Youth Employment Opportunities

ALBANIA

Prepared by:
Altin Hazizaj

Tirana 2003
This research was carried out by the Children’s Human Rights Centre of Albania – CRCA on behalf on ICON-GET Institute, Germany. The research was part of the ICON-GET Institute programme “Youth Employment Opportunities in South Eastern Europe”.

The research was funded by GTZ Germany.
## List of Abbreviations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AYC</td>
<td>Albanian Youth Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CRCA</td>
<td>Children’s Human Rights Centre of Albania</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISC</td>
<td>Social Dialogue and Partnership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ILO</td>
<td>International Labour Organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IFAW</td>
<td>Independent Forum of Albanian Women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MOLSA</td>
<td>The Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>Non Governmental Organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNICEF</td>
<td>United Nations Children’s Fund</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNDP</td>
<td>United Nations Development Programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIS</td>
<td>International Voluntarism for Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YAPS</td>
<td>Youth Albanian Parcel Service</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CONTENTS

1. Introduction
2. Target of the research
3. Methodology
4. Country analysis
5. Results
6. Comments on the research
7. Outlook for further steps
1. INTRODUCTION

The transition to democracy in Albania was longer and more difficult than expected and the civil disorders of 1997 prolonged the transition for a longer period of time.

Albania is situated in the southwest part of the Balkan Peninsula. The country area is 28,748 Km square, where 34.8 percent of the land is forest, 15 percent wilderness, 24.3 agricultural land and 4 percent lakes. Albania is bordered in north by Montenegro and UN administered Kosova, in east by FYROM and south by Greece. The country shares part of the Adriatic Sea with Italy.

Since 1990, Albania has undergone significant political and social changes and is currently going through a delicate transition towards a market economy and democratic governance. The transition process in Albania has brought drastic changes in the economic, political, and social environment. From a society with a fairly well developed social welfare infrastructure in which access to education and health care were virtually universal, Albania now faces many serious issues in these areas.

Unemployment has increased resulting in average living standards that fall below the poverty line, as well as an increase in social and economic inequality. According to the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, in 1999, unemployment stood at 18.2% with a total of 239,794 people registered unemployed. In addition, it is estimated that a further 7% of the unemployed are unregistered.

During the second half of 1997 the economy recovery had began, but despite governmental measures there are still serious obstacles to overcome such as high rates of unemployment (particularly among women), lack of foreign investments, public administration corruption and wide spread fiscal evasion. Since 1995 the main governmental concern has been macroeconomic stabilization (1995-1996) and national and international crisis (1997-1999), whereas social issues generally and gender issues specifically have received little attention.¹

Albania has a GDP of 810 USD per capita, which ranks it as a country with the lowest income per capita in Europe. UNDP’s Human Development Index places Albania 100th out of 174 countries ranked, which is significantly below the range of ranks for South-eastern European (55-73) and Central European (33-47) transition countries. Out of the total population of (3.354,300), 30% living in rural area and 15% living in urban areas are considered poor. Faced with economical insecurity, many Albanians are migrating to more developed areas, or going abroad.²

The country situation has been affected also by the political crises and lack of cooperation among political parties and forces in Albania. The Socialist Party of

² World Bank Report – 2000
Albania and its allies has been governing the country since June 1997, after the collapse of Pyramid schemes and civil disorder. However the political battles within the Socialist hierarchy has brought to the office five Prime ministers within a range of five years. This in several cases has concluded in changes of governmental policies, staffs and slow economical development of the country. The political changes of a country in transition tend to mirror themselves in other walks of the life such as economy sector, social development, internal migration etc.

Albania in the new millennium is looking forward for a full membership in NATO and European Union. Despite a high development rate of 7 percent every year, Albania remains still a poor country with a wide division between those who have and those who don’t, while few opportunities are available for marginalised groups of the society, especially youth and children.

2. TARGET OF THE RESEARCH

The target of this research were the following ages:

- **Children between 10 and 18 years old**;
- **Young people between 18 to 25 years old**;
- **Young women and girls between 18 and 30 years old**.

The research concentrated on the following issues:

- **Youth project / programmes from private sector or / and NGO’s throughout Albania related to youth employment opportunities**;
- **Youth initiatives related to employment opportunities**;
- **Governmental policies for youth employment**
- **Initiatives related to marginalised groups of the society, with a special focus to children and young girls**.
- **Identification of best/good practices concerning youth employment opportunities**.
3. METHODOLOGY

The methodology of this research was prepared by GET and included the preparation of the Data-sheet of good / best practices of employment initiatives. The Data-sheet is divided in three sections:

Section I General data on the organisation
Section II General data on the selected programme / project
Section III Specific data on the concrete initiatives of the programme / project
Section IV Results / Effects – Lessons learned from the concrete initiative
Section V Specific criteria of Analysis of the effects of the initiative on employability and employment / job creation

The Data-sheet of good / best practices of employment initiatives was first consulted by the National Coordinator for Albania. An Info Paper in the national language was sent via e-mail to almost all the NGO's, private entities and governmental authorities (more than 100), which in their mandate deal with employment issues and more specifically youth employment issues. More than 10 organisations nationally (most of them in Tirana) answered to the Info Paper notifying whether they had any project / programme or initiative dealing with youth employment opportunities.

In a later stage the Coordinator send electronically and via normal mail the Data-sheet of good / best practices of employment initiatives to all the institutions and organisations that replied to the Info Letter. In order not to depend our research only to those who have an e-mail, the Coordinator arranged several interviews and meetings with non-governmental organisations and public institutions in Tirana. Most of the Data-sheet of good / best practices of employment initiatives were filled in direct interviews with directors of organisations and institutions. Only one filled Data-sheet was received via e-mail.

Some organisations found the Data-sheet too difficult to be filled by themselves, while others could not answer to all sections and questions posed by the Data-sheet. In many cases the Coordinator saw that some NGO’s and institutions lacked the information and knowledge concerning the target group, some others lacked information related to general data and records about youth employment in Albania, internal organisation of the NGO / institution, previous programmes, other initiatives related to youth employment opportunities etc.

