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Youth Guarantee Implementation Plan 2023-2024 Albania

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Progress Report 2023

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Abbreviation

ALMPs	Active Labour Market Policies
AQF	Albanian Qualifications Framework
DCM	Decision of the Council of Ministers
EIP	Economic and Investment Plan
EU	European Union
EU4SI	EU for Social Inclusion
EU4LMI	EU for Labour Market Inclusion
EWS	Early Warning Systems
ICT	Information and Communication
ILO	International Labour Organisation
INSTAT	Albanian Institute of Statistics
LFS	Labour Force Survey
MoECI	Ministry of Economy, Culture and Innovation
MoEF	Ministry of Economy and Finance
MoSYCh	Ministry of State for Youth and Children
MoES	Ministry of Education and Sports
NAES	National Agency for Employment and Skills
NEET	Not in Education, Employment, or Training
NESS	National Employment and Skills Strategy
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NYA	National Youth Agency
PES	Public Employment Services
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNICEF	United Nations Children’s Fund
VET	Vocational Education and Training
YG	Youth Guarantee
YGIP	Youth Guarantee Implementation Plan

Executive summary

The 2023 progress report highlights the main achievements of the first year of implementation of the Youth Guarantee Implementation Plan, which was approved as part of the National Employment and Skills Strategy 2023-2030 through the Decision of the Council of Ministers nr. 173, date 24.3.2023. The report monitors the implementation of reforms and initiatives under the four phases of the Youth Guarantee scheme, with the aim to integrate youth aged 15-29 into employment, education, or training within four months of registration, targeting NEETs (Not in Education, Employment, or Training). This initiative marks Albania's commitment to addressing youth unemployment and inactivity, fostering a more inclusive labor market.

Prevention and Mapping. The NEET journey begins with prevention of early school leaving (ESL), since the risk of becoming a NEET already starts during education and continues after the completion of formal education as many young people may still face difficulties in finding jobs for various reasons. Consequently, empowering and prevention initiatives must begin at the school level. This includes engaging in proactive work with schools and adopting various forms of drop-out prevention and outreach programmes. For this purpose, during 2023, NAES, in cooperation with UNICEF and other partners have set up the early warning system (EWS) and established many local and national networks for identifying young people at risk of dropping out from schools. For the first time, in 14 vocational secondary schools in Albania, the EWS is being implemented as a dropout prevention measure. During this period, more than 200 education personnel in 14 pilot schools were trained and mentored by national and international experts on the implementation of the EWS,¹ and more than 150 vocational school students were advised and mentored through direct assistance, sharing ideas for dropout prevention projects and peer activities. These pilot schools were further supported by provision of grants for the implementation of school projects proposed by vocational school students, which involves cooperation with teachers, parents, the local community, local businesses and municipal institutions. Participation and access to vocational education have also been encouraged with the revision of the Government Decision No. 666,² which enabled the provision of half-scholarship to all girls attending vocational education and the provision of scholarships for those students who undertake VET programmes that are not in high demand. Similarly, the Government Decision No. 119³ was approved to cover transportation costs for students studying outside their residence to avoid any possible dropouts due to transportation reasons.

Communication and Outreach: To bring services or information to all young people, particularly those who are "hard to reach" (e.g. those who are not registered with public or non-public support services), during 2023, the NAES began to design the National Youth Guarantee Digital Portal to clearly convey the message of the YG scheme and its service offer. The portal aims to serve as a unique gateway where all young people can access a wide range of information and services, including job offers, training and professional development opportunities, career counselling, and information on available support programs for young people. In addition, the portal will have features to provide guidance on creating CVs and advice on job interviews. The platform will feature a questions and answers section and feedback area for continuous service improvement. In the framework of designing and implementing information and awareness raising campaigns to attract young people to the services

¹Including teachers of general and vocational subjects, representatives from the Development Unit, psychologists and social workers.

