of the Academy of Sciences. The higher schools and research institutions that mainly deal with scientific research and have sufficient human capacities should build research–academic groups as basic units for realising research operating within the respective department or faculty. The new Law on Higher Education in the Republic of Albania provides the establishment of such a structure. In the public schools that have more limited capacities for research, it is more important to support the establishment of Regional Development Centres, where researchers of various faculties and departments cooperate through projects for carrying out important studies for the region. According to the higher education strategy, the establishment of these centres should be supported by an initial promotional fund.

Public Centres/Agencies of development and technology transfer have the mission of carrying out studies and development projects and of transferring knowledge and

technologies in the practice of product and service delivery. The following centres/agencies operate in the relevant line ministries:

- six centres/agencies in the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Customer Protection
- one agency in the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Water Administration
- one centre in the Ministry of Tourism, Culture, Youth and Sports
- two centres/agencies in the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Energy
- two centres in the Ministry of Public Works, Transports and Telecommunication.

Centres/Agencies/institutes and other private entrepreneurships dealing with research, development, technology and knowledge transfer fields: This chain of the system is still in its first steps of development in Albania, but the development trend is very positive. Some similar, private units also exist in the form of institutes or NGOs with

a clear profile of competencies in this field, in particular in the field of analysis of social and economic problems, serving as a basis for policy making. This segment of the research and development system has provided good support for the policymaking, executive and legislative bodies. Meanwhile, private entrepreneurships in the field of knowledge and technology transfer in the IT sphere have also increased. However, initiatives in other important fields for economic and social development of the country are scarce. For instance, there is little private initiative for studies in the field of energy, agriculture, molecular biology, biotechnology, natural resources and other related fields. In addition, it should be highlighted that development of private entrepreneurship in research, development, technology and knowledge transfer has, in all cases, been speedier than that of public institutions, because of the absence of stimulating financial mechanisms for researchers and genuine public institutional reform of the science system.

2.3 Key drivers of SSH research

Depending of local, national and regional contexts, international experience shows that the following main functions are normally ensured by the national innovation system's supporting institutions:
- Promotion of Research & Technological Development
- Promotion of Business Innovation & Technology Transfer
- Promotion of Enterprise Development & Exports

- Promotion of Investment, at foreign and national levels
- Promotion of Employment & Human Resources Development.

The interaction among, and combination of, the above functions may give rise to a number of additional functions and enhancing effects, of which some examples are shown in the following scheme:

Figure 1
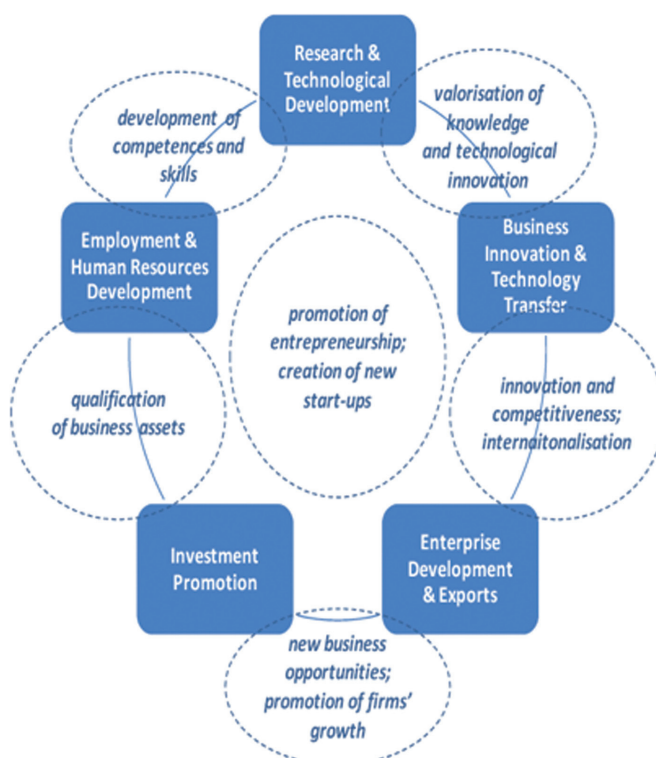
In many countries, whilst policy formulation is kept at the State (usually Government) level, the supporting functions as exemplified above are many times carried out by autonomous institutions, which assume frequently the nature of Institutes, Agencies, Foundations or other types of not-profit organisations. Depending of their nature and aim, the relevant ministries have an important stake, and many times a leading role, in such institutions, which normally count with a number of public and private stakeholders in their structures or management bodies.