When such cases were faced, as described above, the Coordinator collected the most relevant and available information and tried to create a general picture of the initiative. In some other cases programmes or projects had ensured their funding, but yet haven’s started to be implemented. This cases also were taken into consideration, but bearing in mind that such projects / programmes or initiatives could result in a failure in the future.
4. COUNTRY ANALYSIS

4.1 Labour Market in Albania

The labour market in Albania is characterized by high unemployment and a lack of investment to create the potential for a major increase in employment. State policies on employment lack co-ordination and fiscal policies so not properly support an accelerated development of the private sector. The situation is exacerbated by informal labour, lack of efficient labour market institutions and a shortage of skilled labour.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Labour force and employment 1994-1999</th>
<th>in thousand</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Population</td>
<td>3202</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working age population</td>
<td>1786</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labour force</td>
<td>1423</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total of employed persons</td>
<td>1161</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Registered unemployed</td>
<td>262</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rates of unemployment</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

After a continuous decline until 1996, the level of unemployment has increased year by year and now remains at a high level. In 1999, according to the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, unemployment stood at 18.2%, with a total of 239,794 registered unemployed, compared to 17.7% in 1998. In addition, it is estimated that a further 7% of the unemployed are unregistered. Continuing high unemployment poses obvious risks to maintaining macroeconomic and social equilibrium and constitutes an increasing financial burden on the state.

The first few years of transition were characterized by an immediate increase in the number of unemployed due to the collapse of many enterprises. But during 1993-1996, registered unemployment fell continuously as the economy recovered and the number of small and medium enterprises grew. During the 1997 crisis, many of the state and private enterprises were destroyed and this had an immediate impact on the labour market. The increase in unemployment figures was also related to the fact that many jobless had not registered previously, because they had been receiving monthly payments from pyramid scheme investments.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population and labour force</th>
<th>in thousand</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Population</td>
<td>3167</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population eligible to work</td>
<td>1763</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labour force</td>
<td>1364</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation rate (in %)</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employed</td>
<td>1063</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Registered unemployed</td>
<td>301</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployment rate (in %)</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

![Population and Labour force](chart.png)
It is difficult to make a full assessment of the Albanian labour market using just the official data of the last ten years, for the following reasons.

- A large part of the population is rural and mobile, which makes it difficult to identify the unemployed. The search for a common denominator to define unemployment has been the subject of intense and often controversial debate.

- The existence of a large informal economy.

Various external and internal factors have prevented private business (except in areas such as trade, services and construction) from growing and playing an important part in the economy and labour market. The main cause of unemployment in the cities, along with the low level of skills, is the massive migration of the population from rural to urban areas.

The low wages that characterise the Albanian market have not yet stimulated the attraction of foreign financing. They have led to a decline in the professional level of the labour force, as well as encouraging emigration of skilled labour and, above all, well-educated people. This massive loss of human resources means that the economic situation is unlikely to change rapidly.

The volume of informal labour is huge, although no official figures exist. While for a time the phenomenon may have served as a means of reducing labour costs and alleviating social problems by generating employment, the scale of unregistered labour is now so large, that it is expected to cause problems in the future. The large contingent of uninsured today will create a great burden for social assistance and welfare programmes. Albanian society will have to pay a high cost to reduce poverty in future years.

In the last few years, the Government has undertaken several steps to improve the situation by financing various employment initiatives, including the programme of public works and employment promotion through co-

**STABILITY PACT AND LABOUR ISSUES**

The Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs (MOLSA) in the framework of Stability Pact is responsible for management of ISC (Social Dialogue and Partnership) and HRD. For the above, MOLSA was engaged and seriously committed to contribute in preparation of regional donors Conference of Bucharest, presenting some priority areas as follows:

- Strengthening of institutions
- Employment and employment promotion policies
- Vocational training in compliance with long-life learning
- Social protection and insurance
- Tripartite social dialogue

MOLSA is involved in the implementation process of some priority projects, such as:

1. "Social Services Delivery Program" is a co-financed project by the World Bank together with Italian, Japanese and Albanian governments, with a total amount of 15 million USD. This project will support strengthening social policies, public services system and combination of public and private services including NGO-s. In the framework of a study on Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy (GPRS), financed by WB, the compilation of political matrix on monitoring Poverty Reduction Strategy which aims at the improvement of Social Insurance System (Pension Reform) and Decentralization, and Performing of social services is coming to an end and soon will be set up the poverty monitoring centre in MOLSA. The delivery of credit is expected to start in April 2002.

2. "Enhancing the capacity of MOLSA in combating the problem of child labour in Albania" financed by the Italian government, (ILO) and Albanian government (MOLSA) with a total amount of circa 32 000 USD with a duration of 18 months.

3. "Retraining of Redundant Public Employees Program" financed by Italian, (ILO) and Albanian government, (National Employment Service - NES) with a total amount of circa 1million USD. The purpose of this project is reintegration of employees, who lost their jobs because of the reform of public structure.

(http://www.mbet.gov.al/english/Stabilitypact/wtab els/cohesion.htm)
operation with private business. These projects have created new employment, especially the public works projects in rural areas, which were undertaken in 1998/1999.

Albanian labour market offers limited possibilities given the poor qualification of the unemployed. While 48% have finished the middle school and 49% have finished the high school they need vocational/re-training programmes to do qualified work. But training opportunities in terms of quantity and quality are very poor. The only progress is the establishment of several private centers, mainly for foreign languages and computer courses. But this centers charge high fees and have little impact on employment. There are also few options for women in the labour market. Currently the female unemployment rate is 21% compared to 15% for males.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Employment, as per NACE* classification</th>
<th>in thousand</th>
<th>in %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1162 1138 1116 1107 1085 1073 100 100 100 100 100 100</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture and fishing</td>
<td>780 778 777 771 768 770 67.1 68.4 69.6 69.6 70.8 71.8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mining and oil industry</td>
<td>20 21 18 16 16 15 1.8 1.8 1.6 1.4 1.5 1.4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Processing industry</td>
<td>81 65 62 58 54 55 7 5.7 5.6 5.2 5 5.1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electricity, water</td>
<td>9 9 10 14 14 14 0.8 0.8 0.9 1.3 1.3 1.3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction</td>
<td>18 21 22 15 11 12 1.6 1.9 1.9 1.3 1.1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trading</td>
<td>32 51 58 47 22 27 2.8 4.5 5.2 4.2 2 2.5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hotels, restaurants</td>
<td>10 11 20 10 13 12 0.9 1 1.8 0.9 1.2 1.1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport and communication</td>
<td>28 30 27 27 33 33 2.4 2.6 2.4 2.4 3.1 3.1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>55 53 46 49 49 48 4.7 4.7 4.1 4.4 4.5 4.5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health</td>
<td>32 26 23 25 27 27 2.8 2.3 2 2.3 2.5 2.5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>96 73 62 75 78 60 8.3 6.4 5.5 6.7 7.2 5.6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Employment promotion projects have also helped create private enterprises and employment within this sector. These projects were implemented in the second half of 1999 and are ongoing. However, many of these jobs are seasonal. There is an evident need for institutions to become responsible for further analysis of the situation, and for the development and implementation of policies and strategies in this area.

