



MINISTRY OF TOURISM, CULTURE
YOUTH AND SPORTS

NATIONAL YOUTH
STRATEGY

2007-2013



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National Youth
Strategy
2007-2013

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INTRODUCTION

NATIONAL YOUTH STRATEGY

The initiative

The idea of revising the National Youth Strategy 2003 emerged as a result of the need to delineate a strategic platform for the sustainable development of youth that is consistent with the priorities of the new government and resonant with the socio-economic and cultural transformations that have taken place during the last few years. At the heart of this initiative lies the idea that younger generations in Albania represent key agents for positive change towards the consolidation of democratic governance and the process of European integration.

This document maps out different ways of creatively utilizing the existing potential in order to address the multiple challenges faced by young people. To this end, the National Youth Strategy 2007-2013 aims at the creation of effective channels for youngsters to contribute to the strengthening of the market economy, rule of law and quality of life in the country by actively participating in the public life and decision-making processes. In this context, the implementation of the National Action Plan 2007-2013 will provide the principal focus for the work of the Directory for the Coordination of Youth Policies at the Ministry of Tourism, Culture, Youth and Sports.

Towards the goal of furthering youth empowerment, a principal direction for intervention will involve the creation of a youth-friendly institutional environment – that allows for a wider participation of young people in all decision-making levels, as well as for their active participation in public life as informed and responsible citizens. Given that young people comprise close to 70% of the total population, the National Youth Strategy 2007-2013 will strive to raise awareness among youngsters about the role that they can play in the future development of the country in the strengthening of democratic governance, the

achievement of sustainable social and economic development, the protection of the environment, as well as the enrichment of cultural life in Albania.

Governmental youth policies

The approach of the Albanian government towards the development of youth policies reflects a keen interest in designing inter-sectorial policies that take a long-term view on the issue of youth development. By responding to the Decree No.134 of the Prime Minister of Albania “On the Preparation of the National Strategy for Development and Integration” – the revised National Youth Strategy and National Action Plan 2007-2013 take action upon the priorities set by the new government for national commitments and reforms undertaken in the framework of the Stability Pact and the Stabilization and Association Agreement.

The emergent policy approach is also responsive to the directives stipulated in the “Global Program for Youth Action to the Year 2000 and Beyond” of the United Nations and the “White Paper Policy” of the Council of Europe. Furthermore, the drafting of strategic objectives also draws on the supporting instrument for youth policies “Youth in Action” endorsed by the Council of Europe and the European Parliament (14/07/2004 No.152) and the latest recommendations coming from the European Youth Forum.

The strategic vision of this document and the accompanying action plan map out multiple perspectives on the efficient and sustainable use of resources – for the improvement of the quality of life for young people and the strengthening of their representative groups and organizations. Critical to the success of the implementation of the National Youth Action Plan 2007-2013 will be the close

cooperation among governmental agencies on the central and local levels, civil society groups and international organizations operating in the youth sector, as well as the business community.

The implementation of the National Youth Action Plan will involve the systematic evaluation of the achievements made over time and obstacles encountered. In this context, the continuous revision and assessment analysis of the youth situation in the country will ensure the fine-tuning of projects and programs to the most pressing issues relating to youth development.

CONSULTATIVE PROCESS

The process for the revision of the National Youth Strategy and National Action Plan 2007-2013 was coordinated by the Directory for the Coordination of Youth Policies at the Ministry of Tourism, Culture, Youth and Sports and facilitated by the Center for Change and Conflict Management – PARTNERS Albania.

Critical to the preparation of these documents was the contribution of a diverse group of experts associated with a number of active civil society groups and international organizations operating in the field of youth:

- Albanian Youth Council, Albanian Youth Parliament, Albanian Students Abroad Network (AS@N), Action Plus, Gender Alliance for Development, Children's Rights Center Albania, UN Model Albania, Open Art Tirana;
- UN Albania – UNICEF, UNFPA, UNDP, ILO/ IPEC.

Another important aspect of the process was the contribution of specialists from different central governmental institutions, such as the Ministry of Labor, Social Issues and Equal Opportunities and the Ministry of Education and Science. The inter-ministerial working group contributed not only by providing valuable expertise, but also by investing energies upon the finalization of an agreement among the involved institutions for concerted action towards the achievement of the identified strategic goals.

STRUCTURE

General remarks

An emergent feature of youth policies in many countries is the formulation of all-inclusive inter-sectorial approaches focusing on links between sustainable development, representation of youth in all levels of decision-making, and active participation of young people in public life. The Albanian government aims at the drafting and implementation of an integrating strategy that addresses the most pressing issues affecting the quality of life for young people and that furthers the empowerment of youth. To this end, the inter-sectorial approach strives to establish an efficient cooperation and coordination among governmental agencies on the national and local levels, civil society organizations, international institutions and the business community.

Central to the strategic vision elaborated in these documents is the strengthening of the youth sector – through establishment of transparent and effective mechanisms allowing for engagement of young people not only in the consulting and drafting phases, but also in the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of projects and programs. The development of a framework for cooperation delineating clear distribution of responsibilities and obligations among governmental and non-governmental structures operating in the area of youth development will be of critical importance to the success of this collective engagement.

Present conditions

The first part of each section sketches the current situation by highlighting the most salient problems faced by youth, as well as depicts different areas of intervention for youth development and empowerment. Actual situation analysis addresses not only the role of governmental agencies operating in the youth sector, but also the engagement of non-

governmental organizations and the private sector. In particular, this section elaborates on the efficiency of public expenditure programs, the performance of civil society groups, as well as the contributions of international organizations and the initiatives of the business community focusing on youth.

The analysis is based upon a diverse range of information sources and studies conducted by Albanian and/or international researchers. By taking an interdisciplinary approach towards the complex and multidimensional issue of youth development, the assessment of the current situation aims at providing a landscape of problems and potentials for young people in Albania. In this context, a special emphasis has been put on the treatment of the implications of the post-1990s political, socio-economic and cultural transformations in the country, as well larger regional and global developments.

Vision, priorities and strategic goals

The National Youth Strategy 2007-2013 articulates a vision for youth empowerment that is resonant with the principles of sustainable development, the construction of an open democratic society and the integration of Albania in the large family of the European Union. The goals elaborated in this section delineate a number of strategic engagements, which are consistent with the programmatic priorities of the new government. The designation of strategic areas of intervention was informed by a keen concern – to optimize the resources available through the improved coordination of central and local governmental agencies and to create synergies through the collective engagement of state institutions, civil society groups, international organizations and the private sector.

The section maps out different strategic dimensions of the work that needs to be accomplished from various actors operating in the area of youth

development, which are in line with the European perspective of Stabilization and Association Agreement and the Millennium Development Goals agenda. A particular emphasis has been placed upon the clear distribution of responsibilities and obligations of all involved parties, as well as the designation of the institutional spaces for youth representation and participation on all decision-making levels.

Key to the strategic vision lies an understanding of youth development as a multidimensional process offering a tremendous potential for the advancement of standards implicated in the European integration process and for successfully meeting the challenges of globalization. The empowerment of young people is thus considered as a critical investment in raising the future human capital available for the healthy development of the national economy. In addition, the empowerment of youth is seen as fundamental to the nurturing of informed and responsible citizens who can contribute to the strengthening of the rule of law and democratic governance in Albania.

POLICIES

This section constitutes the heart of the document. By defining the principal commitments stemming from the vision, priorities and strategic goals of the National Youth Strategy 2007-2013, the policy section

offers a wide range of concrete steps that articulate a critical and creative approach towards the issue of development of Albanian young people. In this context, particular attention has been given to the designation of both youth sector policies and inter-sectorial policies.

The emergent policy framework strives to improve upon the previous engagements of governmental institutions, civil society groups, and international organizations operating in the field of youth development. To this end, the group of experts focused on drawing from the successful experiences of other countries in the Western Balkans, Central and Eastern Europe that share similar histories with Albania, as well as the excellent know-how developed by the European Union. The recommended policies seek to adapt this pool of knowledge and skills to the specificities of the problems faced by younger generations in Albania.

Accountability: Monitoring and evaluation arrangements

The last section lays out an array of measurable indicators that allow for the monitoring of the work accomplished and the development of assessment analysis for the progress made towards the fulfillment of the specified priorities and strategic goals. The designation of concrete and measurable indicators

has been considered key to the development of an effective framework for accountability from all engaged actors.

The diversity of indicators makes evident the multi-dimensional and inter-disciplinary nature of the projects and programs endorsed by the National Youth Strategy and National Youth Action Plan 2007-2013. Thus indicators vary from the number of young people utilizing the internet, to the inclusion of sustainable development in the curricula of secondary education, to the creation of Youth Information Units that facilitate youth employment.

Given the current lack of extensive statistical information on youth, it is expected that comparative assessments of different projects and programs

will be possible only in the medium- and long-term period. One of the top priorities in the agenda determined in the National Youth Strategy 2007-2013 involves the close cooperation with INSTAT and other research institutions – for the collection and integration of information on young people in order to create an exhaustive youth database for Albania.

II. REPRESENTATION AND PARTICIPATION OF YOUNG PEOPLE

1. YOUTH and PUBLIC LIFE
2. STRENGTHENING CAPACITIES of YOUTH NGOs
3. REGIONAL and INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION
4. YOUTH PARTICIPATION IN ELECTIONS

SITUATION ANALYSIS

Youth and public life

Even though young people comprise the largest share of the Albanian population, youth representation and participation in decision-making processes remains a matter of will from individual high-ranking officials. In fact the lack of legal obligations and institutional practices promoting the active presence of young people in public life continues to work to the detriment of youth development and empowerment. This in turn, leads to policy approaches that are out of touch with the views of young people and fail to adequately address their demands and aspirations.

In addition, the lack of a gender perspective on projects and programs aimed at youth development also leads to the unfair and inefficient utilization of existing resources. Thus far policy approaches have fallen short of taking into consideration the different needs among young boys and girls – as well as the unequal opportunities they have in accessing public resources and effectively participating in community life. As a result, the current situation reveals a strong gender imbalance, which tends to favour a greater participation of young males in public life.

The low level of youth participation in decision-making process is a matter of critical concern for

the consolidation of democratic governance in the country, as well the achievement of sustainable social and economic development. The disregard of youth perspectives implicates significant costs in both political and economic terms – for not only it amplifies the democratic deficit, but it also leads to a suboptimal allocation of the available economic resources. As a result, initiatives to reform the youth sector and transform the youth reality tend to remain on a theoretical level and effect little real change.

Among the principal factors leading to the currently low level of youth representation and participation in public life – it is worth mentioning the lack of clearly defined legal basis safeguarding the status of youth decision-making, the lack of mechanisms for the effective inclusion of young people in the institutional life on the central and local levels, as well as persisting cultural perceptions that tend to undervalue the role that youngsters can play in society.

Strengthening capacities of youth ngos

One of the most pressing needs of the youth sector is the strengthening of organizational and managerial capacities of youth organizations. Characteristic to this sector of the civil society remains the transience of leadership – and the following loss of valuable knowledge and experience. As a matter of fact, a large number of youth organizations actively function

only for as long as the founding leadership remains engaged. As a result, the youth sector is in great need for enhanced sustainability, strengthening of organizational capacities, and the continuous training of the sector's leadership and activists.

Another typical problem faced by youth organizations is the lack of effective channels of information dissemination among actors operating in the youth field – governmental agencies on the central and local level, civil society groups, international organizations and the private sector. Even though young people are the pioneers of technological change and adaptation, the information and communications technology infrastructure remains underdeveloped and a marginal source of information. As a result, the great potential for fostering youth activism and improving the coordination among youth operators remains unused.

The lack of the needed know-how in the field of public relations (PR) continues to be yet another salient characteristic of the youth sector in Albania. An important consequence of the poor PR capacities of youth organizations is the diminished access to the pool of resources that is potentially available from the donor community. The strengthening of management capacities for the efficient and transparent disposal of resources and the enhancement of PR capabilities of youth organizations comprise focal areas for investment in the youth sector.

Regional and international cooperation

The opening of Albania to the outer world following the collapse of the communist regime in the early 1990s was characterized by the phenomenon of massive immigration towards developed countries. A problematic image on a regional level was acquired due to the Balkan crisis and inter-ethnic conflict spilling out of the disintegration of the ex-Yugoslavian space. As a result, European scepticism and fears from uncontrolled migrant inflows from the region translated into the raising of the Schengen Wall – soon after the fall of the Berlin Wall. The negative image that the country gained in the international public opinion is critically linked to the specificities of the initial waves of immigrants and the emergence of extensive networks of organized crime.

Year 2000, however, defines a turning point for developments in Albania and its neighbouring countries due to the relative stabilization of the regional situation and the progress made towards the achievement of higher standards for democratic governance and a functioning market economy. Continued positive changes provide the context for understanding the recent initiative for the progressive

liberalization and facilitation of the visa regime for citizens from the Western Balkans.

Regional and international cooperation is key to the nurturing of sustainable peace and the furthering of democratisation processes in the region. In fact, the close collaboration of civil society groups operating in the youth sector and governmental agencies across national boundaries has played a critical role in the intensification of regional and European integrating processes. Nonetheless, there exists an ample space for increased participation of Albanian young people in regional and international projects. This in turn would boost the contribution that younger generations give towards the sustainable development of the country by acting as ambassadors of the Albanian culture abroad and by bringing back fresh perspectives and valuable experiences from other countries.

Yet there remains a great deal to be done by both governmental institutions and civil society groups in order to increase the opportunities available for Albanian young people to participate in regional and international events. To this end, youth operators should strive to enhance the currently underdeveloped communication infrastructure on a regional and international level, as well as to actively support volunteer and cultural exchange programs.

Youth participation in elections

A defining feature of Albania's transition to democracy following the collapse of the totalitarian regime in the early 1990s was the establishment of the right to vote in free and fair elections – one of the most cherished institutions of democratic politics. While this emergent right was extensively exercised by Albanians during the first few rounds of elections, since the mid-1990s there has been a persistent low level of voter turnout in general and amongst young people in particular. In fact, the phenomenon of disenchantment with the electoral process is spread widely not only across the transitioning countries in Central and Eastern Europe, but also among the developed and consolidated democratic societies around the world. Understanding the causes of "voter fatigue" and tackling the issue of youth voter participation is key to lowering democratic deficit and promoting sustainable democratic governance.

The Albanian experience has shown that neglect of youth from politicians and disillusionment with politics at large comprise two principal reasons why young people keep away from the ballot box. Thus low youth voter participation needs to be framed in the context of the lack of youth presence in public life and decision-making processes, as well as the

political landscape marked by instability and periodic crises. In addition, young people seem to have lost faith in the political leadership of the country due to the abusive approach to engaging youngsters during electoral campaigns as a façade only.

Research on electoral processes and voting participation patterns reveals that younger generations – between 18 and 35 years old – comprise the largest age-group abstaining from their right to vote. This is a disturbing fact indeed for it implicates not only that young people continue to remain marginal to the process of political development in the country, but also that the Albanian democracy is representative of the will of the minority rather than majority component of the population.

In this context, there is a pressing need that young people become informed citizens and active participants in the country's political life by participating in the voting process. Furthermore, there is great deal to be done towards the nurturing of a voting culture, which promotes responsibility and transparency among the political leadership and enhances the dialogue between politicians and their constituencies.

VISION, PRIORITIES AND STRATEGIC GOALS

Youth and public life

Active youth participation in all levels of decision-making processes is important not only because it gives young people the appropriate place they have in a democratic society, but also because it enhances institutional performance thanks to the energy and creativity young people bring along. Meanwhile, wide and effective youth representation and participation in public contributes to democratic development by boosting the interest of a weighty constituency in pressing for accountable and efficient governing agencies and political leadership. In addition, increased youth presence in public life furthers policies that are in tune with the most pressing needs and aspirations of younger generations

A principal goal of the strategic vision adopted in this document is the development of youth policies that recognize youth empowerment as key to the successful investment in future leaders – who have a better understanding of democratic governance and are better equipped for strategic planning and efficient administration of public resources. In this context, a particular emphasis should be placed upon the drafting and implementation of policies, which are

informed by a gender perspective and thus sensitive to the different needs and potentials of young boys and girls for a wider participation in public life.

Key to the achievement of the strategic vision will be the application of innovative models and successful experiences from other countries – adjusted for the specificities of the political, socio-economic and cultural topography in Albania.

Strengthening capacities of youth ngos

Strategic dimensions of the commitment to strengthen the capacities of youth NGOs include boosting technical and financial resources accessible by the youth sector of the Albanian civil society, investing in trainings for youth leadership, developing fair practices for monitoring the performance of youth organizations, as well as promoting the creation of an effective information and communication infrastructure for the youth sector.

The vision of improving organizational structures and managerial capabilities of youth groups is informed by an understanding of the variations of specific institutional, executive, and geographic needs in this field. Enhanced capacities of youth NGOs will bring about an increased number of collaborations on projects and programs on local, regional, and national levels – thus creating real opportunities for youth structures to contribute to the improvement of the quality of life for young people and the sustainable socio-economic development of the country. In addition, the strengthening of the capacities of youth organizations will also promote the development of intensified cooperation with international organizations and institutions operating in the youth sector.

Regional and international cooperation

Essential to the vision of regional and European integration will be the active support from governmental institutions for the participation of Albanian youngsters and youth NGOs in regional and international activities.

Wide participation in international projects and programs of exchange creates opportunities for Albanian young people not only to directly voice their own stances and interests, but also to act as ambassadors of the Albanian culture and heritage abroad – and thus become promoters of a positive image of the country in the international public opinion. Sustained participation of Albanian young people in international events and activities also promotes youth empowerment by offering youth organizations the possibility to absorb successful experiences and models developed abroad, while enhancing their communication and collaboration

networks. In addition, regional projects and cultural initiatives are critical to the development of good-neighborhood relations, the transcending of conflictual pastness, as well the nurturing of a common future as part of the European family.

The strategic vision considers the utilization of information and telecommunication technologies essential to the promotion of regional and international collaborations. In particular, the construction of an online portal with information on initiatives and events abroad and on financial support available would contribute significantly to the goal of increasing regional and international cooperation. Yet another strategic commitment will be the inclusion of Albanian young people in the drafting, planning, implementation, monitoring and assessment of regional and international projects – through an improved coordination between relevant ministerial agencies and youth NGOs.

