

Working Package 1

Mapping 3M activities in partner universities

Deliverable 1.2

Mapping 3M activities and needs in University of Gjirokastra

Final report

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**U3M-AL PROJECT - DEVELOPING THIRD MISSION ACTIVITIES IN
ALBANIAN UNIVERSITIES**

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Short profile university (type of university, size, special features)

“Eqrem Çabej” University of Gjirokastra is the most important higher education institution situated in the Southern part of Albania. It was opened by decision of the Council of Ministers, November 1991, on basis of a High Pedagogical Institute, opened in 1971. This university welcomes almost 4000 students in all its programs of study. The University attracts students mainly from the Southern Region, but not limited only to this area. In recent years, it accepts students from all over the country as well as from other neighboring regions of Albania, such as Kosovo, Macedonia and Greece. Our University welcomes the most contemporary ideas, progressive curricula for the development of our society, professional ambitions and tangible pedagogical and scientific work. At our University, different generations of teachers and university lectures, different kinds of cultures and trends are met and they achieve perfection through respecting the historical individualities, the present and future of each of them. EÇUG presents interest in the exploration of the region and scientific research in all fields, mainly in education, albanology (linguistics), anthropology, interethnic, intercultural and inter-religious relations, archaeology, ecology, and tourism.

Our University comprises two faculties, respectively:

The Faculty of Education and Social Sciences and the Faculty of Natural Sciences. The University of Gjirokastra offers the following full time and part-time study programs, which are based on the principles of Bologna Chart:

- 18 full time study programs, bachelor, (15 part time study programs, bachelor)
- 12 full time study programs, professional master’s program (9 part time study programs, professional master)
- 5 full time study programs, master of science
- 1 doctorate study, (in process to be approved)

The mission of the university aims at the need for change, transformation and creation of real capacities, which are valuable for the society. On concrete basis it is focused on:

- The preparation of the teachers for all the levels of pre university system.
- The preparation of high nurses.
- The preparation of specialists for economy.

- Being an important scientific, research and publishing center, a Continuing Education Centre, as well as a Regional Development Centre.

1.2 Regional context

Our university intends to adopt and precede the economic and social development of the region. It intends to become a center of continuing education in the southern region of Albania. University of Gjirokastra is a center for education and scientific research taking into consideration the labor market, the social – economic reforms and the new standards of the European integration. **We** maintain contacts with certain groups of interests such as:

- Local authorities (The Town Hall, Prefecture, District Council, Chamber of
- Commerce, Regional Educational Directorate)
- Banking Institutions, Health Service Institutions,
- Private enterprises
- Local community

We have been, and actually we are involved in different joint projects with them which have had a significant impact on the region. During this academic year, we have applied for more than 15 projects IPA Cross-Border and we are invited as a partner to some Tempus Projects. We hope to be approved of some of these projects.

The contemporary ideas, progressive programs influencing the development of society, professional ambitions, and scientific and pedagogical engagements are welcomed at the University of Gjirokastra.

1.3 Changes in the role of universities in the context of regional economy and change of the U3M role

Currently our university is focused on teaching and research process. In the context of regional and social economy development, the university is asked to become a key player within our society. The long/mid- term program for the development of “E.Çabej” university is in accordance with the principal tendencies of the higher education in Europe and further on, particularly with the process of Bologna. This long/mid- term program for the development of our university is a concrete implementation of the national strategy for the higher education (2008-2013) for the mid-term and long term policies of the higher education institutions, taking into consideration the suggestions of the academic staff and student groups, who are interested in the development of this

university. The university is facing an increasing demand for U3M activities, especially continuing training which remains one of the priorities of our university. In addition to educational activities, UGJ promotes other activities related to the U3M in order to increase its role in economy, especially in tourism.

2 INSTITUTIONAL PERSPECTIVE TO U3M

2.1 What are the main types of U3M activities developed in this university (technology transfer & innovation, continuing education and social engagement?)

The University is equipped with laboratories, and a scientific library. Furthermore, the University is an important research, scientific and publication centre. Its lecturers have always been, and remain active participants in conferences, scientific sessions, and numerous publications within the country and abroad. It also publishes its own scientific journals “University research” with its two periodicals:

- “University research – Social, Economic and Educational Sciences”
- “University research – Mathematics and Natural Sciences”

On the basis of the experience and present achievements, our University has carried out some research work related to its future development, in terms of reconstruction as well as its extension to other study programs and activities.

Continuing education is the main U3M activity developed and provided by the academic staff of the University. Continuing education is the main U3M activity developed and provided by the academic staff of the University.