4.2 Gender issues

The 1999 Human Development Index ranks Albania at level 100 with a gender-related development index 80 (0.696 in value) placing the country last among Eastern European countries.
The overall employment situation of women has deteriorated despite the fact that their educational achievements are not only comparable to those of men, but in some instances even higher (women account for 65% of university enrolments in 1999). The transition to a democratic system and market economy increased dramatically the number of women who lost their jobs and are today more economically dependent upon their husbands. In the rural areas the situation is even worse because the lack of financial resources to purchase machinery and the high number of emigrated men, forces women to work harder and for longer hours.⁴

A peculiar characteristic of the country is represented by the annual rate of population growth for the year 1990-1998; while the women population experienced an increase of 6.51% in the last eight years, the men population had a negative growth, -2.11%. The data are explained on the one hand by the different life expectancy at birth between men and women, and on the other hand by the massive emigration flows of men in reproductive age in neighboring countries (IMF estimates a total of emigrant workers of 428000 units in 1996).

One of the main gender concerns in Albania today seems to be the missing link between “de jure” and “de facto” equality with regards to access to employment, business and credit institution, health and social services.

Albanian law prohibits gender discrimination and job segregation in public and private employment, but despite this prohibition and despite the high level of women education, also in traditional male dominated areas, employment opportunities for women are still very few and badly remunerated. Furthermore, the intensive involvement of women in the labour force during the communist regime was not accompanied by changes in the division of labour in the family. To some extent the objective of women emancipation by their participation in the paid labour force has been discredited by the double burden women had to bear the responsibilities of family care in addition to remunerated work.

Although the country has ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and has participated to the 4-th World Conference on Women, no major revision of legislation has been undertaken to conform national law to international standards and no serious commitment has been formally taken by the Government.

The newly established Constitution (November 1998) in article 18 prohibits any forms of discrimination based on sex and in the hierarchy of laws international ratified instruments are second only to the Constitution. National courts should disregard any national law or provision contrary to the principles established by ratified international instruments. It remains to be seen, however, how national courts can apply this principle when an official translation of the ratified instruments is not provided by the State. Another element impairing the achievement of gender equality is the delay in

strengthening the existing national mechanism for the protection and promotion of women’s rights. The formal establishment of a national mechanism is a first step, but not in itself sufficient, to achieve gender equality. If, as it happens in other countries, the mechanism is under-funded, under-staffed and has a marginal role in the overall development of the country, its effectiveness will be limited.

Paradoxically the emergence of a more democratic society and the growth of civil society have led not to greater participation in decision-making but in greater exclusion from public life and women’s political participation. Like other countries in transition Albania experienced a sharp decrease in the percentage of women in Parliament, from a top 30% in 1994 to a mere 7.3% in 1997. In mid 1999 only two women were cabinet Ministers, only one women was Prefect and only one women was Head of Commune (out of 309).

The right to employment is sanctioned in the new Constitution in article 49(1): “Everyone has the right to earn the means of living by lawful work that he has chosen or accepted himself. He is free to chose his profession and place of work as well as his own system of professional qualification.”

This principle applies to all citizens, men and women. Article 9 of the Labour Code prohibits any discrimination in employment and occupation. By discrimination is meant any distinction on the basis of sex affecting the right of the individual to equal employment and treatment. Distinctions, exclusions and preferences required for a particular job are not considered discriminatory. Specific protective measures for employees foreseen in this Code by governmental decrees or collective agreements are not considered discriminatory.

By employment and occupation is understood also guidance and professional training, employment in different occupations and work conditions, the accomplishment of work, remuneration, social assistance and termination.

Discrimination in employment is punished with a fine equal to ten times the minimum monthly salary. As far as equal remuneration between men and women is concerned, Article 115 establishes equal payment by the employer for men and women workers, for a work of equal value. This formulation is in conformity with international instruments (ILO Convention N.100 on Equal remuneration, 1995 to which Albania party).

Differential rates, which correspond, without regard to sex, to differences as determined by such objective appraisal as the amount of work, vocational qualification or length of service, are not considered as being discriminatory.

Women’s safety is at risk in Albania. Violence in the household is perceived as a serious problem (no reliable countrywide data exist on the phenomenon). Being perceived as a private matter between husband and wife, domestic violence is not addressed by the public policies. The existing Family Code does not contain any provision, while the penal code makes reference only to sexual violence, but it does not distinguish between violence exerted by
members of the household or by other perpetrators. At present the exercise and the exploitation of prostitution in Albania is a crime sanctioned in the Penal Code. No provision, however, exist regarding trafficking and abduction for purpose of prostitution. The country lacks institutions and financial resources to deal with the problem, which is cross-border and interest origin and destination countries.

4.3 Child Labour in Albania

School enrollment rates, particularly at the secondary level, and especially for children from rural areas have fallen since 1990. According to the Albanian Ministry of Education, the number of pupils (age group 3-14) is 553,411 out of which 213,775 living in cities and 339,636 in villages. The enrollment rate in primary education is 94% and the drop out rate is 3.01% - academic year 1998/1999. The number of pupils (age group 14-18) is 102,161. The enrollment rate is 77% and the drop out rate is 17.39% - academic year 1998 / 1999).

As a result, the expected duration of schooling has dropped to below 10 years. This drop occurred against the background of a decline in public expenditures on education from 3.8% of GDP in 1995 to 2.8% of GDP in 1999. The declining enrollment rates reflect deterioration in the quality of education, the diminishing relevance of traditional forms of vocational and technical training and increased opportunity costs of attending school.

A research\(^5\) carried out during 1998 from the Children’s Human Rights Centre of Albania (CRCA) found out that more than 17 percent of children in the country are involved in one or more forms of child labour. At the same time, the UNICEF MISC (Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey- 2000 estimates that 32% of children are classified as currently working. There is a difference between boys and girls (30% of boys and 28% of girls).

Regionally, the percentage of children working is lowest in the urban areas at 7 % and highest in the rural areas with 45%. Another research\(^6\) carried out during January- February 2000 gives evidence that children in Albania have been involved increasingly in activities that, according to the ILO Convention 182, can be considered as worst forms of child labour.\(^3\) During the former research, six Albanian districts were analyzed. The following main forms of child labour were reported:

- Working Street children
- Children working in agriculture

---

\(^5\) “The Vicious Circle” is a Report on the situation of child labour in Albania. The report was prepared during 2000 from the Children’s Human Rights Center of Albania - CRCA.