Youth participation in elections

The strategic vision adopted in this document focuses on the goals of achieving wide participation of young people in electoral processes and promoting responsible citizenship. To this end, serious investments of resources need to be made in order to increase awareness among youngsters about the electoral weight they comprise and the importance of voting for sustainable democracies.

In this context, a major emphasis should be placed upon the drafting and implementation of policies aiming at improved information and education of young people with the principles of democratic governance, electoral mechanisms of the political system in the country, as well as administration of tax-payers money and public resources in general. A strategic dimension of the work shall be the bringing of experiences from countries around the globe for the increased participation of young people during the electoral process – both as voters and as observers for different monitoring bodies.

Active youngsters during the electoral process also means active between political mandates. Increased youth voter participation will bring a valuable pressure upon politicians for the better fulfillment of their commitments and will push towards the achievement European standards for integration. Completing the emergent virtuous circle, there is the potential for increased interest from young people in participating in the voting process as a result of the increased responsiveness of politicians to the youth component of the electorate.

Yet another strategic goal is the provision of continued support for youth representative structures

that function upon the principle of free and fair voting, such as the Albanian Youth Parliament and student government bodies both in secondary and college levels. The empowerment of these youth representative groups will be key to the fostering engaged and responsible younger generations – who can take full responsibilities for exerting their right to vote.

POLICIES

Youth and public life

- The Ministry of Tourism, Culture, Youth and Sports in close collaboration with the Ministry of Education and Science and the local governing authorities will invest in raising of the necessary infrastructure for the creation of opportunities for the development of youth representative structures in all levels. In addition, continuous financial support shall be provided for the strengthening of existing and newly-formed youth structures;
- The revision of Civic Education and Introduction to Sociology textbooks – through the close cooperation among the Ministry of Education and youth NGOs – with the aim of reformulating the material on the role of youth in public life and on the importance of youth participation in decision-making processes. Central to this revision process will be taking into consideration differences in accessing education and in mentalities on education of girls and boys, specificities of different geographic areas, disparities in income, differences in religious belief etc.;
- Inclusion of young people on all administrative levels of the decision-making process ranging from governmental institutions on the central level to the local civic bodies on the municipality and commune levels, in order to contribute to the consolidation of democracy and good governance;
- Increased accountability of the government vis-à-vis young people through periodic [interpellance] of the Minister of Youth and Minister of Education with youth representatives – with the goal of instigating the interest of young people on governmental policies, as well creating effective communication channels between youth and the government;
- Raising awareness among young people on the importance of participation in decision-making processes for the consolidation of democracy, through the organization of workshops, trainings and informal education programs.

Strengthening capacities of youth ngos

- Trainings for youth leadership and the strengthening of democratic participation within youth organizations;
- Instigating a greater level of collaboration among youth organization through roundtables, formal and informal gatherings on the local and national levels;
- The institutionalization of mechanisms for the sustainable cooperation among governing bodies in general and local authorities in particular with the civil society organizations focusing on youth;
- The creation of a communications network for the exchange of information and experiences among young people through the utilization of information technology and the internet;
- The engagement of governmental institutions on the local, regional and national levels for the coordination of projects and programs aiming at the strengthening of planning and coordinating capacities among youth NGOs.

Regional and international cooperation

- The utilization of information technology for the gathering, elaboration, and circulation of information on collaborative projects, regional and international activities and exchange programs, as well as the availability of financial support for participating in these activities;
- The inclusion of representatives from youth NGO in the delegations representing Albania in regional and international conferences on a ministerial level;
- The progressive liberalization of the visa regime with the aim of enhancing the freedom of movement of young people within the region and the common European space;
- Promoting intercultural dialogue and regional cooperation through exchange programs, the organization of seminars and educative workshops etc.

Youth participation in elections

- The organization of “mock-election” events in high schools, university campuses, as well as among youth in different communities;

- The organization of massive festivities advocating youth voter participation, such as Pop & Vote and Rock & Vote;
- The organization of informative and awareness-raising campaigns on the local, regional, and national levels;
- The organization of discussion forums with candidates in parliamentary elections, as well as elections on the municipality level;
- The organization of debates and open forums focused on the issue of youth voter participation to be broadcasted on the television and radio;
- The building up and strengthening of informative websites on electoral processes in order to provide for a sense of orientation for young people;
- The publication of informational materials targeting young people and aiming at their active citizenship through voter participation;
- Collaboration with youth media (campus newspapers etc.) in order to raise awareness among young people on the importance of voting for democratic governance;
- Promoting and supporting youth participation in the monitoring of election processes based on a volunteer approach;
- The raising of the infrastructure and close cooperation with youth organizations for the engagement of young people in the monitoring process.

RESOURCES AND INDICATORS

Youth and public life

At the heart of the strategic area of intervention there is the increased participation of young people in decision-making and engagement in public life.

Through the organization of activities, programs and trainings it will be aimed to motivate the youth to vote, to enhance the capacities of youth organizations, and to promote cooperation on regional and international levels. .

Through the building up of anti-corruption networks, the number of young people involved in awareness raising campaigns against corruption will increase.

Through the information programs we aim to improve the abilities of young people to obtain information on important issues directly affecting youth.

By focusing on activities that cut across cultural, economic, and geographic boundaries throughout the whole country, a higher level of collaboration on multiple levels (within and across governmental

agencies and youth civil society groups) will be achieved.

A critical benchmark to be achieved will be the designation of legal obligations for youth representation in governing bodies, councils, committees and within campuses – and the achievement of 20% increase in the level of youth representation in decision-making processes.

Strengthening capacities of youth ngos

Through training programs on youth leadership, information exchange and the coordination of collective initiatives among organizations operating in the youth sector of the civil society, the capacities of the sector shall be enhanced.

Regional and international cooperation

Through activities that promote good-neighborly relations and security in the region, we will facilitate and enhance the level of cooperation and communication among young people regionally and internationally.

Youth participation in elections

Through awareness raising campaigns based on a creative approach to the utilization of different media channels, it will be aimed to boost the self-perception of young people on the importance of their electoral weights and the surpassing of by 20% of the current 45% of youth voter participation.

III. YOUTH AND ECONOMY

1. YOUTH EMPLOYMENT
2. BRAIN GAIN: YOUNG PEOPLE STUDYING ABROAD
3. YOUTH BUSINESS and SELF-EMPLOYMENT
4. PROFESSIONAL TRAINING for YOUNG PEOPLE
5. YOUTH as SMART CONSUMERS

SITUATION ANALYSIS

Youth employment

The creation of employment opportunities in general and youth employment in particular comprises a strategic priority of any government. However there exists an important difference between good political will and what happens in reality. While young people in Albania have a higher chance of finding a job than older ages, there exists a stark inequality among younger generations employed in leading positions and those in lower ranking jobs. Also as a result of the regime change in the country, younger generations are better equipped and able to adapt and integrate in the emergent labor markets; however, employment opportunities available do not match expectations among young people.

Children and young people in Albania comprise more than half the total population in the country and represent the largest share of the labor force, both in the rural and urban areas. However, capabilities and energy to work do not ensure a suitable job placement, also as a result of the scarce job openings. On the other hand, internal rural-to-urban migration, the extensive spread of the informal

economy, the lack of strategic policies aiming at the creation of incentives for youth employment, and the dissonance between the educational system and demand from the labor market – lead to a unfavorable position for young people for successful employment and career development.

Brain gain: Young people studying abroad

One of the most problematic dimensions of the post-1990 transition is the phenomenon of brain drain. Based on statistical information provided by the Albanian Students Abroad Network (AS@N), the number of Albanian youngsters continuing their studies abroad is estimated to exceed 25,000. Meanwhile, several surveys reveal that the percentage of those wishing to return to Albania to invest their future varies within the narrow margin of 5 to 10 percent.

It is easy discernible that the lack of real policies aiming at the utilization of the intellectual capital and energy of Albanian youth studying abroad and the decreased interest of these contingent to invest their future in Albania are two major obstacles to reversing the process of brain drain. In addition, of critical import is the presence of underdeveloped mechanisms promoting the ties of youth studying

and living abroad with the homeland – while taking into account that these youngsters are the real ambassadors of the country and contribute to the improvement of Albania's image in the international public opinion.

The lack of the much needed infrastructure for the achievement of “brain gain”, the lack of continuous policies aiming at providing incentives for the return of youth studying abroad, the lack of information concerning governmental and private sector job opportunities and career development potential – make it such that only a small fraction of Albanian students graduated abroad return to Albania to live and work while contributing to the development of the country. As a result, this critical potential for the sustainable development is dispersed and lost without being able to give a concerted contribution towards the goal national development in keeping with the best Western standards.

Youth business and self-employment

The development of youth entrepreneurship and business represents a salient dimension of the aim to boost job creation in particular and the growth of the Albanian economy at large. On the other hand, promoting the creation of youth businesses creates the premises for youth empowerment vis-à-vis the government, and greater economic freedom from the family.

The lack of statistical information makes the assessment of the varying factors leading to the current low levels of youth entrepreneurship difficult. However, it is acknowledged by most experts that some of the principal factors that bear a negative effect on youth business function both subjective and objective dimensions. Amongst these we can make mention of the lack of healthy competitiveness because of the bulky informal economic sector which than creates an unfavorable situation for successful youth entrepreneurship, the lack of initiative and risk-taking cultural attitudes among younger generations, as well family traditions and the control that the family exerts on the lives of young people.

In addition, other factors which should be taken into consideration include the lack of understanding and knowledge of the legal framework concerning the starting up of a business, the lack of a good understanding of the economic and banking system, as well as the lack of relevant information that can be easily accessed from young people (such as the taxation system, opportunities for favorable small crediting of youth businesses, market niches and emergent market trends, etc.).

In this context, it is worth noting that the lack

of fiscal and legal policies on the national and local levels remain central predicaments to the encouragement of the creation and sustainability of youth businesses. However, recently, there has been a increased effort from governmental agencies and the private sector alike to provide incentives and create opportunities for the establishment business established and managed by young people. Currently youth enterprises play a not insignificant role in the economic development of the local communities where they live; however, the impact of these economic activities on the national level still remains negligible.

Professional training for young people

The multiple political, socio-economic, and cultural changes that have unfolded during the last decade – following the dismantling of the centralized command economy to a functioning free-market economy – have had significant implications in the field of academic and professional training (APT). The transformations that brought about the emergence of the market economy have created multiple exigencies for higher levels of qualification and literacy in the direction of information technology and services.

The fine tuning to the emergent labor markets and the need for greater flexibility comprise key directions for the development of academic and professional training programs – so as to give to the latter a new face and to educate and equip the new generations with the qualifications, skills, aptitudes, and flexibility required by labor markets.

The current academic and professional training system in Albania is underdeveloped both in quantitative and qualitative terms. In general, there is a lack of the suitable infrastructure, inadequate funding, a low level of human resources, outdated curricula and inefficient managerial approaches.

In this context a major goal will be the close cooperation with the Ministry of Labor, Social Issues and Equal Opportunities on a national project to be carried out by the Directory for Coordination of Youth Policies in order to created the necessary infrastructure for an improved professional training.

Currently, on a national level there function 40 academic institutions of technical and professional education, spread out over 22 (rrethe). Out of the total, three professional schools operate in rural areas, with the principal focus on agriculture and agrobusiness. These schools are divided into four principal fields: electro-mechanic (18 schools), economic (9 schools), construction and furniture

design (4 schools); agriculture, forestry and veterinary (9 schools). Students are trained in 35 major specialties.

However, both professional education and professional training retain a low profile reputation among young people and older generations – insofar as the quality of the programs offered and the low percentage of students enrolled are concerned. Even the private sector providing services in the direction of professional education and training is underdeveloped and shares similar characteristics with the public sector.

Young people as smart consumers

Enabling young people to become skilled and responsible consumers (especially during the adolescence period) comprises an integral part of the legal, political, and technical mechanisms that ensure protection of consumers. The fulfillment of this basic right, on the other hand, implicates that consumers must have the relevant knowledge and skills that enable them to behave and participate in the product and services markets as informed and responsible economic agents.

However the concept of the consumer itself in Albania is not as yet widely known given that Albanians share an underdeveloped consumer awareness and lack a consumer culture – partly as a legacy of the communist period. Even though the rights of consumers were included in the law for the protection of the consumers since 2003 – surveys show that only a small minority knows these rights.

The lack of consumer culture is a critical obstacle to the development and empowerment of youth given the general consumer trends – such as lack of understanding of the qualities and characteristics of consumer products and services, the assessment of the conditions of selling, the understanding of contractual terms, warranties or the financial evaluation, etc. Given that consumer culture develops from early on during the infancy and adolescence periods, the importance acquired by the education and training of youngsters as smart consumers comprises an issue of particular interest.

According to several studies, young people in Albania represent a large share of consumers of unrecommended products and services – such as tobacco, alcohol, gambling, as well as excessive expenditures of the disposable income in buying expensive clothing, paying for cellular communication, electronic games, bars, pubs etc. The behavior of young people as smart consumers aims at achieving high standards of living based

on the emerging global culture of responsible consumerism.

Meanwhile the tendency for excessive expenditures does not match the level of youth economic dependency (especially among teen-agers and students), especially so given that their economic efforts for education, professional training or seasonal and part-time employment are minimal.

VISION, PRIORITIES AND STRATEGIC GOALS

Youth employment

The vision of the National Youth Strategy aims at defining concrete objectives for providing incentives for employment among youth. This must be closely linked to the part of the strategy where the promotion of youth entrepreneurship is discussed – given that these two components comprise fundamental elements for the empowerment of Albanian youth.

In this framework, another priority will be the commitment of the Ministry of Labor, Social Issues and Equal Opportunities, to include a policy framework for encouraging youth employment as a special chapter in the preparation and adoption of the National Strategy for Employment. Yet other engagements of MLSIEO will be the provision of changes and additions to the Labor Code with the goal of regulating contractual terms for both full- and part-time work, as well as the creation of programs aiming at the encouragement of youth employment by the private sector and the civil society sector. Furthermore, MLSIEO must invest in the creation of Youth Employment Information Units in close cooperation with the private sector and education institutions.

Brain gain: young people studying abroad

The strategic vision links the investment towards brain gain and brain circulation with the regeneration of the Albanian economy and the sustainable development of the country towards European standards. Albanian students studying abroad constitute an valuable asset in terms of human capital thanks to the experiences they have gained abroad, the contemporary know-how they bring along, the high-quality education background they have, as well as the strong work ethic and global cultural outlook they have developed abroad.

A key priority will be the mapping and implementation of realistic policies that aim at the utilization of the intellectual capacities and energy of young people studying and living abroad. To this end, the necessary steps must be taken so as to minimize the level of brain drain by raising the demand for labor in the country and by creating opportunities for young people studying abroad to gain an understanding of the job opportunities and career development potential available in Albania.

Another priority will be the collaboration with student representative organizations and international institutions for the creation and facilitation of communication between students and different institutions, as well as the exchange of information and experience amongst the students themselves. Of special importance will be the facilitation of the process of acknowledging academic titles and professional programs awarded abroad, in order to facilitate their integration in the labor markets.

Youth entrepreneurship and self-employment

The vision of the National Youth Strategy on youth entrepreneurship takes into consideration the vision of the Albanian government on the development and empowerment of young people. At the same time this vision aims at creating opportunities for youth wishing to create new businesses to find the needed assistance and guidance in order to fulfill this particular economic right. On the other hand, the vision takes into consideration the role that the government should play as a regulator of economic life in the country, and as a promoter of new enterprises and youth empowerment.

An important strategic dimension will be the designation of a fiscal package with the motivating and facilitating mechanisms for youngsters who embark upon the creation of enterprises or who have already created them. A matter of priority will be the special support to initiatives of youth living in rural areas and marginalized youth.

The government should encourage NGOs in the creation of youth centers providing for economic, fiscal, legal and employment information. Of special importance will be the conduct of periodic studies on youth employment and emergent trends of labor markets – while giving a special attention to focusing the differences in problems and potentials among young boys and girls. In fact, one of the principal dimensions of the strategic vision will be the

incorporation of a balanced gender perspective in youth employment projects and programs.

Yet another priority will be the establishment of a funding unit for projects aiming at the creation of microbusinesses that are managed by young people, as well as the stimulation of the agricultural sector through the self-employment of young women and the provision of a greater access to resources for girls. A key role will be played by the engagement of the Ministry of Finances to negotiate with second-tier banks for the creation of a special crediting program named “Youth Business” with favorable terms for the young recipients who want to create an enterprise.

Professional training of young people

The strategic vision determines the inclusion of academic and professional training as a critical step forward towards the application of the best practices of European Union member states. A principal goal is the mapping of APT policies that facilitate the achievement an optimal and rational disposal of the available financial and human resources.

One of the priorities of the strategic vision on the professional training of young people shall be the creation of a unified and high quality APT system, which is capable of offering continuous professional qualification for young people and adults alike – that is finely tuned to the needs and potentials for sustainable social and economic development of the country in the framework of regional and European integration. And integral part of the work in this direction will be the reformation of the professional training in the country, the revision of academic programs, the training of teachers and instructors, as well as the equipment of schools and training centers with the needed infrastructure and material basis for the specifics of these programs.

The new law on APT (2002), Second National Conference on APT, the Creation of the National Council of APT (2003), the Strategy of Employment and Professional Training (2003), the National Strategy of Undergraduate Education (August 2004), as well as the 2002 CARDS program of the European Union in support of APT in Albania – have all provided to the creation of an ample space for reforming initiatives of this critical sector for the development of the human capital in the country.

The Ministry of Education and Science shall be working on the inclusion of the Strategy for Professional Training in Undergraduate Education in the revised Strategy of Basic Education. One of

the priorities of the National Youth Strategy 2007-2013 shall be bringing the problematics of youth professional training within the focus of discussions in forums of different levels, with the goal of increasing the level of awareness on the importance of the empowerment of this sector.

Young people as smart consumers

The vision of the strategy is the education of children and youngsters as responsible consumers with the aim of developing attitudes and values, which are consistent and resonant with a critical and environmentally-sensitive approach to social consumption patterns. It is only through the increased level of awareness among Albanian consumers that it is possible to minimize the potential for abuse against them. In a market economy the respect of consumer rights is on par with the respect and furthering of human rights for a democratic society.

Yet another priority shall be the organization of educational activities both as an integral part of formal academic programs, and as part of extra-curricular activities. To this end, an active role must be played by governmental institutions in supporting with financial and technical resources the realization of projects and activities with young people from consumer associations and youth civil society groups.