Supporting SSH-research institutions in Albania
Within the current context, several of the core functions listed above are carried out in Albania through Agencies

or directly at the ministerial level. The main institutions involved are:

- The Agency for Research, Technology and Innovation (ARTI)
- The Albanian Agency for Business and Investment and Development (ALBINVEST/AIDA)
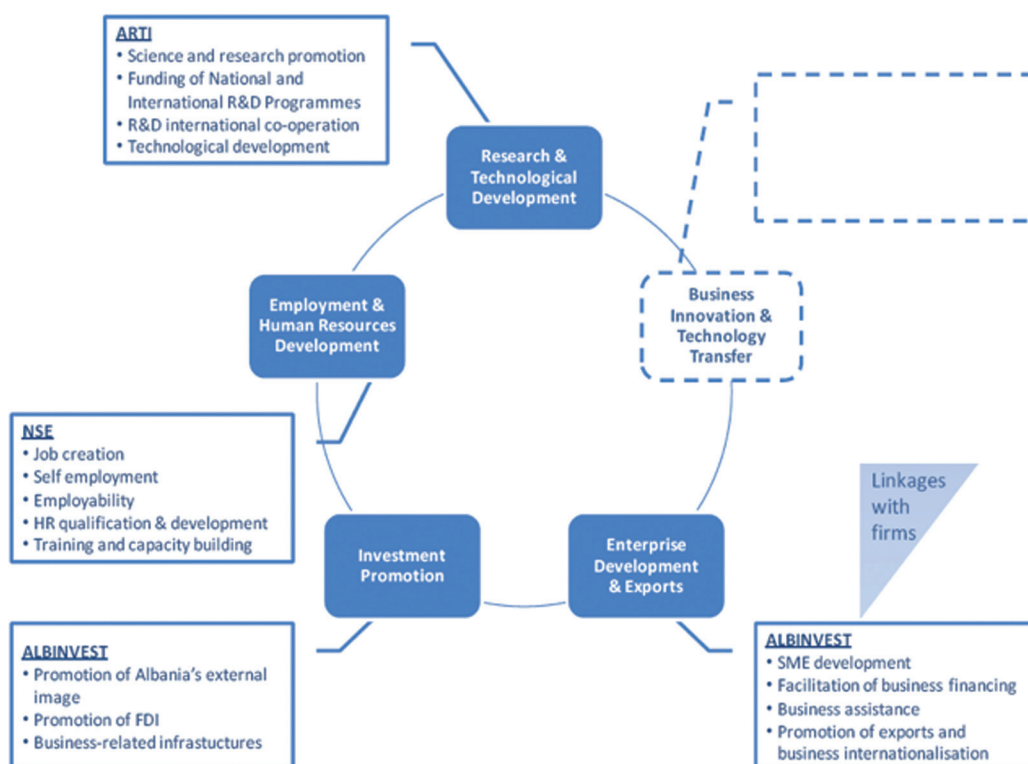- The National Service for Employment (NSE)

These institutions may be positioned within the above functional scheme as follows:

Figure 2

Additionally, Albania also has the National Agency for the Information Society (NAIS), which functions are mostly linked to provision of IT infrastructure, telecommunications policy, e- Government and promotion of IT use in Society. This Agency, however, should not be positioned within the inner layer of the Albanian NIS, as it deals mostly with communication infrastructures and some factors' market conditions which, according to the conceptual

model shown, belong to the outer layer of the national innovation system. The scheme above shows the existing gap in the Albanian National Innovation System, as no institution is currently ensuring the business innovation and technology transfer function. This justifies the creation of the Albanian Business Relay and Technology Centre, which would fill the existing gap.

2.3.1 Main SSH sector trends in Albania

Of concern here are the broader policy framework and socio-political context within which social science research operates. An assessment of capacity development problems and challenges at this level would need to consider four specific elements.

i.   The first element concerns research policy. Is there a national policy that defines priority areas? Are there

any indications of genuine interest in research on the part of the authorities or wider society?

ii. The second element concerns the working conditions of researchers and their salary levels. The latter are generally linked to the salaries of the overall civil service, and cannot be modified by a single organization or even ministry. Do researchers have sufficient incentives to continue carrying out research rather than

joining the private sector, or leaving Albania? These include monetary incentives but not only. Are salaries sufficient for people to work full-time instead of looking for consultancies, moonlighting and working in other institutions, or leaving research to join the private sector or go abroad? Another series of questions relates to the incentives that may exist to encourage researchers to publish.

iii. The third element concerns the Albania's overall level of stability and security.

iv. The fourth element concerns the degree of academic freedom: freedom to teach, freedom to publish and freedom of the press. What tradition of academic freedom does Albania have, if any?