\(^6\) ILO Convention concerning the Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour adopted on 17.06.1999 (C. 182).
• Children in prostitution, trafficking in children
• Children involved in trafficking of drugs
• Children working in textile industry

Although poverty is frequently cited as the main cause of incidence of child labour, there are numerous other interrelated socio-cultural factors involved and the problem is much more complex. Conditions that create poverty such as unemployment, economic crises, unequal distribution of wealth, migration, unplanned urbanisation and the growth of the informal sector are all factors underlying the prevalence of child labour. Inevitably, factors such as inadequacies within education systems, crises in families, consumerism, and traditional socio-cultural attitudes also contribute to generating the conditions from which child labour emerges.

There are no official data concerning child labour in Albania. According to the Labour Code, the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs does not recognize the above forms of child labour as “labour”. The Ministry and the General Inspectorate of Labour at a local and central level has never considered child labour as a wide spread problem. Obviously, the Central and Local labour offices lack knowledge and training on child labour and relevant principals and regulations of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, the ILO Convention 138, and 182 and other respective international documents.

The public opinion in Albania has never played its role for the prevention of child labour. Often the family itself is one of the “employers” of children. Child labour seems to be acceptable by the society at large. Moreover, public indifference and tolerance are even furthering the increase of child labour show finally that children’s rights are not at all taken into consideration. This must be challenged. Thus, child labour has to be put on the public policy agenda and kept there through awareness-raising and social mobilization.

Child trafficking and prostitution are the most striking phenomena, and considered as worst forms of child labour. Albanian children abducted or sold by the parents have been trafficked to Italy and Greece for reasons of economical and sexual exploitation. Official data from Italy estimate that there are 900 Albanian young girls working as prostitutes in this country. Other governmental data estimate that more than 2000 unaccompanied children have been illegally trafficked towards Greece and Italy during the recent years. Even if initial research has been carried out during 2000 there is no research dealing with worst forms of child labour. Thus, reliable data on the number of children involved in trafficking and prostitution are not available. Neighboring countries such as Italy and Greece has expressed their concerns about the increasing number of Albanian children trafficked for economical and sexual exploitation. A few governmental and non-governmental protection centers have been established in Greece and Italy in order to host and protect these children.

At present, only a few institutional provisions and structures exist that may prevent children from entering into labour. Otherwise, the law for Pre-University Education in Albania explicitly declares that such institutions are to be established at the Educational District Authority and the Labour District Offices. Yet, a
comprehensive approach for the rehabilitation and reintegration of child laborers is missing. However, providing alternatives for child laborers at community level is crucial, and need to be implemented. Therefore, the capacity of community based institutions needs to be strengthened.

4.3 Youth employment opportunities

a. Governmental initiatives

There is little to say about the Governmental programmes / projects or initiatives related to youth employment opportunities. The collapse of communist regime and socialist economy resulted in massive unemployment of labour force in Albania. More than 600 thousand people are assumed to have emigrated in foreign counties such as Greece, Italy, Germany, USA and Canada.

The massive emigration served as a safety valve related to the high unemployment rates. The Governmental policies since 1998 has been tackling the unemployment phenomena in the country by providing funding to governmental and private agencies to employ manual workers, especially from poor and marginalised groups. However other marginalised groups in rural areas, or Roma people were left unemployed by those schemes.

However unemployment policies resulted in negative aspects for the promotion of youth employment opportunities in the country. Many young people have left the country for working or studying abroad, while crimes committed by young people have increased drastically in the recent years. Data shows that most of the crimes committed in a year have been by young people between 14-25 years old.

The Government of Albania during the recent years has focus its work for youth more on strengthening the curricula of vocational training schools and institutes, than establishing direct links between the business sector and vocational training schemes. Most of these schemes provide to young people vocational training on manual jobs such as electrician, mechanic, hair-dresser or tailor and sewing machinists.

One can say that youth are although privileged in Albania for being employed compared to people between 40-50 years old. The Governmental authorities, and especially the business sector will prefer to employ young people between 16-30 years old. This characteristic of the Albanian labour market is related to the difference of knowledge between the age groups expressed above and of new technologies that are widely used by young people.
The two advertisements below describe the preferences of two different institutions one public and another private related to young people.

**MUNICIPALITY OF TIRANA**

**Call for Employment**

Based on law No. 8224, of 15.05.1997 “For the Organisation and Functioning of the Municipality Police” VKM No.313 of.01.07.2002, the Municipality of Tirana issues this call for employment for the position of:

Police officer in the Municipality Police

**REQUIREMENTS**

- To have a degree in high school or a university degree, and is preferred to have finished a training on police officer.
- To have finished the military duties.
- Good physical conditions and to be 175 cm tall.
- To be not more than 35 years old and for those applying for the first time should be no older than 30.
- To be a good citizen.

**COMMERCIAL BANK OF GRECCE (ALBANIA)**

**BANKA TREGTARE E GREQISE (SHQIPERI)**

**EMPLOYMENT VACANCY**

Commercial Bank of Greece (Albania) is looking for new personnel for its new branch in Vlora (city in South Albania).

**The Candidates should fulfill the following conditions:**

- To be between 22 to 35 years old
- To have a university degree in economics or other relevant sciences
- To have good knowledge of English language (proficiency level) and knowledge of Greek language will be taken into consideration
- Previous working experience

b. **NGO initiatives**

Non-Governmental Organisations are new to Albania. The transition from communist regime to a democratic system flourished in Albania the NGO movement. The data concerning the number of NGO’s working in Albania are contradictory, but many people believe that there are more than 500 registered NGO’s in the country. However most of this NGO’s are little or not at all active, while only some 50 of them have permanent programmes and projects in Albania.
The lack of well-established NGO’s\(^7\) in Albania is believed to be related to some reasons such as the ones below:

- Lack of Governmental funding in Albania
- Lack of funding or sponsoring from private sector
- Poor organisation and weak organizational structure
- There is no distribution of duties and responsibilities within the organisation
- Not focused scope of activity (Many NGO’s try to occupy a wide list of priorities that may vary from women rights to environment or children)

Youth employment for a long time has not been in the priority of the organisations, which were dealing with consequences of the stagnation of the economy, massive unemployment and marginalisation of the society.

However during the recent years with the massive emigration of young people from Albania to foreign countries some organisations have started to re-design their priorities in order to respond to their target groups. Nevertheless such initiatives seems to be at a pilot level and at a limited number, especially because there is a lack of clarity between NGO’s on their initiatives related to youth employment. The main concern is their approach to young people coming from poor and marginalised groups leaving in urban or rural areas. Faced with an increasing need for more vocational training for young people and a non-stable market economy, for most of the NGO’s it has been difficult to respond to the changes within a short time.