Another priority in this framework will be the development of innovative awareness-raising campaigns for tackling the unsustainable consumption of uncommendable products and services (such as tobacco, alcohol, gambling etc. and products that are prohibited by law for sale under a certain age). An important part of the awareness raising will be the publication of informational brochures and flyers, as well as the organization of seminars and workshops throughout the whole country. The approach towards the problematics of enabling young people to become smart consumers, must be based on systematic studies on markets for services and products for young people and the attitudes and trends of youngsters towards them. The assessment of such trends shall be a shared concern and commitment of governmental institutions specialized in processing statistical information, academic institutions and private research agencies.

POLICIES

Youth employment

- The Ministry of Labor, Social Issues and Equal Opportunities shall give a priority to the inclusion of

a particular chapter for the encouragement of youth employment in Albania in the preparation and adoption of the National Strategy for Employment. The strategy should contain an assessment of the labor market developments, the education system, and the employment situation for young people in the country. It must also determine concrete objectives and measurable indicator, as well as having a budget and an action plan;

- The Ministry of Tourism, Culture, Youth and Sports in close collaboration with NGOs shall coordinate efforts with the MLSIEO for the organization of training programs for young people. Particular focus will be allotted to the improvement of agricultural production and marketing methods given the specific needs of rural economies in different parts of the country;
- The programs undertaken for the increase of youth employment must address the difficulties, needs and potentials of different categories – such as young women, youth in rural areas, marginalized youngsters, repatriated immigrants, homeless people, young people living in families with a large number of children and minimal economic resources, youth returning from military service etc.;
- In the framework of national programs for employment implemented by MLSIEO, special emphasis shall be put on providing financial support and establishing a close cooperation with NGOs that offer employment opportunities to young people. Given that NGOs do not reap profit from employing young people, this will lower the cost of employment and would strengthen the humanitarian work on the community level;
- The MLSIEO should manage the creation of Youth Employment Information Units as part of a pilot program within 2007. According to an agreement between MTCYS and MLSIEO, the latter and other relevant donors will bear the full financial costs of this program. The success of the pilot program and its potential application on a national level by 2009 shall be dependent upon the involvement of youth NGOs, which have a strong background in the fields of information exchange and informal education.

Brain gain: young people studying abroad

- The preparation and implementation of medium- and long-term policies for the motivation of young people completing their studies abroad to return – with a particular emphasis on developing an

integrative approach that fosters cooperation of governmental institutions, the civil society, international organizations, as well as the business community;

- The cooperation with different organizations which represent the interests of young people studying abroad (such as the AS@N network) in order to facilitate the direct communication and cooperation with public institutions;
- Promoting projects and programs that aim at fostering the ties of Albanian young people studying abroad with their homeland;
- The sustained support for the strengthening of internship programs aiming at the creation of opportunities for young people studying abroad to integrate in national labor markets and to commit to career development in Albania;
- Raising the needed funds for the creation of financial incentives necessary for the achievement of brain gain and brain circulation (e.g. through the offering of high salaries for specific highly-skilled labor positions for young people qualified abroad);
- The realization of systematic studies that provide statistical information on Albanian students abroad, their fields of study and qualification, as well as their goals and aspirations for the future. The creation of a database will be key to the formulation of an approach that is realistic and effective in countering the phenomenon of brain drain;
- The assessment of supply and demand trends in Albanian labor market in order to facilitate the orientation of Albanian youth studying abroad in choosing their fields of study and qualification.

Youth business and self-employment

- The support of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry in fulfilling its commitment to create Information Units on the taxation system, national legislation for the opening of new businesses, as well as market niches and emergent markets where young people can invest;
- The creation of a Special Fund for Youth Businesses and the facilitation of the access to crediting schemes from second-tier banks that provide favorable terms for young loaners. The establishment of this fund will require a close cooperation with international organizations and agencies operating in Albania, such as British Council and USAID;

- The enhancement of capacities of professional training institutions for creating equal opportunities for young girls and boys in rural and urban areas, as a means towards achieving their integration in the labor markets.

Professional training for young people

- The Ministry of Education and Science shall take the necessary steps to ensure the offering of mobile professional training courses for young people in the rural and mountainous areas (especially for young girls and marginalized groups) based on demands from the labor market by 2008;
- The inclusion of professional training programs for young people in response to the challenges of the regional and European economic integration of the country. To this end, governmental institutions and research institutions should undertake systematic studies on labor market developments in order to move from the “partial reparations based on momentary needs” towards “long-term and sustainable solutions” in the context of regional and European integration;
- The creation of a unified system of professional training through the intensive reformation of the sector, the reformulation of the relevant curricula, training of teachers and instructors, as well as the improvement of the material basis needed to boost the quality of the qualifications provided.

Young people as smart consumers

- Organization of awareness-raising campaigns on unrecommended products and services for consumption by young people of a certain age (such as tobacco, alcohol, gambling etc.). In this context, particularly important will be the publication and distribution of informational materials, as well as the organization of seminars and workshops throughout the country;
- The organization of educational extra-curricular activities for the formation of young people as smart consumers through the cooperation of governmental agencies, consumer organizations and youth civil society organizations;
- The revision of the regulating framework for the modalities and ethics of marketing techniques of dangerous products (e.g. tobacco) from relevant businesses, which is in keeping with the reforms

undertaken by the developed member countries of the European Union for the protection of consumers;

- The periodic research from specialized governmental agencies and research institutions on product and service markets targeting young people, as well as trends of youth attitudes towards them.

RESOURCES AND INDICATORS

Youth employment

According to data from INSTAT, the level of employment for young people between 18 and 25 years old varies from 50.4% in 2002 to 41.2% in 2005. The implementation of the National Action Plan for the period 2007-2011 and youth employment initiatives carried out by MLSIE, MES etc. shall contribute to a considerable increase of the currently low employment participation rate of young people.

Brain gain: young people studying abroad

Through informational programs on labor market developments and career opportunities both in the public and private sector in the country, there will be an increased incentives' framework for the return of young Albanians finishing their studies abroad. In order to facilitate the better understanding of opportunities in the country, special emphasis shall be put on the strengthening of internship programs in the public administration, civil society sector, and the business community.

Youth business and self-employment

The creation of youth information centers throughout the country shall effect an increased level of information access on job placement opportunities for young people on a local basis. Given that the level of unemployment among young people was as high as 41.2% in 2005, the implementation of the National Youth Strategy shall aim at a decrease of unemployed youth to the level of 18%.

Young people as smart consumers

The implementation of the wide range of activities and programs of the National Action Plan in close cooperation with ZMK shall enable young people to become well-informed and responsible consumers.

IV. HEALTH AND SOCIAL PROTECTION

1. Reproductive health (measures against HIV/AIDS and STIS)
2. Substance abuse
3. Youth delinquency
4. Violence against children and young people
5. Trafficking and exploitation of young people

SITUATION ANALYSIS

Reproductive health

In Albania young people face the same challenges as the rest of the population insofar as issues of well-being and health care are concerned. However, keeping present the particularities that age involves, the problematic is even bigger for this particular group when facing issues regarding reproduction, such as sexually transmitted diseases (STIs) and HIV/AIDS infections.

Having the largest young population in Europe, our country is in danger of a higher rate of HIV/AIDS infections transmitted, especially with the many social, economic and cultural factors that make the young vulnerable to this infection. These factors include the increase of drug use and especially that injected drugs, the increase of prostitution linked to human trafficking, the high rate of migration, the discrimination or stigmatisation against particular ethnic or social groups such as the Roma, or homosexuals, the increase of the number of young people who abandon school.

According to epidemiology data of reported cases of HIV/AIDS in Albania, more than two thirds of the people affected are aged under 34. Moreover, during the last years there has been a tendency for the number of people affected, aging between 15 and 24 years, to increase. Apart from the small number of

reported cases, data from several research studies argue for an increase of STI cases in Albania. Until the end of 2003, in Albania there were 138 identified cases of syphilis. The Biological and Behaviour Surveillance Study for the year 2005 showed the presence of syphilis and hepatitis B amongst young males who go with other males (MGM), users of injected drugs and the Roma.

Different studies carried out in Albania during the last years (i.e. The Reproductive Health Study 2002; the Fast Evaluations 2002, 2004, etc.) have highlighted a huge lack of knowledge and very little awareness of young people concerning the transmission and prevention of HIV/AIDS and other STIs, especially of those young people that live in rural areas, those with a low level of education, of immigrants, young girls, and youngsters part of groups at risk. The lack of knowledge and low perception of risk that young people demonstrate cause for a low level of protective behaviour and a high level of risky one.

The situation lacks adequate services, or intensive and extensive mediation, the latter being deficient, or completely unavailable. The access and service quality that are offered for Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STI) and Sexual Reproductive Health (SRH) at different medical levels are very poor. The stigma that accompanies the STIs and other health issues concerning reproduction often do not allow for

the young people to seek help or treatment. The present testing programmes and the volunteering consultancy on HIV/AIDS are still unorganised, while the exploitation of the existing network is still low due to stigma and fear of discrimination. Often prevention programmes do not make it to the young people in need, especially those vulnerable or marginalised. Young people keep on having little access to the modern contraceptive methods, condoms, and health education. Moreover, data show that young people do not visit health institutions of primary care so that to benefit from the services on reproduction. The law on the prevention of HIV/AIDS was approved by Parliament in 2002, while in 2003 the Government approved a National Strategy that aimed at keeping Albania as a country with a low HIV/AIDS infection presence.

Substance abuse

Southeastern and Central European countries are going through a high increase in the number of drug users, due to the fact that most countries are in the way of drug transportation from Afghanistan to other Western countries and the USA. According to UNODC, this phenomenon is expanding also because the production of opium and cocaine is increasing.

According to data from the Ministry of Health, in Albania there are about 300,00 drug users, but other sources make up the case for a higher number. The abovementioned figure was calculated in 2000. Moreover, Albania is a country where drugs are produced and trafficked, which consequently causes the number of users to increase each day. Reports from clients that visit the Action Plus centre, show that the age when young people start to use drugs is 13 to 14 years, and most of them have been using drugs for 8 to 10 years. Initially the latter have started using the so called light drugs, only to switch to other "heavy" drugs like heroine, and most of them inject heroine. The majority of drug users use cannabis, though there is an increase in heroine addicts. The drug problem is present all over the country, but it is more acute in the urban areas of Tirana, Shkodra, Vlora, Fier, Lushnja, Korça and Gramsh. Reported deaths due to overdose have been about 40, while the number might be even higher due to imprecise reporting. The use of drugs through vein injections is a major cause to the spread of HIV/AIDS infections, and other sexually transmitted ones. It is estimated that 8,000 to 10,000 users inject, mainly heroine, and use the same syringes increasing the risk of infections. Lately, there has been an increase among the members of the Roma community. The latter, apart from the drug problem faces a high rate

of unemployment, deep poverty and a low access to health services. The Roma also have a low level of information, and inject in very bad hygienic conditions, adding up to the other health risks. Drug users can face serious health consequences and a low social wellbeing. They often do not benefit from public health services due to stigma and discrimination. Negative health consequences due to drug use (especially in cases of those that inject) will increase, while other diseases that have to do with the use of drugs will also spread. Malaria epidemics, tetanus, hepatitis C (HCV), other infections of a parasite nature or bacterial one, together with other diseases, are attributed to drug use. A long series of infective complications that have to do with drug injection have been documented since the earliest reports. The HIV infection has dramatically increased, and has changed perceptions of the groups of drug users.

There are several levels of treatment to the problem where we can mention the preventive one, the treatment of the light drug users and the treatment of heavy drug users. However, the level of coordination amongst the government structures and non-governmental ones against drug use is still low, and must be strengthened so that to intervene in time.

During the last years, many young people are consuming alcohol, both in the developed and underdeveloped countries. The excessive consumption of alcohol creates endless health issues and reduces the life span. Those who consume alcohol risk to get cancer, ulcer, heart and liver diseases. Alcohol also reduces the capability to reason properly, and young people are prone to get involved in criminal activities, and other dangerous behaviour.

One form of behaviour that is greatly damaging many young people and their health is smoking. Around 13,500 people die every day in the world due to smoking, and every cigarette one smokes reduces life with 7 minutes. Young people face a particular risk for consequences take two to three decades to show up. Smoking reduces the immunity of the body, and causes problems with the breathing apparatus – so that to mention few of the many irreparable damages to the organism. According to various studies, there is a great chance for smokers to regularly use alcohol and experiment with other drugs.

Note:

With the term drugs are classified all those substances that have a physical or psychological effect on the person that makes use of them, such as: opiates, hallucinogens, cannabis, stimulants, sedatives, alcohol, cigarettes, and other artificial drugs.

Youth delinquency

The involvement of young people in criminal activities, although remains at very low levels, has been increasing over the past years. Young people aging between 14 and 18 years, or those between 20 and 30 years are the ones at higher risk from involvement in crimes and penal charges, towards young people and other persons.

Youth criminality is linked directly to social exclusion and the impossibility to access education, information, culture, work and the impossibility for wellbeing. Other objective and subjective factors, such as family violence, divorces, social and school violence, the lack of youth criminality prevention programmes, etc., add up to the abovementioned factors. As a matter of fact, criminality is higher in the zones where there is a lack of public order, where there is poverty and migration, or where the law is not respected.

Data show that there is an increase in youth criminality, especially in those peripheries that represent a rigid culture. In many cases, the law violators are young, come from very poor families, have been exposed to violence since childhood, have abandoned school, and/ or the community does not include them in activities for professional and cultural formation, and employment programmes.

The lack of adequate laws for the young minors, alternative measures of punishment and institutions purposely framed for the children and youngsters to suffer the punishment, render the situation even more difficult. One of the most critical dimensions of the problematic rests upon the lack of a proper legal and institutional framework to protect the young people that cannot profit from the special status and treatment provided by international conventions protecting children.

Often the young offenders keep on committing crimes for the institutions where they suffer the punishment and where they are supposed to rehabilitate do not collaborate with social services, schools, justice entities, the family or the community. The consequences of properly addressing the issue of youth criminality create new premises for negative

development in the midst of society and business, and increase the distrust towards the government. To this end intervention at this level can be considered urgent.

Violence against children and young people

One of the most problematic dimensions of the difficult post-communist transitional period in the country is the increase of youth violence and suicide cases, especially among young girls. The violence that is encountered most of the time manifests as physical, psychological/ emotional, and sexual violence. Children and young people remain unprotected and vulnerable given that in our country there does not exist a pertinent law against violence in the family – meanwhile, this also causes for the citizens to assume and perceive that there are no protective measures against this phenomenon.

Another very important aspect of the current situation is the lack of specific studies concerning the problem of violence against young people. Existing studies mostly refer to children and there are no authentic analysis on the causes and consequences that violence causes in the lives of the young people, considered as a wider category. In this context, there is also a lack of precise statistical data on the social economic characteristics of violence relating to gender. Meanwhile, it is known that the groups that risk the most are the children and the young people from poor social strata, as well as young girls.

The violence phenomenon, although not a novelty, remains in secret and the mentality of the family, of the society, and the educated individual in these families and society makes it impossible for intervention and prevention to take place since the first symptoms. Another problem is the fact that many parents and teachers in Albania still think that physical disciplining is part of the education and growing up process of their children. This reflects in the lack of an Ethic Pedagogical Code, which would clearly establish the teachers' ethic towards pupils, completely ending the use of violence.

One of the most problematic aspects of the current situation is not only the insufficiency of awareness campaigns, but also the low level of consulting and rehabilitating services. There still remains much room for improvement from the state instances, as well as from other civil society actors and other international organizations that operate in the country to educate and strengthen the young people, so that they can overcome violence. In this framework, a crucial issue is the legal regulation of the visual and written

work from the media, which offer and reproduce commercial images linked to violence, in the name of an information – intensive society.

Trafficking of children and young people

Human trafficking keeps on remaining a crucial problem for Albania. The transitional period has caused the emergence and the consolidation of organised crime that renders children and young people victims of prostitution, street work, organ transplantation, and other illegal services destined to the developed countries. According to a study carried out in the USA from the State Department, it is calculated that the human trafficking industry achieves 9 billion USD at a global level each year, a fact that demonstrates the existence of powerful forces and demand in the market for these services.

Meanwhile, the demand of organized crime in the country also plays a determinant role. High poverty, internal migration, the loss of social values caused by the transitional period and the exploitation of children and young people for forced work are factors that stimulate young people's trafficking, be them girls or boys. In the meantime, the categories at higher risk of becoming human trafficking victims are made up of young and undefended people, young people from poor social strata, mostly from rural areas, and especially young girls.

The lack of political stability and the problematic economic transition during the 1990s have provided a favourable territory for the development of human trafficking, which also bursted out due to the specific of the transformations in the region. This way, one of the main problems has been the incapability of state organs to face the situation and effectively fight human trafficking, as part of the organised crime in the country. However, the government's approval of a series of laws against trafficking, and the strengthening of the institutions that execute the law have had a positive influence, reducing the number of trafficked persons, and the risk of becoming a victim of human trafficking.

Changes in the Penal Code and the approval of the National Strategy Against Human Trafficking (2001), and the National Strategy Against Child Trafficking (2004), completed with the signature of a series of bilateral and multilateral agreements between Albania and other countries, constitute one more guarantee in the tentative to eliminate this negative phenomenon.

VISION, PRIORITIES AND STRATEGIC GOALS

Reproductive health

It is part of the vision of the Strategy to promote and secure the reproductive health for the youth, containing the spread of HIV/AIDS and other STI infections, unwanted pregnancy and insecure abortions.

In this framework a priority is constituted by the increase of awareness and knowledge and the fight against stances, myths and misunderstandings that exist among the young about different cases that deal with sexuality, and reproductive health. Moreover, another priority is the increase of preventive capacities through the reduction of risky behaviour among the young, the possibility to access and use modern contraceptive methods. Special importance retains the creation of a supportive environment for the young, and their direct involvement in the planning and implementation of youth politics on reproductive health.

The achievement of these strategic goals will require for a multilateral engagement from state institutions, the private medical market, and from NGOs concerned with the young and that operate in the sector to expand, improve and intensify friendly services for the young. Priority will be given to the improvement of health control clinics, especially in the rural areas, guaranteeing free or with reduced prices the basic services especially during adolescence, and the guarantee of sexual equality, as far as the access to medical services is concerned.

