

EURAXESS Members in Focus: Albania

Research and Development in Albania

Albania has a number of research institutions conducting cutting-edge basic research. Eleven of the Top-35 research organizations that receive funding through the EU's Framework Programme for Research and Innovation (Horizon 2020) are from Albania. The capacity of Albania's research institutes to conduct excellent research is also reflected in the relatively good performance in terms of scientific publications.

R&D performance is concentrated in public sector centres and institutes, higher education institutions, line ministries, and the government sector: UNESCO statistics indicate that in 2008, 52.1% of R&D was performed by the public sector and 47.9% by higher education. UNESCO¹ also reports that GERD funded by business enterprises totalled 13.1m ALL in 2007 and 54.3m ALL in 2008 (\$0.308m and \$1.311m in current PPP\$, respectively, or approximately €0.225m in 2007² and €0.891m 2008³). This is the first standardised indicator of the size of BERD in the country—other estimates suggest that the ratio of gross business enterprise expenditure on RTD to GDP is around 0.0025%⁴.



Albania is a democratic and developing country with an upper-middle income economy. Albania is a member of the United Nations, World Bank, UNESCO, NATO, WTO, CoE, OSCE and OIC. It is also an official candidate for membership in the European Union. Furthermore, Albania is one of the founding members of the Energy Community, including the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation, and Union for the Mediterranean.

Albania's R&D Strategy

The **New R&D&I Strategy for the Programming Period 2017-2022** aspires to strengthen the Albania research system (human capital and infrastructure), conduct research relevant to the needs of the country and thus make R&D an indispensable tool for the further development of the Albania economy. In this context, it is intended to launch programmes focusing on the development of human capital for research in a knowledge economy (including support to excellent researchers, support to mobility of researchers to work in enterprises, and support to training for innovation activities, as well as starting grants for new researchers).

Entrepreneurship and Innovation

According to the programme of National Strategy for Development, Science and Innovation, Albanian enterprises are expected to increase their Business Expenditures on Research and Development sensibly. A considerable number of enterprises is more and more undertaking Research and Innovation activities mainly in services and incremental innovations. In this line, The National Agency of Scientific Research and Innovation aims to support a close collaboration between the private businesses and the academic staffs through the

¹ Beyond 2020 WDS - Table View

² Source: European Central Bank, ECB reference exchange rate, US dollar/Euro equal to \$1.3705/€1, 2007 data.

³ Source: European Central Bank, ECB reference exchange rate, US dollar/Euro equal to \$1.4708/€1, 2008 data.

⁴ Estimates from discussions with MES officials, 2011



implementation of The Triple Helix Project (Public + Businesses + Academia).

Funding and Recruitment Opportunities

The government constitutes the largest R&D source of funds (in 2015, 0.4% of the GERD was funded by GOV) and the third largest R&D performer (after Higher Education Institutes and Business). The National Agency for Scientific Research and Innovation www.akti.gov.al is the supreme State advisory body for national policy for research, technology and innovation. The responsibility of funding research is shared between the *Ministry of Education, Sports and Youth* and the *Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs*.

The National Agency for Scientific Research and Innovation (NASRI) consider the scientific and technological cooperation agreements as important in increasing the national capacities of the scientific research level. There are calls launched to do justice to this importance and these calls are funded from the government's budget.

The agency has a record on carrying out bilateral calls with Slovenia, Austria, Turkey and Italy. It is also important to note that governmental agreements on science exist with a whole range of states/countries all around the world. Furthermore, Albania has an interstate agreement with 9 of the 28 European Union member states.

International Research Cooperation and Mobility Examples

Important information for incoming researchers

[EURAXESS Albania](http://euraxess.al) is a resource for foreign researchers who plan to come to Albania. Whether you are looking for information about work, study or everyday life in Albania, EURAXESS Albania covers all matters relating to your professional and daily life, job and funding opportunities. EURAXESS Albania is also a platform for researchers, entrepreneurs, universities and businesses.

The Higher Education sector is the largest R&D performer accounting for expenditure in 2015. At the end of 2015, the Higher Education sector was composed of 12 public universities and 28 institutes subordinated to Ministries. In addition to public, there are 24 private universities of various types accredited by the *Ministry of Education, Sports and Youth* operating in the country.

The R&I strategy for the next programming period 2017-2022 focuses on the following priorities:

- Areas of traditional strength for the country (examples: tourism, energy);
- Areas of recent successes in terms of critical mass and on-going activities (examples: IT, engineering, energy);
- Areas of high added value and able to deliver major economic benefit and employment prospects (examples: energy, nutrition – food sciences); and

Areas of national interest (examples: food production, archaeology, culture, energy, defence).