Fifteen years ago the qualification of pre-university teachers was the responsibility and duty of university staff. With the reorganization of Regional Educational Directories the responsibility was transferred to RED. It's a well known fact that RED doesn't have proper qualified staff that could successfully train and qualify teachers of pre-university education. RED trainers are ordinary teachers with no proper training and scientific qualification in order to successfully fulfill this specific task.

On the other hand universities offer qualified staff with proper credentials from Professors, PhD, MsC, Doc. etc...., organized in specialized departments and research groups. This staff has ongoing and updated knowledge in respective scientific and methodological fields. Therefore they may perform this duty with more proficiency and competence.

2.2 How have the number and intensity of the different types of U3M activities evolved at the institutional level? (e.g. which types of U3M activities have increased more? Which are the most important ones for the university?)

With regard to U3M, technology transfer and innovation have increased more in Gjirokastra University. This is due to combining education and research with technology. In this aspect, we have to underline that the activities evolving remain on the basis of random cases done by the lecturers mainly in providing lectures and supporting their qualification. The scientific activity of the academic staff is mainly based on the participation in conferences (the participation in international conferences has increased a lot recently), different national and international projects. Anyway, the output of these activities remains mostly within the university, in favor of the staff qualification.

Continuing education activities have increased further at institutional level. We have the right to apply training and qualification of in-service teachers.

We have prepared and for the next academic year we believe to open 3 SCP shorts cycle programs:

- a. Accountant, Secretary and Archivist – 9 months, 60 credits
- b. Family Tourism Management (Bed and breakfast manager) – 6 months
- c. Different short course for teachers' qualifications of all levels.

In developing these and other ongoing programs, we rely on a vision of exchange and mutual benefits. Community benefits from the presence of the university as well as from the wider range of services. University also benefits from links with the community by taking other funds from regional and EU authorities. Community needs the university not only in terms of education, but also as a structure of individual or company level training, research and consultancy services to various SME, rental facilities such as conference rooms, etc.

Sports cultural activities organized in cooperation with the community are limited and not systematic. In the last 4 years, university has been engaged in activities related to social commitment through employing staff, who is working with the students of the university in order to increase their participation in several sport cultural activities at university, on a regional level.

UGJ annually organizes a successful theatrical drama with the Troupe of Gjirokastra Theatre. They perform in Gjirokastra, Tepelena Përmet and Vlora, etc. Lack of student's sports club hinders the sports activities with community. Therefore sports activities are rare and spontaneous.

2.3 University policy and strategy towards U3M activities

2.3.1 Are there any institutional policies to foster U3M activities? Who is in charge of developing them? Which are the main types of U3M activities encouraged? To what extent are U3M policies contextualized in institutional strategies?

At present the University operates in accordance with “The Strategy for the Development of “Eqrem Çabej” University of Gjirokastra”, which states clearly that the vision of the university is to adopt and precede the economic and social development of the region. The persons in charge are the authorities of the University. Teaching and research continue to remain the basic missions of our University, the third one - cooperation with different sectors of society in order to improve regional development has to be in the centre of “The Strategy for the Development of “Eqrem Çabej” University of Gjirokastra” and to be actively implemented in the coming years.

2.3.2 Are there policies to encourage U3M activities via human resources management incentives?

There are no written policy documents encouraging U3M activities in the university with the exception of the guidelines set out in the Strategy for the development of the University, but the conduct of the majority of them remained on paper. Lack of funding and the limited number of projects approved does not promote the implementation of these policies at satisfactory levels. Recently, our university is supporting its staff to develop different U3M activities by allowing them to place a part of their teaching load to these activities. The fact is that our University has applied and continues to apply in many project proposals participating as a leading partner or partner, mainly in national project proposals and IPA-cross border project applications. We have to be more active in order to apply for Tempus projects where participation is larger and profits are bigger.

2.3.3 To what extent the U3M activities described above are a consequence of institutional policies? Describe the main problems and needs at institutional level to promote U3M considering the three types of activities

2.3.3.1 Technology transfer & innovation

2.3.3.1.1 Main problems

- Digitalisation of secretariat services.
- Lack of funds for the R&D infrastructure

- Lack of closed relationship and cooperation with local and regional authorities, MoES, etc

2.3.3.1.2 Needs

- Respective software to comply with the needs of the university.
- Financial support for the R&D infrastructure
- More investment for the scientific libraries and access to international scientific publications.
- Specialized staff.
- Good cooperation with all actors that impact on technology transfer & innovation

2.3.3.2 Continuing education

2.3.3.2.1 Main problems

- Lack of facilities for continuing education and distance learning (lack of teleconference rooms, slow internet connection, lack of software).
- Lack of subscription in international journals.
- Lack of the proper equipments for a modern teaching. The lack of the necessary funds for purchasing the necessary material base.
- Lack of more training schools under the attention of the university. The financial restrictions in order to undergo the school practices
- The centralization of funding.
- Lack of continuous round tables.