Another crucial aspect remains of the Ministry of Education and Science to improve the learning programmes on life, physical wellbeing and reproductive health. Moreover, priority must be given to the inclusion of consulting centres in schools at the first and secondary level, which can offer information on reproductive health, eating, and family planning.

Substance abuse

The vision of the Strategy on drug abuse is based on proper education and protection of the young in order for them to be healthy members of the society, independent from drugs. In particular, the strategic approach includes the prevention of drug use, the rehabilitation of users, and the reduction of damage or risks that have to do with the use of drugs.

The drug problematic must be treated as a priority from the local and central governments aiming at the prevention of its uses, and the fight against organised crime and the drug business. In particular, programmes aiming at reducing damage or treating drug users must be further developed for they are too limited right now. Moreover, state institutions must closely collaborate with actors from the civil society in order to raise awareness among young people, and to be near them for help and treatment.

The identification of, and provision of more human resources and materials so that to handle the drug phenomenon is a necessity. Meanwhile, a need to put to efficient use the available resources and the formulation of realistic policies make the case for the creation of a monitoring system, which would evaluate the level of engagement against drugs. In this framework, it would be important to collect statistical data and to carry out studies on the drug phenomenon in the country.

Youth delinquency

The Vision of the Strategy on the issue of youth criminality gets inspiration from respect for minors' rights and young people in conflict with the law. The fulfilment of the Vision finds it a priority to engage for the improvement of preventive work, the execution of alternative measures of punishment, the reinforcement of law implementation, the creation of a proper infrastructure where minors and young can serve time, and their reintegration in society.

One of the main strategic aims is the creation of a complete legal framework in coherence with Albania's obligations to the Convention on Children Rights and recommendations of the Committee for Children Rights. In this same context, the collaboration between state institutions, the UNICEF and civil society is of crucial importance for the creation of a functional system of justice administration for young people. Priorities include the opening of specific pre-prison settings and other environments where young people can serve sentences, and the execution of alternative penal measures. In the meantime, another priority is the materialization of a system for the prevention of child and youth criminality through the settlement of caring and assistance measures for all the minors who show penal behaviour or tendencies. The Ministry of Tourism, Culture, Youth and Sports in collaboration with the Ministry of Justice will engage in the creation of a legal package for the young.

Violence against children and young people

The Vision of the Strategy on the violence phenomenon is to secure the protection of minors and young people from exposure to violence, abuses and other forms of mistreatment – accompanied by psychological support and consulting for the victims. A critical element of the strategic vision is the direct inclusion of young people in the battle against violence – and their strengthening for the execution of activities that address racism, xenophobia, discrimination and gender based forms of violence that influence their lives.

Another priority for the fulfilment of this vision is the coordination of the public institutions' work with that of the civil society so that to raise awareness, strengthen and mobilise the community to prevent violence toward young people. In this framework, carrying out formal, informal and intercultural activities should be stressed for all actors playing a role in the prevention and treatment of violence and discrimination scene. Working with school directors, teachers, parents and the young people themselves to eliminate all forms of violence at school and out of it is especially important.

Another crucial move would be to gather statistics and carry out studies that aim at the formulation of national and local programmes, as well as to monitor and evaluate undertakings that address violence against girls and boys. An important element of the undertaken programmes will be the participation of young people at local and national levels to address the violence problematic – choosing more effective models in accordance with the groups and their specific needs.

The strategy of the government and other actors in this sector aims at the formation of young people that will be able to show the proper behaviour to protect themselves from violence, to promote a culture against discrimination and gender based violence, and aware of violence in the family. Also, a crucial role will play the continual training of the pedagogical staff and health personnel on physical, mental and health consequences of violence on girls and boys.

Trafficking of children and young people

The Vision of the Strategy is the engagement for the complete elimination of trafficking and exploitation of young people in Albania, and the creation of mechanisms and other necessary forms for the support of trafficking victims during their integration in schools and jobs.

A priority of the strategic vision from governmental entities will be the addressing of causes that increase trafficking and the fight against organized criminal networks. Especially, the economic strengthening and social protection of young people that find themselves at risk because of trafficking will be the strategic aim of a multilateral collaboration of public institutions, actors of civil society, and international organisms that operate in Albania and further in the region. Another priority with which to engage is the organisation of awareness campaigns in collaboration with the media to raise public awareness on trafficking, giving it a special focus to protect girls and young women.

The collection of statistical data and carrying out interdisciplinary studies makes up an important aim to formulate and execute national and local programmes that direct the trafficking phenomenon – so that to achieve optimum use of human resources and available materials.

Another strategic aim with its own priority is the engagement of the Ministry of Education and Science so that to include in the public schools' education programmes information on the dangers of trafficking and its consequences on youth. Meanwhile, the Ministry of Tourism, Culture, Youth and Sports will play a very important role, collaborating with various youth related NGOs, to conceptualise and execute creative forms of informal education on the problematic of trafficking.

POLICIES

Reproductive health

- The improvement of work coordination among the various governmental institutions, international organisations and other civil society actors for the formulation and execution of awareness raising campaigns suitable as far as the cultural aspect is concerned.
- The creation and strengthening of youth organisations that offer services in the reproductive health area, the fight against HIV/AIDS and STIs so that to achieve complete coordination on national and regional planes.
- The support and strengthening of youth centres to turn them into centres that offer a secure environment, supportive and friendly where young people can access counselling, contraceptives, clinical prevention services and treatment. These youth centres are in Tirana and in other regions of the country responsible for them will be the Ministry of Tourism, Culture, Youth, and Sports and the Ministry of Health, supported by donators such as UNFPA and UNICEF.
- The development of awareness media campaigns aiming at the change of social norms, individuals beliefs, and other behaviour from young people that have to do with reproductive health, the prevention of HIV/AIDS and STIs, as well as family planning. It is also of crucial importance to conceptualise awareness programmes that take into account corresponding characteristics of vulnerable categories of young people, such as those that do not attend schools, those in rural isolated areas, the young Roma, the sex workers, IDUs, males that have sexual encounters with other males, and other marginalised groups.
- The formulation and execution of projects that aim at gender equality and the empowerment of women through the increase in information access on family planning, sexual health, health services and alternatives that can be offered to victims of sexual violence.
- The engagement of the Ministry of Education and Science and the Ministry of Health for the improvement of the teaching curricula on reproductive health and sexual education since primary school through high school, as well as the arrangement of health units in schools.
- The emergence and strengthening of peer education groups. Peer education must primarily aim at promoting healthy behaviour such as postponing sexual relations, promoting loyalty, reducing sexual partners, effectively communicating with partners, increasing the use of preservatives, promoting contraceptive methods, increasing the demand for health care, the improvement of risk perceptions, the increase of different reproductive health services, as well as family planning.
- The organisation of pilot programmes for the promotion of a consistent use of condoms by boys through the installation of distribution machines near schools.
- Trainings of medical personnel, as well as of other social workers so that to offer friendly services for young people in the areas of reproductive health and family planning.
- The creation of monitoring mechanisms that allow the evaluation of reproductive health, HIV/AIDS

and STIs among young people, and the evaluation of the efficacy of undertaken programmes at national and regional levels aiming at the continuous improvement of the approach to the huge problematic of reproductive health and family planning.

- The collection of statistical data with the aim of creating a complete database on youngsters reproductive health and carrying out studies that aim at enhancing knowledge on protection and on risks.

Substance abuse

- The promotion of abuse prevention through educative school programmes through the engagement of the Ministry of Education and Science for the involvement of the drug problematic in high schools.
- Carrying out training courses and distributing informative material for students, teachers, parents and social workers so that to raise their capabilities to identify and diagnostic abuse with substances since early stages.
- The creation near high schools of friendly environments for the young people in general and for those with drugs problems only, for the education on drug abuse and the support of users to take personal proper decisions for a “life without drugs.”
- The engagement of media on raising awareness for the wide public and especially for young people on drugs, and the training of journalists to achieve greater capabilities for the realisation of effective campaigns that transmit meaningful and positive messages for vulnerable groups.
- The support of youth related NGOs to realise programmes to educate and provide individual counselling to encourage the integration of youngsters in the community, and to have a healthy lifestyle, as well as to raise awareness on the negative effects of drug use.
- The organisation of awareness campaigns that aim at reducing the number of people that inject drugs, stopping/ reducing the reuse of syringes, the increase of morns and syringes disinfestations, as well as the increase of preservative use and other contraceptive methods.
- The support of spreading substitute therapies (i.e. with methadone) or other rehabilitating therapies without medicaments in other regions of the

country where services for users almost lack completely.

- Ensuring full observance of human rights for drug users through protection from discrimination, and protection of privacy. Drug users are citizens with full rights and specific health conditions, and not irresponsible criminals.
- The creation of monitoring mechanisms, collection of statistical data on the situation of substance use for boys and girls, as well as the support of research studies on the problematic of drug use aiming at the continual improvement of undertaken programs at both national and regional levels.

Youth delinquency

- The Ministry of Tourism, Culture, Youth and Sports will collaborate with the Ministry of Justice on the compilation and the approval of the Legal Reform Package on Minors, through an integrative approach which will consider the stances of interest groups, or others affected by this package
- The preparation of the Code on Justice on Minors from the Ministry of Justice in full correspondence with the Convention on Children Rights with the aim of creating stable basis for the protection of the rights of children and young people in the country.
- The preparation of a legal package on Alternative Measures for Minors and Young People through the discussion of all social implicated partners, under the joint supervision of the Ministry of Justice and UNICEF within 2007. The aim of the legal package will be the increase of chances to rehabilitate and the execution of rehabilitating rights in all appropriate cases, as well as the minimisation of factors that negatively influence young people.
- The execution from the Ministry of Education and Science of programs that stimulate tolerance, understanding, and conflict solution. These undertakings will be directed by an approach that will consider schools like community centres, where education programmes, awareness and prevention campaigns will be offered.
- The undertaking of national campaigns both informational and educative that aim at raising awareness of youngsters on the personal and social aspects of violence in the family, schools, community and society, as well as the negative consequences of involvement in penal activities. The organisation of these awareness campaigns will be realised through the multilateral

engagement among the Ministry of Interior Affairs, the Ministry of Tourism, Culture, Youth and Sports, and the Ministry of Education and Science, as well as the collaboration with youth related NGOs.

- The building of a prevention system for youth criminality, which will aim at taking measures to provide assistance and care for all the minors that display a tendency to penal behaviour, as well as the joint commitment of the Ministry of Interior Affairs, the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Education and Science, MLSIEO.

Violence against children and young people

- Carrying out awareness raising activities for the prevention of violence toward minors and young people, through their direct involvement in the formulation and organization of these initiatives. Special attention must be paid to raising awareness among young women and children with respect to their rights.
- Raising awareness and informing media on the education of young people with anti-violence messages that will reflect tolerance and will encourage gender equality so that to eliminate gender based violence.
- Support for formal and informal activities of peer education taking into account the very important role that peer influence plays is also crucial. In this framework, support must be granted to the creation of community programmes for children and youngsters where they can gather and talk about their problems as well as treating peaceful solutions for conflicts.
- The organisation of training programmes aiming at increasing the level of awareness of police workers, doctors, social workers and of the whole community on the problems caused by violence on young people.
- The creation of interdisciplinary groups for the treatment and medical, psychological and social rehabilitation for all kinds of victims, as well as the execution of programmes in educative institutions for the social and medical support of children and young victims of violence.
- The realisation of monitoring and evaluation with the participation of young people themselves aiming at the improvement of addressing corresponding needs, getting feedback on existing

services, and changing strategies for prevention and treatment of the violence problem.

Trafficking of children and young people

- The inclusion from the Ministry of Education and Science of an informative programme on the dangers of trafficking and its consequences in high school and university textbooks within 2007. to this reason, texts like Civic Education must be reviewed in order to include concepts and issues such as children's and young people's rights, the exploitation of human beings, etc.
- Annual organization from the Ministry of Tourism, Culture, Youth and Sports of a national awareness campaign on the risks of trafficking through television spots, and the distribution of informational pamphlets. Meanwhile, a creative approach toward the conceptualisation of undertaken campaigns would be the organisation of a National Competition with artistic works from high school students on the thematic of human beings trafficking.
- The engagement of the Ministry of Interior Affairs for the creation of 12 Regional Units for Children and Young People in every Police District Directory, beginning in 2007. The main aim of these units will be crime prosecution toward children and young people (through the fast identification of trafficking and exploitation cases), providing on-time defence for the victims, as well as a professional pursuit of the legal process. On the other hand, these Units will be playing a major role in the prevention process, and during the legal pursuit of cases of young people involved in crimes (drugs, sexual crimes, crimes against people). As far as the last issue is concerned there exist agreements with the Ministry of Interior Affairs.

RESOURCES AND INDICATORS

Reproductive health

The awareness of young people on issues of reproductive health and sexual education will be raised in collaborations with the Ministry of Health, foundations, teachers, and youth NGOs. The increase in number of the centres that carry out HIV/AIDS tests will also be realised for them to play the role of testing and consulting centres.

Through the collaboration with youth centres the possibility to give away free contraceptives and gynaecologic services to young people will also materialise.

The use of contraceptives – MICS 2005

The percentage of girls aging from 15 to 19 that are married or lived with their partner and use one contraceptive method: 35%. The percentage of girls aging from 20 to 24 that are married or lived with their partner and use one contraceptive method: 425%

Substance abuse

Through activities and trainings like the materialization of counselling centres to treat young users, trainings for teachers, the inclusion of psychologists and social workers in schools and communities of rural areas, painting expositions, theatre plays focusing on the subject, distribution of promotional material, informative seminars, debates on TV, summer schools, etc., will aim at the reduction of the number of young people that use drugs and at the prevention of use from even younger ages.

Youth delinquency

Awareness, prevention of violence towards minors and young people will be realised through several activities such as awareness campaigns on the rights of the young. Given that there are no centres for the treatment of young victims that have been abused in the 2006 – 2007 period a training centre will open, where a multidisciplinary equip will operate, and will aim at reducing and preventing the number of violence victims.

Carrying out a study to increase knowledge on violence in rural and urban areas that will deal with victims, parents, teachers and institutions is also of great importance.

Trafficking of children and young people

Meetings, educative seminars, the distribution of promotional materials, summer courses for the young people at risk, which will get informed on trafficking and risks related to it and will also be provided the chance to have fun, are some of the undertakings that will serve as an awareness campaign against young people's trafficking. The number of educative seminars in rural areas and legal, psycho-social, and medical trainings in collaboration with the Ministry of Work, Social Affairs and Equal Chances.

V. YOUTH RECREATION AND FREE TIME

1. STUDENT'S IDENTITY CARDS
2. FREE TIME, SPORTS and CULTURE
3. ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION and ACTION
4. YOUTH and TOURISM IN ALBANIA

SITUATION ANALYSIS

Student's identity cards

The high prices of services and products for young consumers represent financial impediments to youth development. The current situation for youth in Albania is starkly different from that in developed European countries, where youngsters benefit from multiple economic advantages – partly as a result of strategic inter-sectorial policies. In this context, it should be noted that European models of student identity cards such as EURO <26 and ISIC comprise excellent frameworks for the sustainable supply of services with reduced prices for young people. Contrary to the integrated markets of the European Union, the Albanian market does not create advantages addressing the economic needs of young people – even though the latter hold a significant consumer potential. In addition, the lack of financial support (as services and products accessed through student ID cards) comprises one of the major causes leading to the low level of youth initiatives. Yet another impeding element is the presence of underdeveloped tourist markets that do not provide for lowered prices for students – who, as a result, are directly affected in their ability to partake in these markets as a particular category of consumers. Lastly, it is worth mentioning that Albania is the only country in Europe lacking youth hostels.

Free time, sports and culture

Another crucial aspect of the political, economic

and socio-cultural transition in the country after the collapse of the totalitarian communist regime is the usurpation and the progressive degradation of public space at the disposal of young people. In particular, the privatization process was characterised by the dominance of narrow interests and abuse of public spaces for individual gain.

Thus during the 1990s, Albania experienced a progressive appropriation of green areas and youth recreation spaces – such as youth centres, community libraries, parks and playgrounds.

The transformation of these public spaces into private holdings brought about a dramatic reduction of green areas through a massive use of concrete, as well as the disappearance of the majority of places where children and young people could play games, practice sports or simply pass their free time. Indeed most these public places were transformed into cafés, pool bars, or casinos – thus imposing on younger generations new forms of socialization, which provide a partial explanation for the presence of apathy, lack of interest in education, drug use, as well as youth criminality.

It is worth mentioning that a decisive role in these negative developments was played by the lack of a clear vision and an authentic interest preserve and develop spaces for youth recreation. Hence, the present situation can be understood as a combination

of multiple factors – such as corruption and abuses from state entities at different levels, interests of business actors for individual profits, as well as massive and intensive urbanization processes unfolding in a regulatory vacuum.

Alongside these factors, the lack of alternatives for youth recreation is also linked to the limited financial and human resources at young people's disposal from state institutions. In this context, it is worth mentioning that a key role in mitigating the situation has been played by the civil society in general and youth NGOs in particular – whose various projects and programs have mainly been supported by international organizations operating in Albania and in small part by the private sector.

Environmental education and action

One of the most problematic aspects of the transition post 1990s period is the damage done to the national natural resources and the continuous degradation of both rural and urban areas. Massive illegal exploitation of environmental resources has greatly damaged local ecosystems and economies. Meanwhile, the usurpation of green areas in urban centres and the fragmentation of agricultural land in rural areas have brought about a reduction of the natural capital and a decline in the quality of the environment. Critical elements to these phenomena comprise the decreased efficiency in utilizing agricultural lands, increased pollution of surface and underground waters, loss of biodiversity, as well as deforestation and land erosion. Negative effects of human actions are also particularly tangible in the uncontrolled interventions in the existing infrastructure (e.g. both drinkable water and sewage systems), the maladministration of urban waste, and the alarming levels of air pollution due to the drastic augmentation of private transportation.

Young people make up an especially vulnerable category from these problematic environmental developments during the transition period. In fact, environmental degradation has brought about a cutback in the quality of life and a disturbing increase in health risks. Lifestyles of young people living in the peripheries of urban centres have also been adversely affected by environmental degradation – including drastic air pollution, limited access to controlled and qualitative drinking water, lack of green areas, as well as poor waste management. In this context, it is worth mentioning that besides the decreased quality of life, the economic predicament comprises a salient dimension of the links between the environment and sustainable development. Thus the lack of strategic approaches to reducing the current alarming levels of pollution in both urban and

rural areas implicate huge costs for the country's future economy – when the Albanian society will have to provide for a wide range of health services in treating emergent health problems among children and young people.