² Dated 10.10.2019 "On financial quotas for food in canteens and dormitories and determining the criteria for benefiting from payment scholarships for students of pre-university education in public educational institutions".

³ Dated 1.3.2023 "On the use of public funds for the transportation of educational personnel and students who work/study outside the residence".

and measures available within the YG, the NAES carried out information campaigns for the launch of the YG in three pilot regions targeting and inviting both NEETs and employers to apply for the YG.

Preparation. On 27 October 2023, NAES launched the pilot phase of the Youth Guarantee (YG) programme in three municipalities: Tirana, Shkodër, and Vlorë. The launch event was attended by senior representatives from the EU Delegation in Albania, the Ministry of Finance and Economy, the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare, the Ministry of Education and Science, the Ministry of State for Youth and Children, and other partners such as the International Labour Organization (ILO), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), EU4SI, and UNICEF. For the implementation of the pilot phase of the YG, NAES prepared a pilot plan, designed the implementation procedure for Albania⁴, and redesigned and refurbished offices to serve NEETs. In addition, more than 50 employees of EOs, Public Vocational Training Centres and vocational schools operating in the three pilot municipalities were trained to provide more specialized services for NEETs. In parallel, NAES has started developing the YG module within the IT system for delivery of services as well as to track the journey of NEET young people before, during and after involvement in the YG scheme according to monitoring framework requirements of the EU. During the period 21 November - 31 December 2023, 72 young people received the preparatory assistance (47 in Tirana, 22 in Shkodër and 3 in Vlora). They were supported with individualised approach which started by assessment of individual needs to identify individual barriers and continued with drafting of the individual action plan and delivery of widespread services that match individual needs, such as job counselling, career guidance, soft skills development, including digital skills.

Offer. To adapt its offer of ALMPs to the needs of youth NEET, NAES, reviewed existing programmes during 2023 as well as added new ones. To this end, two Government Council Decisions regulating current employment promotion programmes were revised⁵, and a new Decision on traineeships was drafted and approved by the Government⁶. The traineeship programme will be implemented for the first time in YG's three pilot regions, which will cover three to six months of on-the-job training followed by six months of employment. During 2023, in total 72 young people received an offer of ALMPs and return to education after receiving the preparatory assistance.

This report was presented and validated in the Technical Work Group meeting held on 3rd of December 2024.

⁴ NAES is also collaborating with the Swedish Employment Service, which has carried out an assessment of employment services that can be sub-contracted, among others for vulnerable groups and youth NEET.

⁵ Government Decision No. 17- "On the procedures, criteria and rules for the implementation of employment promotion programs through employment, job training and professional practices" and No. 535- "On the procedures, criteria and rules for the implementation of the public works program in the community" to make youth NEET as part of priority vulnerable groups, make them eligible to have access to benefits during their participation, and reducing the age criterion in the "Public Work in the Community" program from 25 to 21 years old in order to include more young people who are Economic Aid beneficiaries.

⁶ Government Decision No. 264, (dated 27.04.2023) "On the approval of the Procedures, Criteria and Rules for the Implementation of the Employment Promotion Program, according to the Youth Guarantee scheme through Learning at the Workplace".

Section 1: Introduction to the Youth Guarantee Implementation Plan 2023-2024

1.1. Youth Guarantee in Albania

The European Commission's 2022 Report on Albania recognizes the government's commitment to establishing a youth guarantee scheme, reflected in the adoption of the Brdo Declaration on ensuring sustainable labour market integration for young people on 8 July 2021. In line with this commitment, Albania aims to gradually implement the Youth Guarantee scheme, as outlined in the National Employment and Skills Strategy 2023-2030 (NESS). This strategy specifically targets young people Not in Education, Employment, or Training (NEET), and is in line with the objectives of the Western Balkans Youth Guarantee, as part of the Economic and Investment Plan (EIP) Flagship no. 10.