This has resulted in a gap between the initiatives of NGO’s to increase youth employment opportunities and the development of market economy in the country. Most of the NGO’s that were contacted or met during the interviewing process either had no initiatives on youth employment opportunities or were planning to address this issue in the near future.

During the research was possible to analyze only five programmes / projects or initiatives related to youth employment, while a dozen of other NGO’s expressed that they were planning to execute similar projects in other districts or towns in Albania.

\textbf{c. Private initiatives}

There is little to say about initiatives related to youth employment opportunities related to the private sector in Albania. In fact one has to mention that there are no programmes / projects or initiatives that are cross linked between the government, NGO’s and private sector.

\(^7\) The term NGO in the Albanian language is translated to OJQ (Organizate Joqeveritare). However even not expressed in the meaning of the word, many understand that OJQ stands for non-governmental and non-profit organisation.
The private sector in Albania does not have any social aspect and is mainly seen only as a partner of the government in paying taxes and duties. NGO’s and private sector does not have any relation with each other especially because the businesses do not profit from tax reduction if they provide funds to NGO’s or pressure groups.

The lack of a scheme where the private sector can undertake social responsibilities, by sponsoring NGO programmes and paying less taxes to the Government, makes the work of NGO’s less effective, which depends to the funds issued by the international community.

5. RESULTS

The results expressed below are collected by the interviews with representatives of NGO’s during the time of the research. The main observation to be made is that most of the organisations seems to be very clear about what they want to achieve by their programme / project or initiative, but however the approach seems to be not very clear or needs to be redefined.

The results are presented based on the NGO programmes / projects and initiatives and they are qualitative and quantitative ones.

1. Youth Albanian Parcel Service (YAPS) so far seems to be the most successful initiative in both job creation and sustainability. It started almost one year ago as a initiative of UNICEF - Albania office with the main aim of providing employment opportunities to marginalised young people in Tirana. YAPS main work is the distribution of express mail in Tirana in exchange for payment.

Almost one year after the establishment of the service, UNICEF offices established the Albanian Children Foundation a non-profit organisation. In this initiative the UNICEF office was assisted by a wide range of sponsors, which now form the Governing body, such as: American Bank of Albania, Vodafone, Coca-Cola, INSIG, Ada Group, Bardha Group, KPMG, Boga & Associates and Rogner Hotel.

The project that started in 2001 is not limited on time. There are no co-operation partners in the project and the budget was initially covered 60% by Banka Inteza and UNICEF, while 40% was covered by the private sector.

Target Group

The target group of this initiative are young people from ethnic minorities, disable and youth without families. The service does not have any gender
perspective, while all the young people who started to work as postman were trained by the organisation before the start of the service. The age group included young people between 16 to 25 years old, most of them coming from single household and marginal groups. The young people are employed full time and two payment methods are used. There is a base salary that every postman receives in the end of the month, while a bonus percentage is applied on every parcel distributed. There is wide difference in the level of education young people. It seems that the majority of people have finished a secondary school, but few others have a primary or tertiary degree of education.

The people to be employed were selected by an open competition within the target group. Calls for employment were issued within the members of two NGO’s, one dealing with orphan young people and the other with disable ones. More than 90 candidates participated in the competition, from which only 40 were selected to participate in the training course.

Region of the implementation

The region of the service is urban marginal. The parcel service at the present is distributed only in Tirana, but soon will start to be implemented in national level with the assignment of more young people in other districts of Albania. So far little is known about the special situation of the region, but one can say that the target group was focused on orphan and disable young people from extremely poor and marginalised groups.

The main reason for the start of the initiative was the poor economical situation of the target group. In fact the Director of YAPS declared that few barriers have been faced during the implementation of the strategy and that they mostly were of technical relevance such as lack of proper maps of Tirana. This barrier was overcome by the preparation of a map by the organisation itself, based on an existing one.

Approach and methodology

As stated above the service was initiated by UNICEF, but the approach and methodology have been implemented previously in another country (Azerbaijan). Based on the lessons learned by the implementation in this country the organizers changed some of the contents of the initiative. In this respect the implementation was done not in partnership with the Government, but with the private sector and staff was trained before starting the service. Since lessons learned previously were taken into consideration the application of the initiative in Albania so far has not faced any problems and restrains during its implementation.
Monitoring and evaluation

Is not clear whether the initiative does have a monitoring and evaluation system. However there is a degree of monitoring of the work of the postman which is result-based, and also through interviews, number of complaints from the organisations using the services, while the financial situation is checked by KPMG. Indicators used by the organisation are more related to the services, then to the application of the programme as a whole. The indicators include the number of services and the quality of the training. The organisation does not seem to have an Impact Monitoring System.

Results – Lessons learned

One year after the application of the initiative the results are impressive. So far, 27 young people from marginalised groups and 9 managers have been employed. YAPS believes that very soon the number of employees will overcome 100 young people throughout Albania. Other results include the distribution of parcel mail, training of staff, monitoring of publicity for local businesses, and finally that sustainability it has been achieved within the first year of the initiative.

The expected benefits of the initiative has been:

- Increase of the welfare for the postman
- Provide more employment opportunities for young people
- Career opportunities

The results so far include:

- Self sustainable
- Change of the working mentality
- Establishment of links between business sector and social initiatives

The list of the Lessons learned include:

- Social businesses can be successful if the initiative is well-planned and a plan of business is prepared before hand;
- A training course for the staff is a necessity before the start of the work.
- There should be close links between the private sector and NGO initiatives.

Sustainability

The initiative so far has proven successful in economical and human terms. Economically the organisation is able to generate enough income to cover taxes, staff salaries and other expenses of the organisation. In
human terms the initiative can be considered successful because more young people will be soon employed throughout Albania.

Replication

This initiative could be replicated in other countries that have similar conditions and legislation in Albania, especially in South Eastern European countries, where societies and economy share a similar degree of comparison.

2. Independent Forum of Albanian Women (IFAW) is one of the major women non-governmental organisations in the country focused on women rights and improvement of their living conditions. Since its establishment the IFAW has been caring out several programmes dealing with women and young girls economical conditions, especially for those coming from poor and marginalised groups

The organisation belong to several national and international networks from whom could be mentioned: Albanian NGO Forum, Women’s National Council, Inter-Balkan Women’s Cooperation etc. The organisation employees five full-time managers and the primary activities of the organisation are related to information and education, social services for women, protection of women’s rights etc.