In this context, it should be noted that environmental degradation phenomena are closely related to the fact that local and central institutions are not properly equipped with the human and financial resources needed for effective environmental management. Apart from improvements achieved during the past few years, the legal and regulatory frameworks for accessing and utilizing environmental resources are still out of tune with the principles and practices of sustainable development.

Youth and tourism in Albania

Albania is a beautiful and charming country. It possesses a wide range of historical, cultural and environmental attractions that appeal to the interests of international tourists. In December 2005 the Ministry of Tourism, Culture, Youth and Sports declared the Strategy for Environmental and Cultural Tourism, which aims at transforming Albania into a tourist destination in the region by exploiting the wide range of natural and historical attractions of the country.

Every tourist attraction is made up of a range of distinguishable factors such as lifestyles, historical heritage, cultural life, landscapes, natural resources and biodiversity – which, in turn, form the basis for the sustainable development of a tourist destination. In this context, it is important that young people be considered as potentially active promoters of initiatives and activities enhancing the tourism industry in the country – including cultural, historical and environmental tourism. Furthermore, the support of youth exchange activities (such as seminars, excursions, visits to museums or historical locations etc.) promoting “the discovery” of Albania will not only create opportunities for finding out about each other's values and traditions, but it will also serve the improvement of the country's image.

VISION, PRIORITIES AND STRATEGIC GOALS

Student's identity cards

The socio-economic characteristics of younger generations and the significance of greater access to youth recreational activities necessitate the development of special advantages and services for this particular category through the Student Card. Another strategic aim shall be the close cooperation of state institutions, non-governmental organizations and the private sector for the creation of the needed legal and financial infrastructure for the enhancement of the socio-economic status of younger generations – through the development of youth and student cards in keeping with the international standards sustained by EURO<26, ISIC etc. Furthermore, governmental institutions shall encourage the creation of economic and accommodation facilities for young people.

Free time, sports and culture

The vision of the strategy values free time activities as particularly important for the psychological, cognitive and physical development of younger generations. Thus creative games and sports activities, participation in artistic and cultural events, as well as engagement in community service programs comprise socializing activities that nurture civic values among youth. Meanwhile participation in recreative activities plays a very important role in keeping young people away from risky behaviors – as they are key to the cultivation of personal values and principles such as trust, respect, integrity and self-assessment, and to the promotion of positive concepts and social attitudes such as tolerance and team work.

In this context, a priority shall be given to the drafting and implementation of clear policies supporting the development of the necessary spaces and conditions for youth recreative activities – with the aim of securing a wide access for both young boys and girls. Strategic goals in this direction shall be the reappropriation of public spaces usurped during the transition period and the creation of youth centers and community libraries throughout the country.

A matter of priority shall also be the integration of recreation needs of young people in the processes of urban and rural planning. To this end, local and central governmental institutions shall support non-governmental organizations with financial and technical resources needed for recreative projects and programs with a wide youth participation level.

Environmental education and action

The vision of the strategy on environmental education and action focuses on integrating principles and practices of sustainable development into policies and programs targeting young people. In particular, the engagement of youth in protecting and developing environmental resources is considered as fundamental to the improvement of the quality of life and the efficient management of the natural capital in the country.

At the heart of the strategic vision there lies the aim of promoting the culture of sustainable development among younger generations by enhancing environmental education and action. To this end, of critical importance shall be the inclusion of environmental education as an integral part of the academic programs in order to nurture environmental awareness and sensitivity among young people. Another strategic goal shall be the direct involvement of youngsters in the drafting and implementation of environmental policies and programs – with the aim of guaranteeing equal access to private property and natural resources for young boys and girls.

The problematics of sustainable development demands the commitment and concerted action of the different governmental institutions on the central and local levels, civil society groups and international organizations, as well as the business community. The monitoring of the environmental situation in the country and of the assessment of project and programs carried out in this sector will necessitate the creation of an environmental database, as well as the conduct of systematic studies.

YOUTH and TOURISM in ALBANIA

The vision of the strategy is based upon the appreciation of youth recreative activities as particularly important to the development of the tourism industry in Albania. Youth activities, artistic and cultural events, youth exchange programs, as well as service community contributions by young people – are all considered as socializing activities that promote a better understanding of the wealth of national resources.

To this end, the strategy aims at enabling young people in contributing to the future developmental potential of the country through the promotion of Albania's natural and cultural heritage. Given that young people tend to combine different activities during their visits, different projects and activities shall strive at transforming important natural and archeological destinations (such as Butrint in Saranda, Bylysh in Ballsh, and Apollonia in Fier etc.)

into attractive destinations for young European travelers.

The protection tourist destination sites from the impact of visitors and the development of ecotourism demand environmental and social responsibility from visitors themselves, local communities, and importantly from young people engaged in these activities.

A priority shall be the creation of the needed opportunities for the articulation of the diverse Albanian cultural landscape – and in particular the customs and traditions of different regions in the country. Furthermore, a particular emphasis shall be put on the development of the infrastructure needed for the sustained offering of youth activities, alpine sports, scuba diving, fishing, archeological camps etc. Through different annual sportive events focusing on alternative sports, youngsters from Europe and the Balkan region shall have the opportunity to explore and experience the beauty of the Albanian nature.

POLICIES

Student's identity cards

- The Ministry of Tourism, Culture, Youth and Sports in close collaboration with other ministerial agencies shall support the development and distribution of the student identity card in keeping with the EURO<26 and ISIC standards. Youth organizations shall be encouraged to collaborate with international youth organizations such as EYCA<26 and ISIC in implementing the relevant standards;
- MTCYS in cooperation with the Ministry of Transport, Telecommunications and Public Works shall encourage the licensing and monitoring of practices that offer economic advantages for youth travel and tourism;
- Supporting the creation of youth hostels partly through possible governmental subsidies in keeping with the best European experiences in this field.

Environmental education and action

- The improvement of the legal and regulatory framework for the protection and development of the environment through inter-sectorial coordination and direct engagement of young people;
- The achievement of effective coordination among central and local state institutions, international

organizations and youth NGOs operating in this sector – with the goal of involving local communities in the drafting and implementation of policies and programs focusing on sustainable development;

- The integration of environmental education in all levels of the academic system, as well as the training of teachers on the problematic of sustainable development;
- Providing technical and financial assistance for youth organizations providing informal education and opportunities for the direct engagement of young people in projects focusing on the protection and development of environmental resources;
- The realization of awareness-raising campaigns promoting civic responsibility for the protection and development of the environment through the dissemination of informative publications on national and global environmental issues;
- The training of journalists and the establishment of a close collaboration with electronic and printed media – with the goal of improving their role in the treatment of environmental issues and the nurturing of the culture on sustainable development;
- The promotion and support of programs that create opportunities for young people to contribute to the regeneration of forests and green urban areas through the planting of trees;
- Drafting and implementing pilot programs on recycling through the close cooperation of academic institutions and the direct engagement of young people – with the aim of extending successful projects to other communities;
- Systematic gathering of data on environmental issues in the country and the conduct of studies on sustainable development – with the aim of creating a national environmental database and allowing for the continuous improvement of projects and program on sustainable development.

Youth and tourism in albania

- Promoting the appreciation of the distinct values of the Albanian cultural and natural heritage among younger generations;
- Organizing youth festivals focusing on the diversity of songs and the wealth of national traditions;
- Organizing yearly activities focusing on alternative

sports and the exploration of Albanian nature
– with the participation of young people from the
Balkans region and Europe;

- Improving Albania's image in the international public opinion through different youth initiatives;
- Creating youth hostels in locations of historical, cultural or natural interest with the aim of promoting youth tourism.
- Encouraging youth organizations focusing on recreational activities;
- Encouraging and facilitating youth volunteer work in providing tourism-oriented services and protecting the environment;
- Promoting the appreciation of the natural and cultural heritage as potential for cultural tourism and ecotourism among young people.

VI. ALBANIAN YOUTH: FUTURE EUROPEAN CITIZENS

1. CIVIC EDUCATION and DEMOCRACY
2. ROLE of YOUTH in PROMOTING HUMAN RIGHTS
3. YOUTH VOLUNTEERISM
4. INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY and INTERNET
5. FREEDOM of MOVEMENT ACROSS EUROPE

SITUATION ANALYSIS

Civic education and democracy

Education for a democratic society is a complex issue that is directly linked to the processes of political, socio-economic and cultural transformation of the Albanian society towards the standards of developed European countries. Behavior that is both acceptable and socializing, and that contributes to the observance of human rights and the strengthening democratic governance is hardly found even in close micro-social environments, including the family. Among the many negative factors affecting the consolidation of civic engagement, it is worth mentioning the massive rural-to-urban population movements, emergent cultural tensions, persisting high levels of unemployment, demands and ambitions for a career, as well as the high number of divorces and immigrant parents.

Another salient characteristic of the transition period has been the low level of cooperation among policy makers, teachers, parents, the community and civil society groups on civic education programs. In this context, it is important to notice that there has been a lack of support for the development of equal opportunities in accessing civic education programs and activities for young boys and girls.

Yet other significant factors include the lack of continuity and expansion of pilot projects, as well

as the lack of systematic monitoring of implemented activities. Furthermore, the weakening of the state qualification system for those who teach democratic citizenship has also negatively affected the development of civic education programs. Meanwhile, support from local governance entities to academic institutions has been completely absent. Lastly, it is worth mentioning that the insufficient representation and participation of Student Government bodies in campus and community life comprises another persisting problem for the development of a culture of civic engagement among younger generations.

Role of youth in promoting human rights

The Albanian society is not properly informed neither on human rights in general, nor on the children's rights in particular. Critically linked to the communist legacy, the lack of a culture of human rights implicates that while Albanian young people are aware of their obligations in the family, school and community – they are not aware and demanding of the rights that the law guarantees them. However, it should be noted that persistent violations of human and children's rights occur not only as consequence

to the lack of information, but also oftentimes it is a consequence of particular social and economic factors.

While human right violations are more visible during the arrest and imprisonment time, it should be emphasized that significant progress has been done in this area during last couple of years.

Young people often face violations of human rights even in public institutions. It is worth mentioning here that such violations often occur within educational institutions, which are considered to be the places where young people learn and nurture an awareness and sensitivity towards the respect of human rights. While considerable improvements have been made, there remains a tremendous work to be done towards affecting a change in the general perception of the Albanian society concerning the human rights. Facts have shown that young people find it easier to change and adapt when compared to older ones. To these reasons, sustainable observance of human rights demands that young people become active promoters of promote human rights.

Youth volunteerism

Volunteering in Albania during the transition years has particularly suffered from the negative legacy of the so-called “forced volunteerism” during the communist period. The modification of this negative perception comprises one of the most critical dimensions of engagements of organizations working towards the creation of a culture of civic participation through the direct involvement of young people on a completely volunteering basis. In point of fact, civil society groups have provided a valuable contribution through the organization of a wide range of volunteering activities – whose economic and social value, if calculated in quantitative terms, would impress the general public opinion on the values of volunteering in Albania.

However, the present situation is characterized not only by a low level of youth participation in volunteer activities, but also by the lack of information providing for a sense of orientation to youngsters wishing to voluntarily contribute their time and energy. Meanwhile the capacities of youth NGOs in exploiting the existing potential among youth to offer community services on a volunteer basis and the financial and logistical available in this sector fall far below the optimal levels.

Another problematic aspect for the consolidation of a volunteer culture among younger generations relates to the lack of a collaborative climate

between volunteer youth groups and the low level of international exchange volunteer programs.

Information technology and internet

Internet in Albania is a novel and continuously expanding reality. By the end of the 1990s, the first internet lines were introduced in Albania thanks to the support provided by foreign organizations. Some of the first Albanian web sites were launched in 2000 (www.albasoul.com, www.shqipëria.com etc.) while three years later the first portal project aimed at the construction of a youth portal (www.syri.org) and a network for Tirana’s high schools (www.shkollat.net) were developed. These innovations brought about a revolution in the information and communication networks among young people.

Even though Albania has made a fair progress towards increasing Internet penetration, the number of young people accessing the Internet is still very small when compared to Western countries. The government’s commitment to provide every classroom with Internet connection is going to radically change the current situation by creating opportunities for larger shares of the population to access the Internet.

At present there is plenty of room for improvement as far as technology use and online services are concerned. Institutions are still not able to offer online services. The low number of youth organizations and academic institutions having websites is still small – and yet even smaller is the number of those effectively utilizing these online portals to communicate and interact with young online visitors.

At present in many countries of the world young people have a chance to educate themselves and further qualify through the use of internet, a situation which is very far from the Albanian one. Even those people that have Internet access at home often find the necessary information in foreign websites, because Albanian ones oftentimes contain uncontrolled and useless information.

VISION, PRIORITIES AND POLICIES

Civic education and democracy

The strategic vision considers education on democratic citizenship as fundamental to the acquisition of the knowledge and skills that are

necessary for active participation as informed and responsible citizens. Civic education plays a key role in the consolidation of a democratic society through the multidimensional effects it has on younger generations – such as the promotion of dialogue and critical thinking, conflict resolution through consensus and tolerance, as well as the increased awareness for individual responsibilities and norms of behavior in community life.

To this end, of critical import shall be assisting young people to absorb the fundamental values of democratic citizenship and enabling them to develop their skills and attitudes necessary for the further development of these fundamental values – and the overcoming of false authority, conformism and prejudice, as well as mechanisms that promote and legitimize racism, ethnocentrism and other forms of discrimination and social injustice.

In this context, a strategic goal shall be the fostering of cooperation among state institutions on different levels, academic institutions and the community in order to efficiently support youth participation in community life.

A particular importance shall be given to the strengthening of the status and role played by Student Government structures and youth NGOs in the drafting and implementation of projects on local, regional and national levels – which provide equal opportunities for the civic education and engagement of young boys and girls. In particular, the institutionalization of Student Government structures shall be considered as a positive step towards the democratization of academic and campus life, and the creation of a sustainable partnership in achieving a wide and effective participation of young people in decision-making and community life.

Role of youth in promoting human rights

Human rights education constitutes a fundamental right. Increased access by young people and improved information in the field of human rights shall be strategic priorities of the policies carried out by state institutions, civil society groups and youth organizations. An inclusive and integrative approach shall be key to the engagement of young people of different ages and backgrounds not only in demanding the respect of their right, but also in their direct contribution in the practical realization of these rights.

Youth education shall strive not only to increase the level of knowledge about human rights, but also the development of capacities among youth for demanding and defending the respect of their rights. State institutions on central and local levels shall take legal, administrative and technical steps aiming at

the inclusion of youth in the process of education and protection of human rights in general and the rights of the child in particular. They should enable the active involvement of young people in decision-making processes, in the implementation, monitoring, as well as continuous improvement of activities on youth education with the principles and practice of human rights.

The vision of the strategy considers the provision and promotion of guarantees for the respect of human rights as inalienable rights. To this end, particular support shall be given to youth organizations operating in the human rights sector, young lawyers and youth activists undertaking initiatives promoting the respect and monitoring of human rights.

The assessment of the present conditions and the mapping of policies aiming at the improvement of the current situation shall be principal objectives of this strategy. The implementation of alternative policies, innovative ideas and successful international experiences will bring about an increased level of awareness among youth about their rights. Of critical import shall be the application of a wide range of contemporary methods with the goal of reaching out to every young person.

A primary objective shall be the development of an infrastructure for taking legal action against case of human rights abuses. Yet another strategic goal shall be the education of young people with the principles of the rule of law and with an understanding of the fundamental role that respect of human rights plays in the achievement of sustainable European standards.

Youth volunteerism

The strategic vision considers volunteering as a critical component of the education of young people as informed and engaged citizens contributing to the different communities where they live and work.

A priority for the Albanian government shall be the close collaboration with youth NGOs and the business community – as well as obtaining technical assistance from international organizations and in particular SNV – for the drafting and implementation of clear policies for the promotion of the principles and practice of volunteer work among youth. In this context, strategic goals of critical importance shall be the development of a legal framework for volunteerism, the definition of the volunteer status, the realization of projects for increased efficiency in the management of volunteer contributions, as well as the fostering of public awareness on the value of volunteer work.

A field of priority for state institutions shall be the commitment to provide orientation and assistance to volunteer for providing services for special groups in need – such as children living in poor conditions, pensioners, disabled people, women living in institutions (rehabilitation centers, prisons) etc. In this context, a strategic goal of critical importance shall be providing technical and financial assistance to NGOs that mobilize young people in contributing with services on a volunteer basis – with the aim of making strengthening the organizational and managerial capacities of these organizations.

Information technology and internet

The vision of the strategy aims at the development of communication technologies that are widely and effectively accessible by young people throughout the country. A priority shall be given to the utilization of online communication technologies for offering services and information for young people. The drafting and implementation of policies that promote online communication or increase opportunities for young people to access the internet comprise key objectives for the government. To this end, internet penetration in every classroom is the greatest challenge for the transformation of the current patterns of internet access and the bridging of the digital divide with the developed Western European countries.

Other priorities include the improvement of standards and the development of capacities necessary for providing online services targeting young people, as well as the utilization of information technology for offering education and qualification programs. Yet another priority shall be the enhancement of online communication among young people in general and youth organizations in particular – for an improved and more efficient cooperation of young people on national, regional and international levels.

POLICIES

Civic education and democracy

- Strengthening the collaboration among young people, the community, parents, and youth NGOs in developing educational programs for democratic citizenship and active participation in community life;
- The empowerment of Student Government structures as autonomous bodies that contribute to the democratization of campus life and the

development of community activities – through the clear designation of the status of Student Government in the decision-making processes and the continuous technical and financial support needed for the development and strengthening of organizational capacities;

- The revision of textbooks on Civic Education courses aiming at an improvement of the didactic material and the creation of practical approaches towards the promotion of activities on democratic civic education;
- Training teachers and trainers in order to enhance the knowledge and qualifications required in the field of civic education;
- Carrying out awareness-raising and informational campaigns at local, regional and national levels, which allow young people to know the basic values of democratic citizenship;
- The realization of monitoring and periodical evaluations to measure the impact of activities and projects undertaken in the area of civic education

Role of youth in promoting human rights

- The commitment of state institutions to take measures of legal, administrative and technical character at national and local levels for an effective inclusion of young people in the education and the protection of human rights in general and children's rights in particular;
- The collaboration of the Ministry of Education and Science and youth-related NGOs in order to conceptualize and execute better-suited methods and forms for textbook materials on human rights education for young people;
- The coordination of work between academic institutions and organizations focusing on human rights for an increased access of information on human rights through creative and attractive publications and activities targeting youngsters;

Policies

- The organization of information and awareness-raising campaigns for young people;
- The establishment of a web site to promote human rights and to denounce violations of the latter;
- The establishment of a 0800 free phone number in order to denounce cases of human rights violations from public institutions;
- The development of close cooperation among youth organizations, national and international institutions, and young lawyers focused on the rights of young people and children;

- The conduct of research and systematic studies that will serve to measure the knowledge and consequent respect of these rights from public institutions;
- The organization of roundtables and workshops in order to present the results of the studies conducted and to discuss the necessary steps that need to be undertaken in order to address the identified problems and potentials;
- The collaboration with youth newspapers (such as local or national school journals), websites for young people and radio stations to promote the Convention on the Rights of the Child in particular and human rights in general, and to raise awareness on the need to respect these basic rights.