The main objective of the Youth Guarantee Implementation Plan (YGIP) is to provide unemployed and inactive young people, registered at employment offices, with quality employment, training, or education opportunities within a period of four months from the date of registration. The programme will primarily focus on the NEET population aged 15-29, given their high unemployment and inactivity rates. By addressing the challenges faced by youth in accessing suitable jobs and acquiring relevant skills for the labour market, the Youth Guarantee aims to alleviate the lack of future prospects that often leads to an increased need to emigrate. To facilitate the successful implementation of the Youth Guarantee, Albania has adopted the Youth Guarantee Implementation Plan 2023-2024 (YGIP).

The key phases outlined in the Youth Guarantee Implementation Plan in Albania are:

Mapping. The mapping phase includes reforms and initiatives aimed at obtaining better and more systematic knowledge of the young NEETs together with the early intervention initiatives intended to prevent young people from becoming NEET. The focus of this phase will be to provide better knowledge as a basis for better policies and more effective action and address the need to have a broader set of data to characterise young NEETs in Albania in a more systematic and profound manner. For this reason, this part of the Plan includes the reform of the information gathering strategy in order to guarantee a regular and systematic approach. In addition, an integrated approach is envisaged based on piloted methodologies to prevent students from leaving school without finishing their secondary education and becoming NEET.

Outreach. The outreach phase prioritises the need to have a local approach to finding and registering the inactive NEET. This task is central for the long-term success of the YGIP in Albania. An important area of reform is the setting up and activation of local cooperation networks and the involvement of new partners in implementing employment and training policies. This phase seeks to respond to the significant extent of inactivity among young people between the ages of 15 and 29. Achieving this will require improving outreach from institutions, such as municipalities and NGOs, through reforms that build the capacity and fund the strategies of local networks. Also included in the outreach phase is the development of a communication strategy aimed at supporting the YGIP.

Preparation. The reforms in the preparation phase are intended to improve the implementation of the YGIP preparatory measures and offers. For this reason, special emphasis is given to build capacity to implement offers and provide and counselling and guidance to better answer individual expectation and needs. Indeed, the efforts required to activate young NEETs need to be targeted and responsive. The counselling and guidance component (school and professional) is widely recognised as a gap in the implementation of employment, education and training policies at various levels. Reforms in this phase will also look at the developments and adjustments needed to the NAES structure and the capacity building of the entities (public agencies and private sector actors) which are involved in implementation but lack the necessary experience and human resources.

Offer. The last phase of the YGIP brings together the main programmes to be mobilised to help young people re-enter education and training or transition to employment. The main focus in the field of employment policies is on boosting and consolidating the recently adopted policy instruments, targeting their application to YG target groups by improving the procedures adopted and the

empowering actors. To that end, consideration is being given to diversifying initial and continuing education and training strategies and the creation of an apprenticeship system is planned, thereby strengthening links with companies and addressing the demand for qualifications in the labour market.

The approved YGIP 2023-2024 is in line with the strategic frameworks described above and provides for policy interventions in the following areas:

- (1) promoting information and activation strategies for young NEETs supported by local partnerships that are open to institutional diversity and value proximity to young people;
- (2) strengthening the role of school and vocational guidance and counselling in the mediation processes that govern access to employment and education and training programmes, as well as in matching job seekers with job opportunities;
- (3) consolidate the portfolio of Active Labour Market Policies and considering making reforms concerning this policy area;
- (4) strengthen the link between education and training on the one hand and labour market dynamics on the other; and
- (5) create incentives and strengthen further continuous training opportunities that offer young people the possibility of a second qualification.

This plan is guiding the initial pilot phase, which was launched on 27 October 2023. The pilot programme will begin in selected municipalities before expanding nationwide. These municipalities were chosen based on their capacity for efficient service delivery and socio-economic factors. The pilot municipalities are: Shkodra (North), Tirana (Central), Vloora (South). The target groups include individuals with varying skill levels, such as graduates, youth with limited qualifications, and unemployed youth, using a “first come, first served” approach. This will encompass new registrants and currently registered unemployed jobseekers who wish to participate in the Youth Guarantee programme. An extended pilot, would also include other adjacent municipalities, which are part of the same regions.