Unsatisfactory conditions in any of these areas may reduce the scientific production, and may tempt academics to leave the country. When designing strategies to build capacity, certain negative conditions are easier to overcome than others. It is easier to train individuals than it is to retain them, and easier to create an institution than to create a community of researchers, or to maintain an enabling environment.

All those elements reflect current trends and need to be addressed in building an active community of social science research in Albania.

2.3.2 Main socio-economic challenges in Albania

- Poor quality of education, particularly in the social sciences. Priority over the years was given to educational quantity at the expense of quality.
- Limited attention to, and marginalization of, the social science disciplines, while giving priority to professional, and business management studies, which are identified with modernity and development.
- Private higher education institutions barely pay attention to research on social sciences.

The current socio-economic challenges are too complex for small and fragmented regional research programmes to redress. They require a concerted and wide mobilization of resources as well as the thoughtful identification of capacity-building modalities to respond to various needs. Addressing the development of capacity countrywide means taking into account the huge disparities between the size and quality of the social science communities of the regions in Albania. It must also observe disparities in financial resources and allocations to social science education and research. Major capacity building targets ought to include the enabling of learning and the exchange of experiences within the region and the coordination of scientific and research policy across the region, as well as focused interventions for specific needs. There are, however, an increasing number of networks that bring researchers together as individuals on a regional level across the Western Balkan Countries to address specific, usually developmental, issues.

Social sciences have a diminishing role in response to societal problems and public interest, and only a modest role in informing policies and effecting social change. There is a need to encourage scholars' sense of themselves as a research community by promoting collaborative research and scholarly exchanges. This community encompasses

researchers within the region, but extends too to scholars in the diaspora, who contribute invaluable expertise and resources and wish to reconnect to their homeland and reengage with its problems. Albanian researchers undoubtedly recognize the main challenges facing Albania, but are hampered by serious deficiencies in methodological training and by isolation from international debates and knowledge production. This applies most notably to the younger generation, who have suffered most from the deterioration in education. To redress these problems, it will be necessary to work on several fronts at the same time: training to increase skills, research and publications to produce knowledge, and networking to enhance the visibility and empower the voice of citizens. The challenge is to carry out these tasks while not losing sight of, and promoting, established centres of social science teaching and research. On the institutional level, we should recognize the diversity of institutions engaged in social sciences, including universities, research centres and research-oriented NGOs. These have differing research capacities and access to resources. Furthermore, the obstacles they face may not only be financial, but also infrastructural and related to building a beneficial research environment. NGOs tend to receive much of the international funding for research, but given the pace and burdens of contract research, issues such as research ethics, methodology, critical discussion and publication are neglected. Finally, the research community across Albania suffers from a lack of access to information, including both official information, such as statistical surveys, archival materials and documentation, and „private" information and grey literature collected by consulting firms and contract research organizations. Researchers abroad often have better access to such sources than researchers within the region.

2.4 Social innovation

Albania presents a deficit on Innovation, performing weakly (ranked at 126 out of 133 in the world), which severely handicaps the competitiveness of its enterprises. They are often at the bottom of the supply chain in key productive sectors and produce low valued added. Foreign technology, investment, trade and experience are the most impor-

tant levers for innovation. Firms' „technological capacity" to upgrade by absorbing existing advanced technologies is weak.

Albania's legislative and strategic frameworks aim to establish a more favourable context for SME development and to strengthen the Albanian Research & Technological

Development (RTD) and promote commercial exploitation of scientific results. It is recognised that Innovation is a firm based process, driven by the market but also dependent on many other factors such as expertise and access to finance. However there is no specific and targeted strategic approach to business innovation and technological development.

The World Bank Report on Building Competitiveness in Albania (2009) indicates a high degree of dependence on foreign sources of technology for upgrading. It states, „Technological upgrading is largely driven by two key factors: (i) firms' exposure or access to more advanced foreign technical knowledge and (ii) their capacity (and incentives) to absorb it. „The most important of the channels [for exposure] tend to be (i) participation in foreign trade, (ii) Foreign Direct Investment, and (iii) "brain circulation", „meaning the international movement of individuals with advanced knowledge, experience and skills."

3 Integration of Albania in the European Research Area in the field of SSH

Internationalisation and integration into ERA and the building of national competences are mutually reinforcing. Albania is committed to playing as full a part as possible in European level research programmes and initiatives, in line with its financial means and strategic interests, and promoting participation of Albanian researchers in the EU's Research Framework Programme and integration into other European research initiatives (COST, EUREKA, etc.).