Youth volunteerism

- The organization of awareness campaigns on the social importance of volunteer contributions in order to promote a culture of civic engagement among young people. To this end, particular focus shall be given to educating the community and changing the present mentality in order to boost the public perception on volunteering;
- The engagement of state institutions and youth NGOs for the preparation, approval and recognizing the status of volunteers;
- The creation of a Volunteering Card in order to secure the necessary incentives young people wishing to volunteer and to facilitate access to particular services (such free local and national transport, health insurance in case of work incidents, and reduced prices for artistic and cultural events);
- The mapping and the implementation of integrating policies aiming at the improvement and strengthening of capacities to better exploit existing potentials in the community and to provide a wider range of volunteer services;
- The provision of technical and financial assistance for NGOs focusing on youth volunteer work in order to enhance their managerial and organizational capacities – with the aim of increasing of the number of active volunteers and improving the quality of the services provided;
- The promotion of national, regional and worldwide volunteer exchange programs for young people through the close collaboration of state authorities, international organizations and actors of civil society operating in this area;
- Providing for a sense of orientation for young people wishing to volunteer through increased information on possibilities for volunteer contribution, as well as the strengthening of collaborations and information exchange among institutions and organizations focusing on youth volunteer work;
- The conduct of systematic studies and the development of an integrated national database in order to provide continuous orientation to actors operating in the volunteer sector and to improve projects and programs undertaken in the framework of consolidating youth volunteerism.

Information technology and internet

- The establishment of a national network of high school and university websites;
- The support and strengthening of youth centers focusing on providing access to information and communication technologies for young people;
- The development of a youth website providing special services for young people in need (online counseling, information etc.);
- The establishment of a national portal for youth organizations targeting not only young people, but also the donor community and third parties – with the aim of facilitating information exchange and the development of collaborative networks;
- The development of a youth portal providing for the continuous education of young people, the supply of online services, exchange of experiences, creation of partnerships, the promotion of Albanian tourism and culture etc.;
- The establishment of a Youth Communication Center, which will promote and support the creation of the information and communication infrastructure necessary for effective and wide internet access by young people.

RESOURCES AND INDICATORS

Student's identity cards

Distribution of student ID cards to all university students throughout the country. Consequently, students will enjoy a wide range of economic, social and cultural benefits that will improve their living standards.

Free time, sports and culture

The increased of the number of young people playing sports or engaging in cultural activities that will be rendered possible thanks to the cooperation of the Ministry of Tourism, Culture, Youth and Sports with youth NGOs and other institutions. Activities will take place not only in cities that are well known for the love of art (such as Korça and Vlora), but also those other cities where cultural and artistic life is poor.

Education and environmental action

The increase in the number of trainings and seminars focusing on environmental action and the importance of environmental awareness for healthier lifestyles among younger generations.

Information technology and internet

During the 2007- 2011 period, programs aiming at providing internet access in every high school in Albania will introduce young people to the latest information on the country and developments around the world.

VII. PRIORITIES FOR THE NATIONAL YOUTH STRATEGY

- The establishment and the strengthening of capacities of youth organizations and structures;
- The promotion of increased participation of young people in public life and decision-making process;
- The engagement of youth participation in the fight against corruption;
- The support of increased national, regional and international collaborations;
- The integration of Albanian students that live and work abroad;
- The stimulation and promotion of youth volunteerism in the country;
- The enhancement of civic education for young people;
- The promotion of increased opportunities for employment information for young people;
- The support of youth businesses and the stimulation of self-employment among youngsters;
- The enhancement of professional education programs for young people;
- The education of young people as smart consumers;
- The boosting of recreational opportunities for Albanian youth;
- The support of inclusive recreational activities for marginalized groups of young people (working children, victims of trafficking, the Roma, Egyptians, victims of violence, young people with social and financial problems, orphans etc.);
- The support of environmental education and action for young people;
- The prevention of substance abuse and the treatment of young drug users;
- The awareness raising targeting the prevention and treatment of victims of violence;
- The reduction of youth criminality;
- The prevention of young people trafficking;
- The awareness raising on reproductive health issues and the enhancement of sexual education of younger generations.

National Youth Action Plan 2007-2013

MATRIX OF ACTIONS AND RESULTS
FOR EVERY PROGRAMME

NATIONAL YOUTH ACTION PLAN 2006-2011 / ACTIVITIES AND PROGRAM OUTPUTS MATRIX

PROGRAM	OUTPUT	OUTPUT DESCRIPTION	ACTIVITY	RESPONSIBLE INSTITUTIONS	TIME TABLE
Developing and Strengthening the Capacities of Youth Structures and Organizations	1. Training program for the strengthening of organizational capacities and youth leadership	Young people from youth NGOs, the Albanian Youth Parliament, Student Governments and other youth structures trained – in writing and management of projects; the identification of pressing needs of different communities in general and those of young people in particular; in fundraising and the identification of donor institutions and organizations; the identification of partners in the non-profit sector, the profit sector and among governmental institutions aiming at the establishment of networks/coalitions; advocacy and lobbying; conflict management; management of human resources; information technology; public speech and public relations (PR); organizational development and strategic planning; organizational stability and self-financing; accountability and transparency within youth organizations themselves, as well as in partnerships.	<p>Training Programs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Writing of project proposals - Project management - Identification and Assessment of needs - Fundraising and the identification of donor and partner organizations - Youth leadership - Advocacy and lobbying - Networks and coalitions - Organizational development - Strategic planning - Organizational sustainability and self-financing - Democracy within organizational structures and transparency within youth organizations themselves, as well as in partnerships - Organizational accountability - Public relations (PR) - Public speaking - Information Technology (IT) - Management of human resources - Conflict management - Participatory governance 	Local youth organizations, national youth organizations disposing of the training capacities in this field, other experienced civil society groups focusing on youth trainings.	2007-2011
		Given the life-cycle dynamics of youth NGOs and representative structures in secondary schools and universities, the need for developing organizational capacities shall be addressed on a continuous basis from the National Youth Action Plan 2007-2013 during the whole implementation period.			

	<p>2. Information exchange and enhanced coordination of activities carried out by youth representative structures and organizations on the local, regional, national, as well as international levels.</p>	<p>Youth organizations and representative structures on the local and national levels shall have an improved level of information access on programs and activities of youth operators. The Directory for the Coordination of Youth Policies and other national actors shall play an active role in furthering cooperation on a national level, as well as distributing information concerning activities, programs, and projects carried out by European youth structures.</p>	<p>Periodic gatherings of local youth councils in keeping with the standards delineated in the White Paper Policy of the Council of Europe, coordinative gatherings on the national youth council level, as well as on the regional and international level.</p>	<p>MTCYS, AYC, Local Youth Councils, Youth Centers, Albanian Youth Parliament, Student Government structures.</p>	<p>2007-2011</p>
		<p>Youngsters shall be better informed on the law on non-profit organizations and the legal framework on the functioning of local governance, which will enhance their performance within and without the sector.</p>	<p>Information Program for youth organizations on the law on non-profit organizations. Information Program for youth organizations on the Law on the Functioning of Local Governance.</p>		<p>2007-2008</p>
		<p>Youth organizations and structures on the local and national levels, as well as interested institutions and individual in and outside the country, shall have a superior level of information on programs and activities of youth groups and NGOs operating on a local basis. This shall, in turn, create effective opportunities for improved coordination among youth actors operating on different levels.</p>	<p>Periodic publications and updating of website relating to youth programs and activities carried out by youth NGOs on the local level (e.g. prefecture and municipality levels).</p>	<p>Local authorities, youth NGOs, local businesses etc.</p>	<p>2007-2011 (organized annually)</p>
		<p>Youth NGOs and civil society groups, the public opinion, governmental institutions, and international agencies shall have an improved level of information concerning programs and activities carried out by youth groups and NGOs operating on a local level. This, in turn, will create opportunities for the increased coordination on joint activities and enhanced access to sources of funding.</p>	<p>Organization of Youth Fairs as important youth public events during national and international days related to youth.</p>	<p>MTCYS, local authorities, youth NGOs, local businesses etc</p>	<p>2006-2011 (organized annually)</p>

			Young people shall benefit from the experiences and absorb the successful models developed from experienced national and international youth organizations – thus contributing with innovative and creative approaches to the strengthening of organizational capacities of youth organizations.	Experience exchange programs among youth organizations on national, regional and international levels aiming at the improvement of know-how and implementation of successful projects (notice the Kucova Municipality and the Kucova Youth Center).	2007-2011
	3. Support from central and local authorities for the development and enhancement of youth organizational capacities.	The budgeting of ministerial agencies and local authorities shall allot more resources to the support of youth programs and activities furthering the socio-economic development of younger generations.	The budgeting of ministerial agencies and local authorities shall allot more resources to the support of youth programs and activities furthering the socio-economic development of younger generations.	- Meetings with governmental representatives (MTCYS) - Meetings with representatives of local authorities - Lobbying on the local and national levels - Participation in consultative gatherings on the local and national budgeting.	2007-2011
		Youth organizations and representative structures shall be provided the possibility to benefit from spaces/buildings that are managed by local or central institutions – thus significantly curbing the risk that youth groups stop their activities due to the lack of sufficient financial resources available for rent. This support shall be provided without interfering in the autonomy of youth organizations and structures from particular institutions or political parties.	The utilization of public buildings and environments that are under the management of central and local governmental structures for the activity of youth organizations and structures.	Ministry of Interior and Local Governance, local authorities, youth NGOs, Albanian Youth Parliament	2007
	4. The institutionalization and recognition of the status of representatives from the Albanian Youth Parliament and Student Governments and school directories and other institutions operating on the central and local levels.	Young people shall have the opportunity to voice their opinions and directly engage in decision-making processes on the local and central levels on issues that related to academics, campus life, as well as community life.	Recognition through regulatory documents and other legal provisions of the Youth Parliament and Student Governments as two forms of student organization in secondary schools – enjoying an autonomy vis-à-vis the pedagogical staff and institutions focusing on education (such as the Ministry of Education and Science, DAR etc).	Youth Parliament, Student Governments, MES, DAR.	2007
	5. Monitoring and assessment program for youth organization capacities	The understanding of the situation of youth organizations, their capacities and needs, as well as the interest groups they represent.	- National and local studies of capacities and needs of youth organizations and representative structures. - Periodic monitoring of the capacities and needs (their fulfillment)	Youth NGOs etc.	2007-2011

Increasing the participation of young people in public life and decision-making					
	1. Strengthening the democracy within youth representative structures.	Students shall have ample opportunities to participate in the election of leading structures in universities.	Directly including of students in the process of selecting leading structures in universities above 20%.	Student Governments, AYC, other youth organization, MoES etc.	2007
		Youth representative structures selected in secondary schools and universities shall have a balanced gender participation.	Designating in the stature and regulatory framework of the principle of gender equality in the representation of young people in the leading structures in schools and universities.	Student Government, YP, MoES.	2007-2008
		The election process in schools and universities shall be monitored in order to guarantee a fair voting process, as well as the legitimacy and autonomy of these structures.	Monitoring the Youth Parliament and Student Government structures, election processes, and their functioning.	SG, YP, youth NGOs.	2007-2008
		Through periodic monitoring, youngsters shall be able to identify and denounce cases and practices of corruption and mismanagement in educational institutions.	Monitoring leading structures in schools and universities (e.g. corruptive practices, malfunctioning etc.)	SG, YP, youth NGOs.	2007-2011
		Studies and surveys shall bring the voice of young people on the problematic of management of schools and universities, as well as other pertinent issues.	Studies, periodic surveys.	NGOs, YP, SG, MoES.	2007-2011
	2. Development of the legal framework (amendments etc.) for youth participation in leading boards and committees, councils in schools and universities, municipality etc. at least on the 20% level.	Youth participation in boards, councils, and committees of local governance, schools and universities shall surpass the 20% level.	Consulting and meetings for the preparation of legal acts and other measures necessary to safeguard youth participation and reduce technical obstacles.	MoES, SG, YP, local authorities, youth NGOs.	

	3. Awareness raising campaigns and debates on the local and national levels on the inclusion of young women in youth representative structures.	The inclusion of young girls in local youth council, the Youth Parliament and Student Government structures, sectorial youth representative structures and professional youth organizations, etc.	- Awareness raising campaigns in schools, universities, and community. - Meetings, community debates, forums broadcasted on the TV and radio.	YP, AYC, SG, other youth NGOs.	2007-2011
	4. Advocacy campaigns and lobbying on the central and local institutional levels for the inclusion of youth in decision-making processes and structures.	Increased participation of young people in decision-making processes on the local and central levels.	Meetings, awareness raising campaigns on the level of municipalities, local councils, Albanian parliament, central government etc.	Youth NGOs, local and central authorities.	2007-2011
		Young people shall be better informed on different forms and methods of participating in decision-making processes on the local level and educational institutions.	The publication of information on the space young people have in decision-making through the utilization of a website and periodic publications.	Local authorities, central government, NGOs.	2007-2011
		Young people shall be able to participate in the gatherings of Municipality Councils and Citizens' Commissions with different status (observers, debaters, interlocutors etc.)	Advocacy and lobbying for changing the regulatory framework of the Municipality Councils in order to safeguard and promote young participation in decision-making processes.	OJF-të rinore.	2007-2011
	5. Publishing of a legal code on the rights of young people	The summary publication of all laws affecting young people (education, employment, military service, student status, alcohol consumption, youth delinquency etc.)	Drafting and publishing a legal code as a summary of laws affecting youth.	Youth NGOs, MTCYS, donor community.	2007
	6. Opening of Youth Offices in prefectures throughout the country	The coordination of youth policies and activities in each prefecture.	The creation of a network of multifunctional youth centers in all prefectures in the country.	MTCYS, local authorities, youth NGOs etc.	2007-2008 90.000 lekë
	7. The formalization and recognition of the representative structure of young people in decision-making	Youth representatives shall directly monitor the implementation of youth strategies and policies on the local and national levels.	The creation of a youth committee for the monitoring of different strategies on the local and central levels (e.g. the monitoring of the implementation of the National Youth Strategy 2007-1013).	Local youth NGOs, AYC, SG, YP, MTCYS, local authorities.	2007

	8. Inclusion of Roma in youth representative structures	The inclusion of young Roma in representative youth structures. Given that the majority of Roma youngsters do not attend secondary education, elections for the Youth Parliament might shall be carried out in the community in keeping with the YP model – thereby giving to the elected representatives an equal status with those selected in campus elections.	- Organizing elections in the Roma community in order to include their representatives in Youth Parliament structures (even though they do not attend secondary school).	YP, ILO/IPEC Youth Center, local Roma youth organizations, other NGOs.	2007
	10. Forums with candidates for municipality elections and parliamentary elections	Hearing sessions in the framework of social accountability shall directly affect the fine-tuning of policy makers and implementers with the concerns of youth, as well as the promotion of a culture of political and financial accountability	Meetings, hearing sessions, monitoring and assessment of electoral promises.	Youth NGOs.	2007-2011
	11. The appointment of the Student Advocate at the People's Advocate Office	Experience sofar has shown that a wide range of student concerns do not find the necessary legal protection.	Meetings, lobbying on the appointment of the Student Advocate at the People's Advocate Office.	SG, YP, other NGOs.	2007
	12. Informative program for youth organizations focusing on the Law on the Right to Information	A better understanding of the legal framework on public information shall promote the enhancement of student capabilities to obtain information concerning important issues directly affecting their well-being, directly affecting them.	Meetings, informational seminars focusing on the legal framework on public information and online publishing.	Youth NGOs, media associations.	2007
	13. Participation in the drafting of the budget on education and youth on the prefecture and central levels	Youth people shall have the opportunity to articulate their needs and aspirations, as well to provide valuable consulting during the budgeting and monitoring phases.	- Consulting / meetings during the drafting phase - Budget monitoring - Lobbying at the Municipality Council and the Parliament	Youth NGOs, local and central authorities, Members of the Parliament	2007-2011
	14. Increased transparency among donor institutions and youth NGOs – dismantling fundraising monopolies	The continuous publication of reports, the auditing of youth organizations in order to ensure financial transparency, as well as the public declaration of supported youth organizations receive from donor institutions.	- The publication of reports on the activities of youth NGOs - The publication of supporting policies and strategies of donor institutions for the youth sector of the civil society	NGOs, donor institutions	2007-2011

	15. Increased youth voter participation and education of youngsters on the importance of the right to vote for democratic governance	Enabling young people to become active voters, enhancing the information accessed on the procedures and details of the voting process, education of young people on the importance of voting and the right to free and fair elections for democratic societies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Awareness-raising campaigns on voting procedures, voters' lists etc. - Facilitating a better understanding of legislation on voting - Creation of support groups for the information of the community - Informative campaigns carried out in youth and other types of media - Awareness-raising campaign promoting first time voting among younger generations - Encouragement and education of young girls for responsible participation in the voting process (especially in the Northern part of the country and the rural areas) - Organization of mock elections - Organization of concerts such as Rock the Vote and Pop & Vote 	YP, AYC, MJAFI, local youth organizations, youth centers, SG, media.	2007-2011
Increased participation of young people in the fight against corruption	3. Increased demand of youth interests vis-à-vis electoral political supply	Matching demand of youth interests on the local level with the electoral political supply of candidates for municipality and parliamentary elections, the monitoring of the performance of elected officers and their upkeeping of electoral promises – shall bring about an increased interest of young people in the voting process and will thus contribute to an increased youth voter turnout	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Open forums with candidates for municipality and parliamentary elections conducted on a regular basis - TV debates among young people and candidates - The publication of materials promoting a higher level of awareness - The utilization of websites for increased information among young people (such as www.unevotoj.com www.votoj.com, www.zgjedhje.com etc.) 	YP, AYC, MJAFI, local youth NGOs, youth centers, SG, media.	2007-2011
	4. Youth participation in voting monitoring processes	Young people shall comprise an important part of the observing teams during the voting process and will thus boost guarantees on the conduct of fair electoral processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Training young people as observers - Monitoring local and central election processes 	ACAC, AYC, MJAFI, YP, SG, other local NGOs etc.	2007-2011
	The creation of youth networks against corruption and the undertaking of awareness-raising campaigns in the fight against corruptive institutions	Young people shall be better prepared in organizing themselves and getting engaged in the fight against corruption	Training youth organizations and enhancing their capacities in fighting corruption	Youth NGOs, ACAC.	2007-2011