The organisation has established a network of social-enterprises, which are part of their large programme dealing with employment opportunities for women and young girls throughout Albania. The main initiative of the organisation has been the establishment of two small textile enterprises and two small green houses in 1994. This initiative has been financially supported by UNDP, Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Italian Department of Social Affairs etc and the products produced by the enterprises are exported mainly to Italy or sold in Albania.

The main aim of the programme was to promote the employment of women and young girls, increase their social integration and economical independence.

Target Group

The target group of the programme are unemployed women and young girls from poor and marginalised groups of the society. The age of the target group varies between 18 and above 25 years of age. However there is a lack of a clear picture of the situation of the target group, especially because it is taken for granted that women and young girls live under severe economical conditions, and that there is a lack of employment opportunities for women in Albania. This directly relates to the
deterioration of their social status in the society making them dependent to the husband or family income.

The target group for this initiative is rather a mixed ones, where the managers own a university degree, while the manual workers come from poor and marginalised groups, ethnic minorities, single household or regular ones.

Region of the implementation

Unfortunately there are no relevant data related to the areas selected for the establishment of enterprises. By the organizers it is believed that data were available at the start of the initiative, but at the present the socio-economical conditions of the three districts were the programme is being applied are different. However the programme is being implemented in Tirana, Durres and Vlora with the aim of the replication of the initiative in other districts of Albania in urban marginal areas.

Approach and methodology

The main approach followed by IFAW has been the establishment of four small enterprises for the production of textiles and food products, where women and young girls have been employed in managerial positions and as manual workers. Training has been made available to some of the staff that needed to improve their knowledge and skills. A management structure has been established with the participation of NGO representatives, partners and employees groups.

The programme has been implemented at a local level and the cooperation between the NGO and local authorities has been sufficient to ensure the implementation of the programme in three districts. A research was carried out by the organisation for the textile market in Albania and other neighboring countries, in order to see how the products could be sold and how would the market react to products coming from Albania. Only after such a research was finished the first contracts were signed with local businessmen or with Italian ones.

For an NGO in Albania is not easy to enter in the field of social business, because the lack of business skills of the staff. This makes the organisation to face problems and restraints during the implementation of the initiative. The major restraints faced by IFAW during these years have been:

- Lack of a deep knowledge of the textile or food market
- High taxes are applied by the Government
- Lack of fair competition
- Production difficulties
Monitoring and evaluation

There is no system of monitoring and evaluation in place. Mostly the initiative is based on measuring the impact of the employment on the women and young girls, such as the economical independence, social integration and security.

Results – Lessons learned

The main achievement and result of this initiative has been the employment of 95 skilled women and young girls and 5 managers, and the production of clothes and food items by Albanian women in three districts.

The IFAW staff is convinced that the initiative have had an impact on the lives of the women and young girls. The establishment of the enterprises is not seen only as a matter of employment opportunities and income generating activities, but also as a tool for the economical independence of females and integration in the social life of the communities where they come from. This initiative has strengthened the managerial capacities of the organisation.

Among the results of the programme has been the organisation of Fairs with the products of enterprises and other women products, sensitization of women on their rights, many hours of counseling and information for the women with social problems.

Most of the lessons learned by the management team are related to the market research and knowledge. It is believed that further exploration of the market and a proper fair market could increase the possibility of success of such social businesses in the country.

Sustainability

Since the enterprises have been running from 1994 means that there is a degree of sustainability. However one can understand that this financial sustainability is very fragile, since there has been no profit generated during the time being.

At the present the sustainability is ensured by the funds made available from the donors and the income generated from the production. Since most of the production is sold to Italy, any changes of the market needs in Italy may directly or indirectly affect the programme in Albania.

Replication

The organisation believes that such initiative could be replicated in other parts of Albania or in the region. However organisations taking such
initiatives are advised to deepen their knowledge of the market for their products, review the local taxes and prepare a business plan before the start. Social business should be close related with other social activities or community awareness, if the programme wishes to have a long-term perspective.

3. Women’s Organisation “Refleksione” is again one of the major women organisations in the country focused on women rights, gender discrimination and social integration of women. The catch phrase of the organisation is “We help women to help themselves”. The organisation is part of an Albanian network called “Women’s Centre” and the staff of the organisation includes 6 full and part-time managers and directors and five hundred volunteers. The primary activities of the organisation are mainly related to women’s and young girls employment and discrimination.

In 1999 “Refleksione” started a programme aiming the promotion of employment opportunities to women and young girls and decrease unemployment in Albania through the establishment of an employment agency. The main aim of the agency is to facilitate women’s employment in the private sector by the identification of women’s needs and skills in one side, and by the other side the identification of vacancies in the private sector. The Agency would be the link between unemployed women / young girls and private sector.

The programme has been supported by Cordaid, while no other partners have been included in the initiative.

Target Group

The target group of the programme are unemployed women and young girls between 18 and above 25 years old. Even the programme supports all women, a special target have been marginalised women and young girls in marginalised areas.

The level of education of women and young girls includes not only skills workers with a primary or secondary diploma, but also young women who have a university degree and are looking for a managerial position.

Region of the implementation

The Programme is implemented in three districts of Albania: Tirana, Shkodra and Pogradec. Is believed that these three districts were selected because of strength in staff and knowledge of the situation in the region by the organisation. However at the time of the interviewing the data concerning the situation of the three districts were not available. One can guess that the given districts should have had a high unemployment rate at the year when the programme started. One of the weaknesses of the
NGO’s working in Albania is the lack of governmental sources and data. Being in such situation the real assessment of the situation is rather difficult and the implementation of the programme may not achieve the desirable impact.

Approach and methodology

The approach and methodology of the initiative aimed at the establishment of three regional employment offices for unemployed women and young girls. At a second stage the organisation issued application forms for women and young girls looking for a job, this followed by a sensitization and advertisement process. Parallel with this process the organizers established close contacts with local private sector and identified their needs and vacancies. The final stage of the whole process is the match between the vacancies available and skills of women and young girls applying for a job.

One of the restraints that the organisation has been facing has been the women’s or young girls refusal to work, after the job has been made available to them. In this cases the job has been transferred to other women or young girls who have applied for a similar work.

Monitoring and evaluation

So far the organisation has not established a monitoring and evaluation system. It was stated during the interview that very soon such a system will be put in place. However the organisation does monitor the impact of the programme in terms of job placement.