In addition, the business sector will need to be encouraged to modernise and improve its capacity to co-operate with and commercialise the results of research carried out nationally, as well as bringing technologies up to international standards through purchase of advanced machinery, etc., including related organisational change and training. Complementary measures to support Albanian companies in this process will be required, including support to innovation management and strategies in enterprises and manufacturing advisory services and technology transfer. In this respect, EU IPA funding will be mobilised wherever possible and access for Albania to the Competitiveness and Innovation Programme (CIP), including Enterprise Europe innovation in enterprises.

In order to gradually increase co-operation amongst the various elements of the „Innovation system', it will be important to work with organisations representing specific sectors of the economy to enable them to motivate and raise awareness of their member firms about innovation. Similarly, training needs to be associated to the STI Strategy, in particular by building relevant basic skills and encouraging those enterprises with technological know-how or R&D capacity to work with higher education institutes on defining undergraduate curricula and at a later stage postgraduate industrially relevant research.

4 SWOT analysis of the SSH research capacity in Albania

The need for database generation, longitudinal studies and improvement in the accessibility of the existing data resources for research purposes across a range of fields in SSH and for the ability of research to contribute to the society's development are documented National Strategy for Science, Technology and Innovation for the period 2009 – 2015. Key priorities in this document include studies of social development
Digitalisation, introduction of new technologies and internet systems for database access changes the methods applied in research organisation in many fields. Opportunities for the use of different data types broaden, analytical methods change and cooperation opportunities based on data sharing grow. Data from actual researches become easily accessible for tertiary tuition, dependence on centres decreases and conditions for achieving excellence in regional research are created. Modern large infrastructures thus become vital for the competitiveness of Albanian research in SSH and its participation in European Research Area.
Processes involved in continuous database generation and maintenance, integration of scattered data resources and creation of access to data extend beyond the boundaries of individual research institutions and often even national boundaries. Distributed and virtual infrastructures are a frequently used format. Infrastructures in SSH are also typically associated with high demands on qualified labour, while investments into technical equipment tend to be lower.

The SSH infrastructure in the Albania is currently scattered among a multitude of resources of a relatively small scope and with various degrees of accessibility. Many long-term activities are organised according to individual short-term projects, while other activities are threatened by termination of research plans.

4.1 Strengths

- Extensive production of data suitable for sharing
- Participation in prestigious international large infrastructure projects
- Long-term tradition of synthesis and archiving activities

- Developed IT infrastructure and availability of new technologies.

4.2 Weaknesses

- Long-term under-financing, lacking funds for the operation threaten continuity
- Small capacity of research operators/units
- Dispersion, insufficient coordination, concentration and interconnection of resources, mutually incompatible systems

- Non-existence of longitudinal data, discontinuity of implementation of long-term surveys
- Frequent insufficient accessibility
- Albanian scientific community closure to sharing research material.

4.3 Opportunities

- Strong demand in basic and applied research
- Opportunities for cooperation under European networks combined with effectiveness arising from resource sharing
- Fulfilment of policy priorities in the support of international cooperation, education, regional development,

applied research and ensuring effectiveness of public investment into research
- Compliance with the priorities of the European Commission.

4.4 Threats

- Persistent lack of finance
- Lacking knowledge of new opportunities and preparedness for new financing mechanisms
- Possible disruption of the environment for cooperation and data sharing in research
- Non-existent or unsuitable methodology for large infrastructure assessment

- Domestic conditions incompatible with obligations under international networks.

5 SSH research priorities for Albania

- **Sustainable Development**
  Development, climate change, globalization and migration have had massive effects on terrestrial and ecosystems. Through multidisciplinary research, the Sustainable Development and Climate Change platform documents the environmental, economic and societal consequences of these developments and proposes new ways of securing sustainable growth.

- **Energy Security**
  In view of the current geopolitical challenges, a sustainable energy production is the only viable long-term solution if we are to achieve energy security and improve living conditions for a growing population. The Energy Security challenge must unravel the underexploited technological potential of wind, solar and bio-based energy forms, and demonstrate how we can use

these resources in ways that are more energy efficient and less harmful to the environment.

- **Health and Quality of Life**
  Chronic diseases such as diabetes, cancer, cardiovascular and neurological diseases represent a major threat to human health.. Various infectious diseases are also becoming more widespread due to increased travel and migration. The Health and Quality of Life platform explores the factors that predispose, cause and protect us against communicable and non-communicable diseases, with a view to finding new ways of preventing, containing and treating diseases.