			The creation of capacities and of the necessary infrastructure for the effective denouement of corruption	Logistical and financial support for such initiatives from central and local governmental institutions	Youth NGOs	2007-2011
			Increased cooperation among the different sectors and actors focusing on the fight against corruption	Cooperation among state institutions, international organizations and other civil society structures	Youth NGOs, local and central authorities.	2007-2011
			The monitoring of corruptive institutional practices in general and public services in particular by young people and their representative groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Surveys - Studies - Complaints - Information exchange among institutions - Public hearings and interpellances on measures undertaken by the government in fighting corruption - Periodic reports highlight achievements made and obstacles encountered 	Youth NGOs	2007-2011
			Improved level of information among youngsters and the communities where they live on the dimensions of corruptive practices in institutions and the ways to fight or avoid such practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Awareness-raising campaigns against corruptive behavior (such as health services, education) and on the cost of such practices on the lives of young people - Performances, concerts, competitions, urban actions etc. - Support for youth media - Distribution of sensitizing materials - Public gatherings and hearings 	NGOs, media, public institutions, central and local governmental agencies	2007-2011
Increased cooperation on the national levels, as well as regional and international levels						
		1. Improved coordination and information on national and international activities	Increased level of information on regional or international youth activities, events, and programs – aiming at the dismantling of information monopolies by a few actors of the civil society	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Collection and distribution of information on international activities and youth programs - Development of a communications infrastructure allowing for the periodic dissemination of information (meetings, email groups, websites, newsletters, e-publications and flyers etc.) 	National youth NGOs, local AYC structures, MTCYS, the Council of Europe	2007-2008
			Increased level of information among Albanian youth on the Youth Program of the Council of Europe shall bring more opportunities for a wider participation and improved cooperation of youth groups and organizations	Promotion of the Youth Program of the Council of Europe	MTCYS, youth NGOs, Council of Europe	2007

			The organization of Youth Fairs in regional levels (according to the principal geographical zones) shall bring about increased opportunities of regional cooperation, as well as the absorption of successful models and experiences.	Regional Youth Fair	Youth NGOs, local governance, MTCYS	2007-2011
			The periodic publication printed in both Albanian and English versions shall serve the promotion of youth activities in Albania on the local and regional levels	Periodic publishing of youth activities and youth organization programs	MTCYS	2007-2011
			Youth exchange programs (study visits etc.) with other countries in the region shall boost the level of cooperation and will achieve an integration of young people in region and international spheres.	Organization of study visits	Youth NGOs	2007-2011
		2. Concrete cross-border activities	Activities focusing on the environment, culture, the economy, tourism, minorities, security etc. shall increase the level of cooperation and further the regional integration of young people – such as Shkodra and Malësia e Madhe (Shkodra Lake and Buna River), Pogradec (Ohrid Lake), Gjirokastër (Dropulli), Sarandë (Ksamili), Kukës (mined border areas)	- Organization of summer school - Organization of Youth Work Camps	Youth NGOs, local authorities etc.	2007-2008
		3. Activities promoting good-neighborly relations and regional security	Roundtables, workshops focusing on hot issues such as relations between Kosovo and Serbia, and the role to be played by Albania and the Albanian factor in the region	- Organization of roundtables - Organization of regional workshops on security issues and the promotion of tolerance and coexistence among different people	Youth organizations, MTCYS, regional partners	2007-2011
		4. The creation of international youth camps	Camps raised in tourist areas shall promote the best of the Albanian culture and tourism – such as the Riviera, Ohrid Lake, Lake of Shkodra, Voskopoja, Saranda etc.	Organization of International Youth Camps	Youth NGOs, businesses, local governance, MTCYS etc.	2007-2011
		Information and integration of Albanian young people living and studying abroad				

	1. Informational programs on academic opportunities abroad and the integration of returning students	<p>Website with information on opportunities for further education abroad, application and acceptance procedures, visa application process, financial aid opportunities, student organizations, part-time job placements, internship opportunities for Albanian students abroad.</p> <p>Coordination and information exchange on academic opportunities for undergraduate and graduate studies, scholarships, internship practices etc.</p> <p>Increased opportunities for internship practices in the public administration for young people studying abroad.</p> <p>Organization of orientation fairs for academic programs abroad.</p>	<p>The creation, development and promotion of a youth online portal</p> <p>The strengthening of youth structures providing such information</p> <p>Internship practices in the local public administration</p> <p>Orientation Fair for academic studies abroad</p>	<p>ASAN, MoES, MTCYS, MoFA, Mol.</p> <p>ASAN, MoES.</p> <p>ASAN, local authorities</p> <p>ASAN, MTCYS, MoES, MoFA, Mol, private sector, youth NGOs</p> <p>ASAN, MoES, MoFA</p>	<p>2007-2011</p> <p>2007-2011</p> <p>2007-2011</p> <p>2007-2011</p> <p>2007-2011</p>
	2. The support of three principal issues: documentation, communication with embassies and foreign representative bodies, and visas.	<p>The government should take its responsibility in facilitating the process of college applications and visa applications by providing particular services for young people (e.g. issuing required documentation)</p>	<p>- Meetings with governmental representatives</p> <p>- Assisting in the solution of identified problematic cases</p>		
	3. Boosting the capacities and resources at the disposal of the Office for the Conversion of Diplomas at MoES	<p>Professional and fast conversion and equivalentation of diplomas and degrees earned abroad</p>	<p>Expanding human resources available and revising the structure of the MoES office for the conversion and equivalency of diplomas</p>	<p>ASAN, MoES</p>	<p>2007</p>
	4. Studies on the employment perspectives in Albania in the medium- and long-term periods	<p>The Albanian government should delineate the employment perspectives in the country in the framework of integration processes and sustainable development</p>	<p>A study on emergent labor patterns and employment perspectives for the coming four years</p>	<p>Youth NGOs, MPCSSHB, MoES, INSTAT</p>	<p>2007</p>

	4. Volunteer exchange programs among organizations on a national, regional, and international level	Volunteer exchange programs with a particular focus on national and regional coordination and exchange	- Volunteer exchange among organizations,. - The creation of functional coordinating centers for the exchange of volunteers.	UNV, AYC, MJAFT, local youth NGOs, MTCYS	2007-2008
CIVIC EDUCATION OF YOUNG PEOPLE	1. The introduction of a textbook material on civic education in secondary schools	The drafting of new textbook material for secondary schools addressing the notion of civil society and youth organizations, as well the inclusion of themes linking to corruption and its avoidance, tolerance and integration of minorities, human rights etc.	- Incorporation of concepts such as "civil society", "organization" etc. in the textbook materials - Correct practices in public institutions (how to avoid corruption) - Tolerance and integration of minority communities - Human rights	Youth NGOs, MoES, human rights organizations.	2007-2008
		Monitoring program for the Civic Education coursework in order to measure the efficiency of existing approaches etc.	Monitoring program on the efficiency of the Civic Education class	Youth NGOs, MoES	2007-2008
	2. Awareness-raising campaign "All Different All Equal"	The awareness raising campaign under the logo "All Different All Equal" shall effect an increase in the level of awareness among youngsters about the importance of equality and tolerance on a wide range of issues: gender, Roma people, marginalized groups etc.	- Awareness-raising campaigns "All Different All Equal" on issues such as gender, disabled people, Roma and marginalized youth groups - Awareness-raising campaign on the regional targeting of Albanians, Montenegrins, Serbs, Macedonians and Greek.	Youth NGOs, MTCYS, partners from foreign countries, the Council of Europe Office in Tirana.	2007-2010
	3. Education of young people through mass media.	Ample space for educational and social programs broadcasted by the local and national media; increased support for youth media and publications	- TV and radio programs - Support for youth media, campus newspapers etc. - Monitoring through t K.D.R.T.V.P.SH of the public TV and Radio stations (e.g. if they are in keeping with the percentage allotted to youth social programming) -Lobbying the KKRT for the decrease of tariffs for TV services offering special educational and social programs for youngsters.	Youth NGOs, KKRT, K.D.R.T.V.P.SH, the media commission.	2007-2008

Increased opportunities for young information and employment					
		Meetings and consulting with experts from local authorities on the organizations of possible activities for the promotion of youth employment	Meetings and consulting	Youth NGOs, governmental structures	2007
		The creation of Youth Information Offices in all circuits of the country shall effect an increase in the access of information on employment opportunities on a local basis	The creation of information offices	Youth NGOs, governmental structures	2007-2008
		Awareness-raising campaign promoting Youth Information Offices among the business community in order to establish a successful partnership for the continuous exchange of information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Awareness-raising campaigns promoting Youth Information Offices among the business community - The establishment and nurturing of cooperation promoting a greater focus on youth employment within the private sector 	Youth NGOs, Chambers of Commerce, local businesses	2007-2008
		The creation of a database with job placement opportunities and the online publication of this information for access by young people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Creation of a database - Creation of a website 	Youth NGOs, state structures	2007
		Youth employment fairs shall assist the launching of new job placements from the public administration and the private sector	The organization of Employment Fairs	Youth NGOs, governmental structures, businesses	2007 -2011
		Informing young people on fiscal policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Meetings and informational seminars - The publication and dissemination of information flyers and brochures 		2007
		Cutting down taxes for businesses employing young people shall further youth employment and the promotion of such businesses	Designation by law of facilitating conditions enjoyed by businesses employing young people (such as lower taxes and special interest rates on loans etc.)	Youth NGOs, governmental structures, businesses	2007-2008
		The designation of a quota for youth employees to be hired by the private sector on an annual basis	Designation by law of the quotas to be reached by the private sector in regards to youth employment	Youth NGOs, governmental structures	2007-2008

		Informing young people about the Labor Code	- Meetings and informational seminars focusing on the Labor Code - Publication of informational brochures	State structures, NGOs, private academic institutions, professional schools, private sector, business community	2007-2011
		The improvement of the legal framework regulating work conditions for young people	Legal improvements concerning working conditions for young people	State structures, NGOs, businesses	2007-2008
		The drafting of local strategies for youth employment	Drafting and implementation of the local strategy for youth employment	Local authorities, NGOs, businesses, donors	2007 - 2011
		The combination of professional curricula and life-skills education shall enhance young people's ability for accessing employment-related information	Incorporation in academic curricula of "Life Skills"	MoES, youth NGOs, UNICEF.	2007-2008
		Linking professional courses with the particular demands from the private sector shall effect an increase in the number of employed young people having different professional qualifications	Meetings for the establishment of a partnership between providers of professional courses and local businesses	Youth NGOs, professional schools, businesses.	2007-2011
		The development of educational practices through a close cooperation with business shall bring about a better understanding of the private sector among youth	Carrying out practical academic work at businesses.	State structures, Chamber of Commerce, universities, businesses	2007-2011
		Youth activities promoting the nurturing of a wide range of skills among younger generations	- Promotional campaigns (fairs etc.) - Meetings of young people with the local authorities and the business community	State structures, media, Chamber of Commerce, universities, businesses, youth NGOs.	2007-2011
		The state shall subsidize social security payments for young people employed in given business for a particular period of time	Subsidizing of social security expenditures for young people	NGOs, Ministry of Finances, businesses, banks.	2007-2011
		Increased information on job placements and procedures of application; increased transparency in the management of entry exams	Improved supply of information on youth employment and higher transparency on employment procedures	NGOs, Department of Public Administration, businesses etc.	2007-2011

The promotion of youth businesses and the creation of opportunities for self-employment	The program for promoting self-employment among young people				
	The development of a crediting line with favorable terms for youth shall facilitate the creation of youth businesses and self-employment among young people.	The creation of a crediting line for youth - Lobbying central and local governmental institutions for the provision of partial subsidizing of the relevant interests rates	Youth NGOs, local and central authorities, banks, youth NGOs, MTCYS	2007-2009	
	Lining professional schools with the Youth Information Offices	Establishment of communication and partnership between professional school and Youth Information Offices	Youth NGOs, professional schools	2007	
	Unpaid internships within the private sector	Realization of unpaid internship programs at the private sector	Bizneset, OJF-të rinore.	2007-2009	
	Powerful business taking into patronage youth enterprises shall benefit from lowered taxes.	Taking into patronage and offering consultancy to youth enterprise by powerful businesses	Businesses, youth NGOs	2007-2011	
	The conduct of studies on the emergent labor market demand in order to obtain a clear picture of employment opportunities in the medium- and long-run.	Research on labor market trends and employment opportunities	Youth NGOs, Chambers of Commerce.	2007-2008	
	The creation of a credit fund ear-market for young people aiming at increased opportunities for opening youth enterprise and increasing youth self-employment	The creation of a credit fund ear-market for youth enterprise and youth self-employment	Banks, Youth NGOs, state structures.	2007-2011	
	Tax amnesty for youth business for a five-year period since the inception of youth enterprises; facilitation of the registration process	A five-year grace period for youth business tax obligations; the facilitation of registration procedures for youth businesses	Ministry of Finances, states structures, youth NGOs, donor community, private sector	2007-2008	
	Training programs "How to start a business or how to draft a business plan" shall enhance the capacities of young people in this direction	Training programs "How to start a business or how to draft a business plan"	Youth NGOs, other organizations who can offer the relevant expertise in this area, businesses.	2006-2011	

			Change of the Labor Code and the calculation of seniority: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volunteer work • Part-time work • Internship 	Designation and regulation by the Labor Code: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volunteer work • Part-time work • Internships 	Governmental structures, MPCSSHB, youth NGOs.	2007
Strengthening the professional formation of young people						
			The creation of new professional courses that are sensitive to emergent labor market demands shall effect a better matching of supply and demand	The creation of new professional courses and training opportunities for young people	NGOs, MoES, MPCSSHB, Professional Training Centers.	2007-2011
			Opening of artisan courses in order to preserve tradition	Opening of artizan courses for the preservation of tradition	NGOs, Professional Training Centers,	2007-2011
			Opening of courses in rural areas for the collection of medicinal plants	Opening of courses in rural areas for the collection and treatment of medicinal plants	NGOs, MoES	2007-2008
			Drafting of special curricula for professional training courses with the aim of creating more facilities for young people	Drafting of curricula for professional courses	Youth NGOs, MoES, MPCSSHB, Professional Training Centers.	2007-2008
			Training the pedagogical staff shall effect in the improvement of the quality of training provide by the center.	Training of the staff for the professional education	State structures, Professional Training Centers, businesses, universities.	2007-2011
			The support of training courses responding to the specificities of the needs of younger generations in rural areas	- Research aiming at the identification of current needs - Designing courses in rural areas that link to the specific needs and potentials	Youth NGOs operating in rural and peripheral areas	2007-2009
			The improvement of the material basis in the training centers	The improvement of the material basis in the training centers	MoES, Professional Training Centers, local authorities, businesses, donor institutions	2007-2011

Enabling young people to become smart consumers – and the economic subsidizing of young people.	Realization of the Student Card	Production, distribution and management of the Student Card	Consumer associations, Ministry of Finances, MoES, businesses.	2007
	Educational and awareness-raising campaigns for the enabling of young people as smart consumers	- Meetings and informational seminars - Publications and information distribution - Lectures - Website	Youth NGOs, consumer associations, Ministry of Finances, MTCYS.	2007-2011
	Incorporation of Youth Consumer Education in the curricula	Incorporation of Youth Consumer Education in the curricula	MoES, consumer associations.	2007-2009
	Food fairs promoting high quality and security standards of food products	Organization of food fairs	Businesses.	2007-2011
	Promotion of organic products	Promoting organic products	Youth NGOs, businesses, media.	2007-2011
	The creation of Youth Centers will provide a wide range of low-cost services to young people	Creation of Youth Centers at the disposal of young people	Youth centers, youth NGOs, local authorities, businesses.	2007-2011
	The legal obligation of businesses to provide information on products sold.	Informing young people on the “YMAG” market.	Ministry of Finances	2007
	Informing young people on the “YMAG” market.	Informing young people on the “YMAG” market	Office for Consumer Protection (ZMK)	2007-2009
	The production and distribution of the AL<26 shall bring about a wide range of social and economic facilities for young people	Production, distribution, and management of the AL<26 Student Card.	Governmental institutions, business community, youth organizations.	2007

Creation of recreational opportunities for young people				The support on the central and local levels of the artistic events "The Magic of Youth Nights" and "Youth Artistic Olympiad" for elementary and secondary schools respectively	Organization of "The Magic of Youth Nights" and "Youth Artistic Olympiad"	Artistic Agency Korca (SOROS), local authorities.	2007-2011
				The creation of cultural clubs for young people in high schools or cultural centers	The creation of cultural clubs for young people	QNK, QKF, MoES, local authorities, businesses, donor institutions.	2007-2011
				The creation of youth community centers that are inclusive of a wide range of youth groups; in those parts of the country where there is a high concentration of Roma young people, the "SCREAM" package shall provide the framework for informal education activities and professional training courses offered	The creation of youth community centers for all groups of young people	ILO-IPEC, N.P.F., local authorities, Social Club Korca, religious institutions, businesses, Roma NGOs.	2007 - 2009
				The creation of moving youth animator groups; the creation of a moving library that will travel through cities, towns and rural areas of the Korca Prefecture	The caravan of social animators	Youth centers, "Devolli" cultural association, MJAFI.	2007
				The organization of "Fest-Folk" an annual cross-border event welcoming youth artists from Macedonia and Greece	Organization of "Fest-Folk"	"Devolli" cultural association, local authorities, community.	2007-2008
				The creation of the artistic youth ensemble "Devolli" that will also attend to the preservation of the regions values and traditions.	The creation of an the youth artistic ensemble "Devolli"	"Devolli" cultural association.	2007-2008
				The opening of movie theaters shall enliven the social and cultural lives of cities	The construction of movie theaters	Local authorities, businesses, MTCYS	2007-2011
				The creation of cultural and sportive centers in the premises of the Palace of Culture or other suitable spaces in cities currently lacking them	The creation of cultural and sportive centers within the premises of the Palace of Culture	Local authorities, businesses, MTCYS.	2007