Results – Lessons learned

The main results achieved during the three years that the programme have been taking place the main identified results have been: the establishment of three employment offices, and employment of almost 50 percent of women who have been applying for a job. Another achievement has been the establishment of close links with private sector and identification of their needs for skilled workers and managers. So far in the three employment agencies have been applying 166 women and young girls with a university degree, 206 with secondary education and 114 with primary level of education.8

8 Albanian primary level of education it divided in two levels primary level has four classes (1-4) and secondary level has also four levels (5-8). At the end of the 8th class the school issues a diploma and most of the students would follow a gymnasium or professional school for the next four years, before they are able to follow university.
Other results include the increase of women’s and young girls welfare, qualifications, economical independence, strengthened capacities of the organisation, voluntarism and the organisations of Fairs for women to show their products. Training have been made available to women and young girls in order to strengthen their capacities.

One of the lessons learned by “Refleksione” is that the cooperation with local government should be at a higher level in order that achieved results to be at a higher degree.

**Sustainability**

Is early to speak about the sustainability of the initiative. In the opinion of the researcher, even that the initiative can produce short and long-term results, at the present can not be avoided the fact that the sustainability is not yet secured.

The three employment offices have been working because the funding has been available. Since neither the women and young girls nor the private sector do not pay for the services that “Refleksione” is offering, the sustainability can not be achieved.

Part of the sustainability process is also the overcome of the barriers and restraints faced during the implementation. The main restraints faced have been, high taxes for the businesses, refusal of the job by the women or young girls and racial discrimination.

**Replication**

The organisation believes that the initiative can be replicated in other regions of Albania or in other countries. However one should take into consideration the sustainability of the services and the extent of the applications.

**4. Albanian Youth Council (AYC) is one of the major youth organisations in the country focused on youth rights, gender issues and youth participation. The catch phrase of the organisation is “We are not only the present but also the future”. The organisation runs in the form of network where more than 20 youth organisations are member. The organisation participates and is member of several networks in Albania and abroad.**

The organisation has not been directly involved in initiating programmes or projects for the promotion of youth employment opportunities in Albania. However the organisation recently started a new initiative to promote youth employment via Internet. A web-page is under preparation and will be available to young people throughout Albania. At the moment of the
interviewing the organisation was at its final stages of the start of the initiative.

**Target Group**

The target group of the programme are unemployed young people between 18 and 25 years old. Even the programme supports all young people, will be focused on marginalised young people from urban and rural areas.

Little is known about the level of education since the initiative has just been initiated and it is in its first steps. However it is willing to take into consideration all the levels of education of young people in Albania.

**Region of the implementation**

The Programme will be implemented throughout Albania, while the webpage is being prepared in Tirana. There is a lack of deep knowledge about the situation of young people in Albania, especially unemployment, since the research about this group has been very limited.

**Approach and methodology**

The initiative takes into consideration the high number of unemployed people in Albania and high percentage of young people in the Albanian population. The main aim of the initiative is to reduce unemployment of young people from Albania, to promote youth employment and career opportunities. A website has been under preparation and very soon will be made available in Internet. Young people will find there employment opportunities that the organisation will find available in the private sector or government. Partner of this programme will be the Municipality of Tirana which cover the advertisement campaign. The organisation will be the link between the private sector and young people, while the website is a tool for the promotion of employment opportunities for young people. Applications will be made via Internet where an on-line application form will be made available and vacancies will be continuously published.

**Monitoring and evaluation**

So far the organisation has not established a monitoring and evaluation system. It was stated during the interview that very soon such a system will be put in place. It seems that the organisation will follow more closely the impact of the initiative and has established a set of indicators such as number of applications made on line, number of employed young people, carrier advancement etc.
Results – Lessons learned

So far the results are not measured and there is not a list of lessons learned. However the main result has been the preparation of the web page and on-line application form, while agreements have been reached with major businesses in the country.

Sustainability

Is early to speak about the sustainability of the initiative. In the opinion of the researcher the initiative could be sustainable because it requests a small staff and little financial implications. However few questions should be taken into consideration such as “How much access do young people have to Internet” and “Is Internet available throughout Albania”. Large towns in Albania do have access to internet, but however large parts of the country do not have access to computers and Internet. In order to overcome such restraint the organisation has decided to publish news and vacancies in Tele-text (See fax) pages in one of national TV channels in the country.

Replication

The organisation believes that the initiative can be replicated in other countries, especially because Internet is being made available globally and many young people use it.

5. Volontariato Internazionale per Io Svilupo (International Voluntarism for Development - VIS) is an Italian non-governmental and non-profit organisation based in Milan, who has established its office in Tirana since 1996. The main aim of the organisation in Albania is to bring development through vocational training and job creation for young people in general.

The organisation works closely and its part of the network of Silesian Communities all over the world including Albania. VIS has focused its primary activities in professional vocational training, promotion of young people and research.

The main initiative of VIS as expressed above is the vocational education of young people. For this VIS and Silesian Community have established “Don Bosko Centre” where more than 400 young people follow daily courses on professions such as electricians, mechanics etc. The programme is supported financially by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Italy, while the Albanian Ministry of Labour has been assisting the organisation throughout the implementation of the initiative.
Target Group

The target group of the programme are young people between 18 and 25 years old. Even the programme supports all young people, is focused on marginalised young people from urban areas. The level of education of young people participating in the vocational trainings is of a primary and secondary level.

Region of the implementation

The Programme is implemented in Tirana. It started as an agreement between Italian and Albanian governments in 1996. VIS was selected as the implementing agency of the project in Albania. An analysis of the market and vocational training needs were identified before the establishment of Don Bosko Centre.

Approach and methodology

The initiative takes into consideration the poor living conditions of children and young people throughout Albania. Most of the young people selected to follow the vocational training courses throughout the year come from very poor and marginalised rural and urban areas. At the end of the course the organisation assists the young people in finding them a job. For this a Training and Employment office has been established by VIS.

A team of 80 teachers and assistants has been formed in order to assist young people in their training. Close relations are kept with the Employment Office of the Ministry of Labour in Albania.

Monitoring and evaluation

There is a system of monitoring and evaluation, which is carried out six times throughout the year by internal and external consultants. This monitoring and evaluation system takes into the consideration the participatory approach of the participants in the vocational training also.

Results – Lessons learned

The main results of the initiative have been:

- 400 young people have been trained so far in different professions
- Establishment of a database of private sector in the area
- Around 40 percent of ex-students have been employed
- New curricula and new books is available
- Young people could have vocational training in 10 subjects and distance learning possibilities is being made available.

During the implementation of the initiative problems and restraints have been faced such as lack of electricity, bad internet connection, lack of support from central authorities, and wish of participants to receive financial support during the time of training.

Sustainability

The sustainability of the initiative at the present is ensured because there is a full support by the governments of both countries, Italy and Albania. On the other the organisation has been able to establish good links between Don Bosko Centre and private sector, so many people after the trained will have a working place.