- **Ageing Society**
  Demographics show that the number of elderly in Albania is on the increase. This calls for effective therapeu-

tic treatments that will ensure physical, psychological and social well-being for this segment of the population. Through a range of interdisciplinary approaches to ageing, the Ageing Society platform seeks to present effective guidelines on how to ensure a healthily ageing population in Europe.

- **Diversity and Cohesion**
  How Albania can develop cohesively when its population is becoming increasingly mobile and more diverse, must be examined. Diversity and Cohesion are the internal as well as external challenges facing Albania

while striving for accession to European Union and its common market.

- **Food Security**
  Securing a sustainable supply of healthy and safe food products is a global challenge that calls for innovative scientific approaches. Focusing on the entire spectrum of national food production – from plant and soil ecology to food production and processing technologies – the Food Security challenge shall bring us the latest knowledge on how to develop healthy and sustainable foods with extended shelf life.

5.1 SSH Research priorities on the basis of the country's readiness
5.1.1 Priority 1: Sustainable Development

- Drivers of land use changes and planning and policy instruments
- Climate change dynamics and its impact on ecosystems
- Social impact of climate change and resource scarcity including migration and urbanisation dynamics in developed and developing countries
- New water resource management technologies spanning from urban to arid ecosystems and focusing on both quantity and quality aspects

5.1.2 Priority 2: Diversity and Cohesion

- Migration and livelihoods
- Education in rural and sub-urban Albania

5.1.3 Priority 3: Energy security and efficiency

- Improve technologies to enhance energy efficiency, flexible energy systems and energy use, including knowledge about energy consumer behaviour
- More efficient and sustainable use of all energy resources

5.2 SSH Research priorities on the basis of future potential
5.2.1 Priority 1: Health and Quality of Life

- Interdisciplinary approach to non-communicable diseases (cancer, cardiovascular and neurodegenerative disorders, obesity, metabolic syndrome)
- Interdisciplinary approach to infectious diseases and emerging/re-emerging zoonoses (SARS, avian influenza)

5.2.2 Priority 2: Ageing society

- Life course perspective on ageing
- Health care policy and preventive medicine
- Health promotion, communication and user-driven innovation

5.2.3 Priority 3: Food Security

- Safer global food transportation
- Decreased food and feed spoilage
- Sustainable animal derived food
- Production
- Management systems for sustainable intensification of livestock production

Additional Questionnaire

This questionnaire aims at producing an inventory of research structures, current and future R&D priorities, and policies for cooperation between Western Balkan Countries in the field of R&D in the domain of *Social Sciences and Humanities*.

Theme: Social Sciences and Humanities

Country name: Albania
Contact person: Edmond Agolli
Institution: ARTI
Postal address: Street "Abdi Toptani", 4, Tirana, Albania
Phone: + 355 4 2 222 409
E-mail: info@akti.gov.al

Section A: Main R&D resources in the field of Social Sciences and Humanities

A 1.   List of institutions / organisations: main RESEARCH PERFORMERS in the PUBLIC sector in the S&T field of Social Sciences and Humanities *(such as national universities, government laboratories, institutes etc.)*

	Name	Postal address	Website /Contact
1.	Universiteti i Tiranës	Sheshi "Nene Tereza", Tirane	http://unitir.edu.al/
2.	Universiteti "Aleksandër Xhuvani", Elbasan	Elbasan	http://www.uniel.edu.al/
3.	Universiteti "Luigj Gurakuqi ", shkoder	Shkoder	http://www.unishk.edu.al/
4.	Universiteti "Fan S.Noli" Korçë	Korce	http://unkorce.edu.al/
5.	Universiteti "Eqrem Çabej" Gjirokastrës	Lagja "18 Shtatori", Gjirokastër	http://www.uogj.edu.al/
6.	Universiteti "Ismail Qemali" Vlore	Vlore	http://www.univlora.edu.al/
7.	Qendra e Studimeve Albanologjike	Sheshi "Nene Tereza", Tirane	http://qsa-al.info/

A 2.   List of institutions / organisations: main RESEARCH PERFORMERS in the PRIVATE sector in the S&T field of Social Sciences and Humanities *(such as national universities, government laboratories, institutes etc.)*

	Name	Postal address	Website /Contact
1.	Universiteti Marin Barleti	Tiranë	admindel@umb.edu.al
2.	Universiteti Ufo	Tiranë	
3.	University of NEW YORK, Tirana	Rr. Komuna e Parisit, P.O.Box 2301, Tirana, Albania	www.unyt.edu.al
4.	Universiteti Europian i Tiranës	Bulevardi "Gjergj Fishta", Nd.70, H.1,Tiranë	info@uet.edu.al
5.	Wisdom University	Blv. "Gjergj Fishta", Tiranë	info@wisdom.al
6.	Universiteti Planetar i Tiranës	Universiteti Planetar i Tiranës : Rr. "Budi 74/1",Tiranë	info@universitetiplanetar.com
7.	Universiteti ISSAT MND	Rr.e Kavajës,ish parku,Tiranë	www.issatalbania.com