		Summer camps that shall also provide opportunities for participation from young people belonging to marginalized groups	Organization of summer camps for young people	Schools, directorate of education, local authorities.	
		The expansion of internet services and libraries for young people	The expansion of internet services and libraries for young people	Youth NGOs, local businesses, local authorities.	2007-2011
		The creation of sports centers within the premises of secondary schools and university campuses (while paying particular attention to the issue of gender equality in accessing sportive facilities)	The creation of sports centers within the premises of high school and university campuses	MTCYS, local authorities, universities, MoES, the Rectorate, businesses.	2007-2009
		The organization of sports championships for young people on a regional and national level	Organization of championships on regional and national levels	KOKSH, youth NGOs, MoES, MTCYS.	2007-2009
		The creation of artistic/cultural/sportive clubs within school campuses for enlivening and enriching opportunities enjoyed by young people	The creation of artistic/cultural/sportive clubs within school campuses	YP, MoES, MTCYS, DAR.	2007-2011
		The creation of community sportive and cultural centers and the training of staff and volunteers work in these centers	The creation of community sportive and cultural centers	Local authorities, donor institutions, youth NGOs.	2007-2011
		The organization of regional festivals such as "Rin-Fest" and folkloric youth festivals	The organization of regional festivals such as "Rin-Fest" and folkloric youth festivals	MoES, MTCYS, businesses, cultural youth organizations	2007-2011
		The establishment of regional structures and the drafting of innovative policies for issues relating to youth recreation.	The establishment of regional structures and the drafting of innovative policies for issues relating to youth recreation.	Central authorities.	2007
		Expansion of public green spaces	Expansion of public green spaces	Local authorities, youth NGOs with an environmental focus.	2007-2009
		The creation and promotion of Youth Hostels	The creation and promotion of youth hostels	Hostels organization, Directory of Tourism at MTCYS, businesses, community.	2007 e në vijim

			The functioning of professional training centers for free or else reduced prices. Youngsters above 14 years old shall be able to access recreative activities as well as training drawing upon skills for life	Access to the centers of professional training	NPF, UNICEF, SDC, Directory of Education, teachers, parents, youth and cultural NGOs.	2007-2011
			The organization of summer camps and summer schools for marginalized groups of young people in order to allow for their full social integration	Organization of summer camps and summer schools	NPF, UNICEF, SDC, Directory of Education, teachers, parents, youth and cultural NGOs.	2007-2011
			The creation of moving theater groups including young girls and representative of youth marginalized groups	The formation of theater groups	"Nena, Femijet, e ardhmja" association, SOROS, NPF, PNUD, GTZ, "Devollj" association, local authorities.	2007-2011
Environmental education and action of young people						
			The expansion and nurturing of green areas where young people shall have the opportunity to spend their leisure time and relate to nature	The creation of small green parks within the premises of all secondary schools	Volunteer student groups, environmental association, local authorities, REC, women's organizations.	2007-2011
			The awareness-raising campaign on environmental issues and sustainable development, as well as the importance of the division of recycling and non-recycling materials.	- TV spots - The distribution of promotional and guiding materials.	EDEN Center, Ecovizija, Open Art Tirana, media, environmental organizations, "Morava", businesses.	2007-2011
			The protection and development of environmental resources in order to nurture sustainable development and the growth the tourism industry in the country	- Gathering of waste from tourist destination areas - Equipment with waste baskets (for recycling and non-recycling materials)	Young people, Directory of Education, local authorities, environmental NGOs, PNUD, community.	2007-2011

			The protection and cleaning of public spaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cleaning activities - Tree planting - Installation of waste baskets in public spaces - Protection of forests through youth volunteer work 	AYC, YP, MJAFT, Ekolevizija, Open Art Tirana.	2007-2011
			The organization of excursions in touristic zones and places of particular natural beauty in order to become familiar with these destinations and to contribute by cleaning up waste materials	The organization of excursions and other youth activities in important tourist destination sites	EDEN Center, MTCYS, Directory of Education, universities.	2007-2011
			Activities with a massive participation of young people during distinct days for the environment (such as the Day of Cities without Cars, the Earth Day etc.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bicycling through the city - Stopping the circulation of cars - Distribution of promotional materials - Debates and open forums broadcasted on TV 	Local authorities, youth NGOs, media.	2007-2011
Prevention and treatment of drug abuse						
			Outlawing tobacco and alcohol adds; the stipulation of severe sanctions for those companies targeting young people in particular.	Outlawing tobacco and alcohol adds; the stipulation of severe sanctions for those companies targeting young people in particular.	Central authorities	2007-2011
			The reduction of smoking from young people in public spaces	The enforcement of laws regulating smoking in public spaces	State institutions, police, and local authorities.	2007-2011
			The professional medical and psychological treatment of drug users	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Opening treatment centers for drug users - Opening regional centers in order to provide sufficient services for a potentially large contingent of young people; regional centers represent a particularly efficient approach given the difficulties involved in opening up new treatment centers due to financial reasons and social stigma. 	MPÇSSHB, Ministry of Health, local authorities, UNICEF, businesses, UNICEF, businesses, parents, Akcion +	2007-2011
			The development of psycho-social services in rural areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -The creation of discussion groups focusing on different themes - Training of teachers and instructors - The inclusion of the psychologist and the social worker in the campus life and community life in rural areas. 	UNICEF, centers for treatment of abused children.	2007-2011
			Awareness-raising campaigns in campuses on issues relating to substance abuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Painting exhibit -Drama, theater, ballet -Distribution of promotional materials 	Teachers, psychologists and social workers, doctors, youth NGOs.	2007-2011

		Raising awareness among young people on the existing centers for counseling and treatment related to drug use.	Raising awareness among young people concerning the existing centers for the counseling and treatment.	"Po" youth center, Peer Educator Network.	2007-2011
		Frequent meetings with parents in order to increase the level of awareness of SHR.	Informational seminars	Social workers and psychologists appointed in school campuses.	2007-2011
		The appointment in every elementary school and high school of a psychologist or social works qualified in dealing with substance abuse cases	The appointment in every elementary school and high school of a psychologist or social works qualified in dealing with substance abuse cases	Aksion +, Directory of Education, specialists from the field of reproductive health.	2007-2011
		The extension of the network of peer educators and the latter's qualification in addressing the issue of drug use	- Extension of the peer educator (PE) network - Trainings for PE qualification on drugs - Organization of summer schools for the creation of PE groups	UNFPA UN Association AYC, YP, UNICEF, UNFPA, Aksion +	2007-2011
		The organization of summer schools for the development of a peer educators' group and the preparation of the PE Manual	- Preparation and publication of the standardized PE manual - Organization of summer schools	UNFPA, UN Association Albania, AYC, YP, Aksion +, UNICEF UNFPA	2007-2011
		Media awareness-raising campaigns on drug related issues; the training of young journalists and media professionals on substance abuse in order to enhance their coverage of such related issues in the media	- Debates and open forums broadcasted on TV - Shows addressing the issue of sexual health especially designed for young people - Trainings of young journalists and media professionals	Media, local authorities, NGOs.	2007-2011
		The creation of new SHMR centers, the conversion of polyclinics into SHMRS in order to increase youth access to the relevant services	The creation of new SHMR centers and the conversion of polyclinics into SHMRS	UNICEF, Ministry of Health, UNFPA, regional health authorities.	2007-2011
		Informing young people and teachers on the legislation addressing the drugs' issue	Awareness on the legislation concerning drugs and the latter's use	Psychologists and social workers.	2007-2011

Awareness, prevention and treatment of cases of violence against children and young people					
		Awareness-raising campaigns on the rights of youngsters (Convention on the Rights of the Child)	Awareness-raising campaigns on the rights of youngsters (Convention on the Rights of the Child)	Youth NGOs, teachers, psychologists, social workers.	2007-2011
		The creation of multidisciplinary teams for the denouncement and treatment of cases of violence perpetrated against youngsters; training of teachers, parents, and young people to effectively and timely denounce cases of violence	The creation of multidisciplinary teams for the denouncement and treatment of cases of violence perpetrated against youngsters	Center of Abused Children, UNICEF, MPÇSSHB, local authorities.	2007-2011
		The creation of a center for the treatment of young people who have become victims of violence	The creation of a center for the treatment of young people who have become victims of violence by a multidisciplinary team	Local authorities.	2007-2011
		The incorporation in the Civic Education coursework of a special chapter on violence and trafficking; distribution of books on human rights and of a manual on children's rights (Sabaudin Gabrani school)	The incorporation in the Civic Education coursework of a special chapter on violence and trafficking; distribution of books on human rights and of a manual on children's rights (Sabaudin Gabrani school)	MoES, UNICEF	2007-2011
		Awareness-raising campaigns targeting the phenomenon of violence – especially gendered violence and violence in rural areas	Awareness-raising campaigns targeting the phenomenon of violence – especially gendered violence and violence in rural areas	Center of Abused Children, social workers and psychologists in school campuses, qualified teachers, NGOs.	2007-2011
		The creation of a special package for high schools on issues relating to violence and trafficking	The creation of a special package for high schools on issues relating to violence and trafficking	MPÇSSHB, MoES, psychologists in the court.	2007-2011
		The opening of counseling and treatment centers for children and young people who have become victims of violence	The opening of counseling and treatment centers for children and young people who have become victims of violence	MoES, NGOs, Ministry of Interior, Center for the Treatment of the Victims of Torture.	2007-2011

		Activities demonstrating cases of violence and trafficking organized by young people in schools (mini-theaters, role-play, painting exhibitions etc.)	Mini-theaters, role-play, painting exhibitions etc.	UNICEF Aksion + YP AYC	2007-2011
		The appointment of psychologists and social workers in prisons and other institutions for the detention of young people	- Appointment of psychologists and social workers in detention institutions - Training of prison staff on human rights and the treatment of young people	State structures	2007-2011
		Supplementing the legal framework on violence and trafficking of young people	Supplementing the legal framework on violence and trafficking of young people	SIDA, Center for the Treatment of Victims of Torture.	2007-2011
		Strengthening state structures responding to the issues of violence and trafficking	Strengthening state structures responding to the issues of violence and trafficking	Albanian Parliament, police structures, courts, prefectures.	2007-2011
		The creation of an NGO network for the assessment of the situation and the identification of possible projects on a local basis	The creation of an NGO network for the assessment of the situation and the identification of possible projects on a local basis	Media, Ministry of Interior, PNUD, NGOS, local authorities.	2007-2011
		Conduct of research studies for an improved understanding of the specifics of violence in rural and urban areas (studies should target victims of violence, parents, teachers, local institutions etc.)	Conduct of research studies for an improved understanding of the specifics of violence in rural and urban areas (studies should target victims of violence, parents, teachers, local institutions etc.)	Municipality (Office for Social Issues), NGOs, Department of Development (Lezha-Shkodra circuit), World Vision, Mjafit, UN Association Albania, businesses.	2007-2011
		Enhancement of academic curricula through the inclusion of course material and student activities addressing the phenomenon of violence	Enhancement of academic curricular, inclusion of topics of violence	Institute of Pedagogical Studies, Regional Directory of Education.	2007-2011
		Training of social sciences teachers and instructors on the efficient utilization of the extra-curricular activities manual for elementary schools and high schools	Training of social sciences teachers and instructors on the efficient utilization of the extra-curricular activities manual for elementary schools and high schools	Institute of Pedagogical Studies, Regional Directory of Education.	2007-2011

		Career education in elementary school (during the 9th grade) for the professional orientation of young people	MoES	2007-2011
	Career education in elementary school (during the 9th grade) for the professional orientation of young people	Parent education for providing professional orientation to young people	MoES	2007-2011
	Parent education for providing professional orientation to young people	Drafting of state policies for poverty alleviation	Central and local authorities.	2007-2011
	Drafting of state policies for poverty alleviation	Practical training of students at state institutions		2007-2011
	Practical training of students at state institutions	Training of police officers in dealing with children and young people	PAMECA	2007-2011
	Training of police officers in dealing with children and young people	Promoting the reintegration of young people with criminal precedents	Media	2007-2011
	Promoting the reintegration of young people with criminal precedents	Education and qualification of young people in parburgim		2007-2011
	Education and qualification of young people in parburgim	The creation of special spaces within the premises of police stations for young people involved in criminal activities	Legal Clinic for minors, UNICEF.	2007-2011
	The creation of special spaces within the premises of police stations for young people involved in criminal activities	The creation of a court for youth cases that can address criminal charges to children and young people		2007-2011
	The creation of a court for youth cases that can address criminal charges to children and young people	Youth participation in decision-making	State structures	2007-2011
	Youth participation in decision-making	The appointment of psychologist and social workers in every elementary school and high school throughout the country	MoES, USAID.	2007-2011
	The appointment of psychologist and social workers in every elementary school and high school throughout the country	Creation of job opportunities for young people	State structures.	2007-2011
	Creation of job opportunities for young people	Opening of qualification and training courses for young people	State structures.	2007-2011
	Opening of qualification and training courses for young people			

		Awareness-raising campaigns on the phenomenon of the blood feud	- Meetings and educational seminars - Distribution of promotional materials	NGOs.	2007-2011
Prevention of youth trafficking					
		Enhancement of the performance of the anti-trafficking office in Albania	Enhancement of the performance of the anti-trafficking office in Albania	State structures.	2007-2011
		Awareness-raising campaigns in rural areas concerning trafficking related issues	- Meetings and educational seminars - Distribution of promotional materials	Media, NGOs, police structures.	2007-2011
		Information programs for youth at risk	Summer course for youth at risk aiming at innovative approaches to getting informed on the risks of trafficking		2007-2011
		The creation of a police structure dealing with cases of repatriation and deportation	The creation of a police structure dealing with cases of repatriation and deportation	State structures, donor institutions.	2007-2011
		Youth employment on a seasonal basis	Youth employment on a seasonal basis	Businesses, local authorities.	2007-2011
		Prevention of trafficking through educational activities in rural areas of Vloja and Fier	Prevention of trafficking through educational activities in rural areas of Vloja and Fier		2007-2011
		Providing legal, psycho-social, and medical treatment for victims of trafficking: creation safe shelters for young people and providing for professional trainings in keeping with the accord with the Ministry of Labor	Providing legal, psycho-social, and medical treatment for victims of trafficking: creation safe shelters for young people and providing for professional trainings in keeping with the accord with the Ministry of Labor	„Vatra” association.	2007-2011
		The opening of a treatment and rehabilitation center on a regional level	The opening of a treatment and rehabilitation center on a regional level	NGOs, Police Directorate, Labor Offices, local authorities, professional training offices.	2007-2011

			The reintegration of former victims of violence in the educational system and society at large	Opening of professional courses	NGOs, Police Directorate, Labor Offices, local authorities, professional training offices.	2007-2011
			Professional treatment of children who have been victims of trafficking	Opening of a treatment center for young victims of trafficking	"Children in Focus"	2007-2011
			Inclusion of trafficking related issues in academic curricula and extra-curricular activities	Improvement of curricula	MoES, NGOs.	2007-2011
Raising awareness on reproductive and sexual health among young people			Awareness-raising campaigns targeting school campuses with the aim of enhancing the information young people have on reproductive and sexual health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Painting exhibits - Theatrical events - Ballet (different performance organized by peer educator groups focusing on reproductive health) - Distribution of promotional materials 	State structures, foundations, doctors, teachers, SHMR, UNICEF.	2007-2011
			The inclusion in the curricula of elementary schools of the Sexual Education and Reproductive Health courses; the training of teachers on finding effective ways of transmitting relevant information to young people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Enhancement of existing curricula - Training of teachers 	Youth centers, ILO-IPEC, Directory of Education, Ministry of Health	2007-2011
			Drafting of programs for family planning and reproductive health	Drafting of programs for family planning and reproductive health		2007-2011
			The training of nurses in rural areas on reproductive health	Training of nurses in rural areas	Ministry of Health, Primary Health Directorate	2007-2011

		Awareness-raising campaigns on reproductive health issues and the enhancement of the capacities of young journalists and media professionals in treating the issue of reproductive health	- Debates broadcasted on TV - Youth shows treating different problems relating to reproductive and sexual health - Utilization of promotional and informational boards	SHMR Media, YP, NGOs, youth centers, local authorities, UNFPA	2007-2011
		Qualification of school doctors and psychologists on reproductive health issues	Training doctors and psychologists	Directory of Education, Regional Health Authority.	2007-2011
		Raising awareness among young people on the existing facilities for obtaining consulting and treatment of reproductive and sexual health issues	- Meetings and seminars - Utilizing campus newspapers	"Po" youth center, Peer Educator Network.	2007-2011
		Increased awareness among parents on the importance of education on reproductive and sexual health	Frequent meetings with parents in order to increase their sensitivity to reproductive health issues	Social workers and psychologists in school campuses.	2007-2011
		Conduct of research on the phenomenon of school dropout (e.g. the causes and consequence of school dropout in the Paskuqan and Bathore areas)	Research study on the reasons and consequences of school drop out in the Paskuqan and Bathore areas	Directory of Education, Regional Health Authority, Tirana Prefecture, "Tirana" association, local authorities, associations for the social and cultural development of young people in rural areas.	2007-2011
		Informing young people and teachers on the legislation relating to reproductive and sexual health	Understanding of the legislation on HIV/AIDS	Psychologists in school campuses.	2007-2011
		Offering contraceptives and providing gynecologic services for free in order to increase youth access to these services	Free contraceptives and gynecologic services for young people	"Po" youth center, SHMR.	2007-2011

		Equipment of medical centers in rural areas with contraceptives	Equipment of medical centers in rural areas with contraceptives	2007-2011
		Equipment of medical centers in rural areas with contraceptives	Ministry of Public Health, NGOs, social marketing institutions (NESMARK).	
		Increasing the number of centers testing HIV/AIDS (e.g. "Testing and Counseling Center")	The creation of centers testing HIV/AIDS	2007-2011
			Institute of Public Health, UNICEF, MPCSSHB.	

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