The sustainability could be ensured by issuing fees to the participants of the courses and a closer relation between the needs of private sector for skilled workers and training courses provided to young people.

Replication

The researcher believes that such large initiative could be replicated in other regions or countries, but the setting up costs are quite high and for that governmental or private funding should be available.
6. COMMENTS ON THE RESEARCH

This research was carried out during a period of four months and for the researcher sometime was difficult to make the difference between stories told by the leaders of the organisations and the real situation.

In Albania there is a lack of data concerning children and youth and finding relevant data for employment opportunities of young people in Albania is very difficult. National and local authorities yet do not see the youth employment as a priority of their policies. Contrary to this few NGO’s are currently working to promote youth employment and these initiatives even may have been implemented since years lack a system of monitoring and evaluation. In fact most of them have been implemented as a social measure and they lack business orientation.

In Albania the exchange of the information between social partners is at a very low level and most of NGO’s fear that sharing the information or experiences with other NGO’s will result in less funding opportunities or “stolen” ownership of their ideas or initiatives. In this respect there is a certain truth, and reality has shown that many international agencies who have established offices in Albania have replicated the ideas implemented by local NGO’s without including them as stake-holders. There is an overlapping of initiatives that produces a competition between NGO’s or other agencies, especially since most of the organisations work in Tirana and only few in other districts.

Most of the organisations would refuse or would not share the budget costs of their projects and some of them would have little knowledge of the situation of the target group or reasons behind the initiative. Some others would not be able to answer to some of the questions posed in the Data-sheet making the data analysis more difficult for the researcher.

Would have been impossible for the researcher to review or interview all the initiatives taking place throughout Albania. All the initiatives included in this research have been taking place in Tirana with some exception. In order to have a clear picture of initiatives carried out all over Albania the researcher contacted with most of the NGO’s via e-mail and telephone. Even more than 100 organisations and agencies took a copy of the data-sheet, only approximately 15 organisations sent a reply, and only five of them filled the data-sheet. Another NGO sent the filled datasheet only after the research was carried out. The others would just express their interest on the research, but when it comes at the level of exchange of information or filling the data-sheet NGO’s would refuse or avoid providing the necessary data.

However some common conclusions can be made by the research such as:
- Youth employment and youth issues are not properly addressed by the Government at a local and central level, despite the fact that many structures and mechanisms have been established to assist young people.

- Youth employment is a very new issue in Albania and this results in a lack of opportunities for young people to contribute in the building of the country, improve their financial situation and become more independent from the family.

- Most of the initiatives on youth employment opportunities taking place in Albania do not have a long-term perspective and lack the assistance of the national and local authorities.

- Governmental funding in Albania should be made available to NGO’s working to increase employment opportunities of young people coming from very poor and marginalised areas whether urban or rural.

- Gender perspective is not always in the focus of NGO’s implementing programmes and initiatives on youth employment and many times gender issues remain un-addressed. However the gender perspective is very strong between women organisations, which sometimes may even result in discrimination of men.

- There is a general acceptance among the public and society in Albania that young people do have more employment opportunities than other age groups in Albania. In several occasions this has amounted in revolts or protests of older people declaring that discriminatory practices have been taking place. However youth employment opportunities are larger in large cities such as Tirana, but almost non-existent in rural areas or small towns, where the private sector is very weak.

7. OUTLOOK FOR FURTHER STEPS

There is a need to implement further steps to improve youth employment opportunities in Albania. For the purposes of this research and of a sustainable long-term perspective of youth employment opportunities the researcher believes that the steps to be undertaken could be:

1. Hold a national workshop with the participation of governmental and non-governmental structures working on youth issues, employment, child labour etc. The workshop should serve as a tool for further cooperation and share of info available between partners.

2. Promote successful initiatives and their replication in other districts or areas where youth employment opportunities are non-existent.
3. Initiate a legislative and policy reform on youth employment opportunities, with the participation of NGO’s and governmental authorities at national and local level.

4. Organize an international workshop in South East Europe and promote the partnership between governments, NGO’s and especially private sector on youth employment initiatives and best practices available.

5. Initiate the establishment of an Info and Training Centre on youth employment opportunities, in partnership with other agencies and NGO’s.

6. Prepare a data-base of NGO’s, private sector, governmental authorities and donors available working on the issues of young people.

7. Provide publications and other info materials on best practices and youth employment opportunities in other regions and countries.
Annex 1

List of Contacts
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Organisation</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Tel/Fax</th>
<th>Contact Person</th>
<th>E-mail</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Forumi i Pavarur i Gruas Shqiptare</td>
<td>Rr“Reshit Collaku”, Nr.100</td>
<td>+ 355 4 228309; + 355 4 247269; + 355 4 228181</td>
<td>Diana Çuli</td>
<td><a href="mailto:office@ifaw.tirana.al">office@ifaw.tirana.al</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shoqata e Grave “Refleksione”</td>
<td>Po Box 2412/1, Tirane</td>
<td>+ 355 4 340432 / 3</td>
<td>Kozeta Jakupi</td>
<td><a href="mailto:refleksi@women-centre.tirana.al">refleksi@women-centre.tirana.al</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YAPS</td>
<td>Rr “Don Bosko”, prane Qendres”Don Bosko”</td>
<td>+ 355 4 253888; + 355 4 253800</td>
<td>Arben Shamia</td>
<td><a href="mailto:arbenshamia@hotmail.com">arbenshamia@hotmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIS</td>
<td>Rr.&quot;Don Bosko”</td>
<td>+ 355 4 240924</td>
<td>Gianluca Antonelli</td>
<td><a href="mailto:vis@icc.al.eu.org">vis@icc.al.eu.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Albanian Youth Council (AYC)</td>
<td>Bul. B. Curri, perballe Kinema Agimit, K 5, Tirane</td>
<td>+ 355 4 259300</td>
<td>Altin Goxhaj</td>
<td><a href="mailto:krsh@abissnet.com.al">krsh@abissnet.com.al</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Useful to Albanian Women (UAW)</td>
<td>Rr. Naim Frasheri, No. 8, Tirane</td>
<td>+ 355 4 223001</td>
<td>Sevim Arbana</td>
<td><a href="mailto:sevim@icc-al.org">sevim@icc-al.org</a>, <a href="mailto:uaw@icc-al.org">uaw@icc-al.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children’s Human Rights Centre of Albania (CRCA)</td>
<td>Pallatet e Shallvareve, Vila mbrapa Fushave te Tenisit, Kati III, Tirana</td>
<td>+ 355 4 242264</td>
<td>Altin Hazizaj</td>
<td><a href="mailto:crca@crca.org.al">crca@crca.org.al</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>