A 3.   Organisations responsible for financing R&D in the field of Social Sciences and Humanities

	Name	Postal address	Website /Contact
1.	Intellectual Property Institute	Rr Mine Peza P226,Shk3, Tirane	http://www.ipal.org
2.	Urban Research Institute	Rr. Rreshit Petrela, Sek 1, Kati 9, Ap D Tirane.	http://www.uri.org.al
3.	Center "Children Today"	P.O. Box 2903 Tirane	http://www.femijetsot.org
4.	Albanian Institute for International Studies	Rr. "Andon Z, Cajupi" Nr. 20 Tirana	http://www.aiis-albania.org/
5.	Foundation for Local Autonomy and Governance	PO Box 8291 Tirane	http://www.flag-al.org

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7. Montenegrin Academy of Science and Arts (CANU) is the supreme institution in the field of sciences and arts in Montenegro. Its activities and role are regulated by The Law on Mongenegrin Academy of Sciences and Arts. It is an instituion funded directly from Government budget and it realizes projects in the all fields of science and arts. Those projects are usually realized within the institution (CANU)

6.	Institute for Democracy and Mediation.	P.O.Box 8177 Tirane	http://www.idmalbania.org
7.	The Albanian Institute for Studies and Education on Information Technology	Rr. "Presidenti George W. Bush" Kulla 2, Kati 2 Tiranë	http://www.isseti.org
8.	Research Center for Dialog and Development (Studio D)	P.O. Box 7447	http://www.studiorum.org
9.	Institute for Policy and Legal Studies	Rr. "Murat Toptani " Gjergji Center,kati VII Tirana	http://www.ipls.org
10.	Center for Public Information Issues	E-Mail: qendra@cip-al.org Tel/Fax: +355 (0) 44507771	http://www.infocip.org
11.	Albanian Center for Assistance in Education	Rruga "Qemal Stafa", Pall. 8/1, Tirana, Albania	http://www.qshaa.org
12.	Center for Legal Civic Initiatives	P.O BOX 1549 Tirane	http://www.qag-al.org

A 4.   How research is performed *(indicate all that apply)*

	Name	Postal address	Website /Contact
1.	Intellectual Property Institute	Rr Mine Peza P226,Shk3, Tirane	http://www.ipal.org
2.	Urban Research Institute	Rr. Rreshit Petrela, Sek 1, Kati 9, Ap D Tirane.	http://www.uri.org.al
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10.	Center for Public Information Issues	E-Mail: qendra@cip-al.org Tel/Fax: +355 (0) 44507771	http://www.infocip.org
11.	Albanian Center for Assistance in Education	Rruga "Qemal Stafa", Pall. 8/1, Tirana, Albania	http://www.qshaa.org
12.	Center for Legal Civic Initiatives	P.O BOX 1549 Tirane	http://www.qag-al.org

A 5.   R&D capacity* in SSH field
A 5. 1 R&D capacity* in S&T field: Higher Education INSTITUTIONS - public

	Lead participating body (please use numbers from question A 3)	Other relevant bodies (please use numbers from question A 3)
In own institutions		
Published calls for tenders, open to all researchers		5, 6, 7
Restricted tenders to preferred suppliers		5, 6 ,7
Co-funding with other national bodies		
Co-funding with other countries		
Other approaches – please fill in: _____		
Other approaches – please fill in: _____		
Is support restricted to national bodies (Y / N)		

* Please use OECD - Frascati Manual definitions if possible.

A 5.2 R&D capacity* in S&T field: Higher Education INSTITUTIONS - private

	1990	2005	2009
Total number of research organizations			
Of which universities	4	6	7
Of which public research organizations			1
Of which private research organizations			
Number of PhD students graduated	-	-	-
Total number of R&D personnel	-	1419	1805
Percentage of women in the total number of R&D personnel	-	56%	65.5%
Total number of employees on a Full-Time-Equivalent (FTE) basis	-	571	781
Total number of researchers	-	571	781
Percentage of women in the total number of researchers	-	56	65.5
Total number of researchers on a FTE basis	-	848	1024
Number of researchers with Ph.D. degree or higher	-	211	300
Number of researchers with Ph.D. degree or higher on a FTE basis	-	120	204
Number of researchers under the age of 35	-	491	615
Number of researchers under the age of 35 on a FTE basis	-	324	382