2.3.3.2.2 Needs

- Respective software to comply with the needs of the University.
- Subscription to international journals in accordance with the department's needs.
- Establishment of the "Lifelong Learning Centre".
- Academic and administrative staff qualification.
- Recognition with the European positive experiences in relation to U3M activities

2.3.3.3 Social engagement

2.3.3.3.1 Main problems

- Students, academic and administrative staff have a low perception of the U3M.
- Lack of sustainable collaboration with the local authorities in order to explore the problems and needs of the regional development for the accomplishing of our role as an engine to support this development.
- Lack of opening to the community and to the interested parties, consulting them regarding the extension of the university and the budget.
- Lack of policies for the development of cultural and sport activities.

2.3.3.3.2 Needs

- The establishment of a Centre of Regional Development with its own network.
- Staff qualification in order to set up and assist this centre.
- Round tables with representatives of the business community to better understand the present situation, its problems and needs in order to develop courses which will prepare specialists meeting the needs of this target group.
- Talks interviews with teachers, parents and students in order to determine the need of this community for a more qualitative teaching and learning process.
- University investments in infrastructure for cultural and sport activities.

2.3.4 To what extent the U3M activities described above are a consequence of local or regional policies? Describe the main problems, legal limitations and needs at local or regional level to promote U3M considering the three types of activities

2.3.4.1 Technology transfer & innovation

2.3.4.1.1 Main problems

The technology transfer and innovation is consequence of the local or regional policies because this transferring occurs as demand of the end user by application of the local or regional policy.

2.3.4.1.2 Legal limitations

A complete legal framework for the technology transfer and innovation.

2.3.4.1.3 Needs

The establishment of a Centre of Regional Development with its own network.

2.3.4.2 Continuing education

2.3.4.2.1 Main problems

- Lack of qualification courses in different fields and specialities based on the needs of the market.
- Lack of a good collaboration between university and local, regional institutions.

2.3.4.2.2 Legal limitations

There are not legal limitations on this issue.

2.3.4.2.3 Needs

More collaboration between faculties/universities and local or regional institutions.

The setting up of a Lifelong Learning Centre in charge of different qualification courses.

2.3.4.3 Social engagement

2.3.4.3.1 Main problems

Lack of continuous press conferences and round tables about education, social, economic, local and regional problems.

2.3.4.3.2 Legal limitations

There are not legal limitations on this issue.

2.3.4.3.3 Needs

Training of the administrative staff of the region in function of the private and public sector and regional labour market. Involvement in joint projects.

2.3.5 To what extent the U3M activities described above are a consequence of national policies? Describe the main problems, legal limitations and needs at national level to promote U3M considering the three types of activities

2.3.5.1 Technology transfer & innovation

2.3.5.1.1 Main problems

National educational policy is and should be more responsible in promoting the technology transfer & innovation.

2.3.5.1.2 Legal limitations

There is no clear determination at national policy in the context of technology transfer and innovation.

2.3.5.1.3 Needs

More clear and supportive national policy in the context of technology transfer and innovation.

Establishing a R&D Centre in order to support university to be involved in technology transfer & innovation activities.

Introduction of technology transfer and innovation as part of university evaluation and ranking.

2.3.5.2 Continuing education

2.3.5.2.1 Main problems

The national policy should support more the continuing education because it is and has to be a part of work evaluation at all public and private institutions.

2.3.5.2.2 Legal limitations

No legal limitations.

2.3.5.2.3 Needs

More cooperation between university and ERD, MoES, local and regional Authorities to carry out this activity.

2.3.5.3 Social engagement

2.3.5.3.1 Main problems

Low awareness of the government on social engagement role of the faculty/university.

2.3.5.3.2 Legal limitations

No known legal limitations.

2.3.5.3.3 Needs

Strengthening awareness of government concerning the role of universities in the U3M activities and in particular social engagement.

Increasing Government investments in University infrastructure for culture and sport activities

Establishing the R&D Centre to successfully implement the third mission of the university.

3 ANNEX