A 5.3 R&D capacity* in S&T field: Non-profit organisations

	1990	2005	2009
Total number of research organizations			
Of which universities	0	2	7
Of which public research organizations			-
Of which private research organizations			
Number of PhD students graduated	-	-	-
Total number of R&D personnel	-	55	206
Percentage of women in the total number of R&D personnel	-	54%	47%
Total number of employees on a Full-Time-Equivalent (FTE) basis	-	16	97
Total number of researchers	-	16	97
Percentage of women in the total number of researchers	-	54	47
Total number of researchers on a FTE basis	-	16	97
Number of researchers with Ph.D. degree or higher	-	42	101
Number of researchers with Ph.D. degree or higher on a FTE basis	-	16	44
Number of researchers under the age of 35	-	30	143
Number of researchers under the age of 35 on a FTE basis	-	10	82

A 6.   **Research infrastructure in S&T field of Social Sciences and Humanities**
         a) Assessment of the physical research infrastructure (without office equipment)

The R&D institutions in general have an internationally competitive research infrastructure and are able to conduct top research in cutting-edge research topics	
The R&D institutions in general have top research infrastructure, the infrastructure enables regular international research co-operation but are not competitive if compared with the „best in this research field"	
The R&D institutions in general have good quality research infrastructure, probably one of the most up-to-date in the country, but are not good enough to join in international research on a regular basis	
The R&D institutions in general have a rather obsolete research infrastructure if compared with international organisations and this is an obstacle to international research co-operation	
The R&D institutions in general have a rather obsolete research infrastructure and it is an obstacle to more domestic contracts	
The R&D institutions in general have no substantial infrastructure, but they have access to it and can participate in top research both nationally and internationally	x

         b) Most important physical research infrastructure in S&T field of Social science and humanities
         n/a

A 7.   **Large and/or National R&D projects in S&T field of Social Sciences and Humanities**

	ongoing /started in 2009	completed in 2009
Number of large R&D projects**		
Of which: the number of projects in collaboration with industry	-	-
the number of projects in which the national organisation co-ordinates	5	5
the number of EU FP projects in which national institutions participate	1	1
the number of EU FP projects in which national institutions coordinate	-	-
Number of national R&D projects***		
Of which: the number of projects in collaboration with industry		

** the total project budget is above EUR 100 thousand and the national institutions' share is at least EUR 20 thousand
*** projects funded in some proportion (10-100%) by the national agency/ ministry

A 8.   **Source of financing of R&D activities in S&T field of Social Sciences and Humanities [12]**

	Year 2009 – Share in %:
a) Private companies?	
b) International sources (such as the EU, UN, OECD, NATO etc.)?	EU
c) Not competitive* government financing?	MOES
d) Competitive* government financing?	MOES
e) Other sources (foundations, non-profit organisations, etc.)?	

* Projects won after competitive bidding procedures – so that the organisation can actually lose the funding targeted at the end of the procedure – count as source on a competitive basis. If the organisation participates in a money-allocation mechanism so that the money cannot be lost (but e.g. „only" reduced), it counts as source on a non-competitive basis of research funding even if the procedure itself is called „competitive bidding".

Section B: Qualitative assessment of the S&T field

B 1   **Current situation in SSH**

The current framework governing STI issues has evolved notably in the last few years, through the adoption of the 2007 Law on Higher Education and the Law on the Academy of Sciences (2006, as amended). A 1994 Law on Science and Technolo-

gical Development was amended several times and needs to be revised to ensure compatibility with international standards and to ensure the opening of national programmes in line with EU priorities, State funding rules for R & D and innovation and animation of researchers, etc. The 2007 Law on Higher Education introduced greater flexibility and objectivity in university funding, while the Higher Education National Strategy sets out a number of ambitious goals to improve the functioning of the university sector.

a) What are the main national development policy priorities?

According to the draft National Strategy for Development and Integration, priority will be given to supporting the development of policies and strategies that prevent and reduce marginalization in education at the national and local school levels. This is to be achieved by preventing early departure from formal education and training and improving the quality of education to ensure healthy life styles and skills relevant to the labour market. Other measures will target the updating of curriculum and tackling disadvantages in education and training with particular emphasis on secondary school enrolment. The support will go towards improved quality of education services to children through the development of policies and strategies that prevent and reduce marginalization. Special attention will be given to development of curriculum and teacher standards. Emphasis will be placed on inclusive quality education.

It will continue to assist national authorities in providing elementary and high schools in Albania, and the curriculum will be consistent with EU standards. Also it will support the review of university level education in terms of quality and governance, given its direct effect on the quality of the civil service and labour force.

b) What are the main R&D priorities?

Strategic goal	Programme
Increase public spending on research to 0.6% of GDP by 2015. Increase the share of gross expenditure on R&D from foreign sources to 40% of all research spending in the years 2010-1015.	Research Infrastructure Fund
Create 4-5 Albanian Centres of Excellence in Science (ACES)	Creation and Development of 4-5 Albanian Centres of Excellence in Science (ACES) bringing together a minimum of 20 researchers
Double the number of researchers, through „brain gain" and training (graduate schools; train 100 PhDs).	Research Eagle Grants Programme to increase Masters & Doctoral graduates Science Promotion and Education Programme towards young people
Increase innovation activity in 100 companies	Programme for Technology Transfer and Innovation to create consortia of academic research institutes with private or other public sector organisations

c) How would you put identified R&D priorities in EU research topics?

European Research Area (ERA) - Free movement of knowledge

B 2   Future priorities

a) Describe how your future R&D priorities are selected and priorities agreed (e.g. foresight)? Are these driven by national policy priorities?

The future R&D priorities are agreed in line with the national development strategic goals and the respective (EU) policy priorities. The process strives to be as participatory and inclusive as possible, but no foresight approach is being applied.

b) Over the next 10 years, what will be the main R&D policy issues in this S&T field?

• Sustainable Development and Climate Change
  Climate change, globalization and migration have had massive effects on terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems. Through multidisciplinary research, the Sustainable Development and Climate Change platform documents the environmental, economic and societal consequences of these developments and proposes new ways of securing sustainable growth.

• Energy Security
  In view of the current geopolitical challenges, a sustainable energy production is the only viable long-term solution if we are to achieve energy security and improve living conditions for a growing population. The Energy Security challenge must unravel the underexploited technological potential of wind, solar and bio-based energy forms, and demonstrate how we can use these resources in ways that are more energy efficient and less harmful to the environment.

• Health and Quality of Life
  Chronic diseases such as diabetes, cancer, cardiovascular and neurological diseases represent a major threat to human

health in e. Various infectious diseases are also becoming more widespread due to increased travel and migration. The Health and Quality of Life platform explores the factors that predispose, cause and protect us against communicable and non-communicable diseases, with a view to finding new ways of preventing, containing and treating diseases.

- Ageing Society
  Demographics show that the number of elderly in Albania is on the increase. This calls for effective therapeutic treatments that will ensure physical, psychological and social well-being for this segment of the population. Through a range of interdisciplinary approaches to ageing, the Ageing Society platform seeks to present effective guidelines on how to ensure a healthily ageing population in Europe.

- Diversity and Cohesion
  How Albania can develop cohesively when its population is becoming increasingly mobile and more diverse, must be examined. Diversity and Cohesion are the internal as well as external challenges facing Albania while striving for accession to European Union and its common market.

- Food Security
  Securing a sustainable supply of healthy and safe food products is a global challenge that calls for innovative scientific approaches. Focusing on the entire spectrum of national food production – from plant and soil ecology to food production and processing technologies – the Food Security challenge shall bring us the latest knowledge on how to develop healthy and sustainable foods with extended shelf life.

B 3   What national policy and R&D priorities should be the subject for establishment of specific co-operation with other Western Balkan Countries?

- Sustainable Development and Climate Change
- Diversity and Cohesion
- Health and Quality of Life

B 4   It is hoped that this exercise will identify areas for future collaboration and R&D co-operation in this S&T field, probably leading to a possible WBC R&D co-operation proposals under FP7.
These projects foresee four levels of co-operation. They range from:

a) The minimum – exchange of information and results
b) Systematic exchange and development of complementary programmes
c) Development of common approaches to agreed R&D priorities
d) The maximum – full joint approaches, common programmes and pooled funds with open access to researchers from participating countries.

   So, with this in mind, what levels of co-operative actions would your country be able to support in the future in this S&T field?

- Systematic exchange and development of complementary programmes
- Development of common approaches to agreed R&D priorities

B 5   A suggestion is to have a high level meeting once or twice a year; where WBC could decide upon themes on which to co-operate. This may lead to a proposal for a project or other forms of co-operation. Would your country be willing to participate in a high level meeting with other WBC to decide upon these themes?

Yes.

wbc-inco.net

Co-ordination of Research Policies
with the Western Balkan Countries

**Background Report on Social
Sciences and Humanities
ALBANIA**

Prepared for the project WBC-INCO.NET

SEVENTH FRAMEWORK
PROGRAMME