1.2. Institutional Framework

The Youth Guarantee National Coordinator is the deputy minister responsible for employment, skills and the public employment service. The YG National Coordinator is responsible for the national coordination and implementation of the plan, in coordination with other relevant national agencies. In addition to the National Coordinator, two groups have already been established and their members appointed to support the design, implementation and monitoring of the YG: the Inter-Institutional Working Group and the Technical Working Group.

NAES is responsible for the executive coordination of the YGIP, and the Executive Coordinator of the Plan is the NAES General Director. The Executive Coordinator is responsible for managing the plan and coordinating the implementation of the instruments contained therein.

Implementation will also involve the participation of multi-level players, such as municipalities, and the significant contributions from NGOs, mainly those supporting young people (particularly those in vulnerable situation).

In addition, the YGIP institutional arrangements foresee a coordination and monitoring platform (monitoring committee) to integrate the various relevant policy sectors. In addition to the responsible institutions at the central level and implementing institutions, cross-cutting coordination, and alignment with the ministries responsible for education and social protection, their implementing agencies, as well as with the municipalities play a key role in implementing the employment and skills development policies. Integrated service delivery at the local level remains a challenge. Local authorities are expected to play a central role in the successful implementation of the Youth Guarantee.

Section 2. Detailed Progress report

This section of the report provides detailed information on the progress of implementation of the planned reforms and initiatives, categorised by the phases of YG implementation.

Key reforms

Integration of additional indicators in the Labor Force Survey (LFS) to better characterize NEET youth. This will be crucial for ensure periodic review of the NEET profile to enable tailored interventions based on individual characteristics.

Reviewing the Public Employment Services (PES) system to improve governance and support the implementation of the Youth Guarantee, including the development of a methodological guide for YG implementation. Preparing the Employment Offices of Tirana, Shkoder and Vlore for the implementation.

Development of a voluntary pre-registration system for NEET youth, through e-Albania, integrated into the Employment Services Systems (ESS). To gather additional information and facilitate better service provision, young jobseekers are assigned to a counsellor, who officially registers them into the preparatory services.

Scaling up of the Early Warning System that monitors the risk of dropping out of school, based on pilot projects aimed at reducing school dropout rates.

Provision of social support measures like scholarships for at-risk students, to reduce economic barriers and prevent early school leaving.

Strengthening career counseling and guidance in VET systems, targeting NEET youth with tailored training and career advice.

Establishment of a system to evaluate labor market trends, aimed at orienting students in VET and higher education, as well as determining necessary qualifications.

Initiatives

2.1. Mapping

The YGIP in Albania aims to create a robust system for characterizing the NEET population, ensuring continuous regulation and updating of policy measures. This involves integrating data from the Labour Force Survey, with improvements proposed through an autonomous statistical module by INSTAT to include additional variables for better characterization. Moreover, a complementary registration system for NEETs identified during outreach activities will collect detailed information on their economic, social, and educational conditions. This dual-purpose data collection will support activation strategies and provide insights for policy development.

Early intervention to prevent young people from becoming NEETs is crucial. The YGIP builds on existing efforts like UNICEF and the Italian Embassy's "Qendro" program, which developed an Early Warning System (EWS) to identify students at risk of dropping out. This system supports at-risk students through targeted strategies and interventions. The YGIP proposes expanding these initiatives, implementing tracking systems in basic and secondary education, and developing

comprehensive support measures for students with learning difficulties or economic challenges, thereby improving their transition from school to the labor market.

Additionally, the YGIP emphasizes social support measures to reduce barriers to education and training. This includes assessing dropout risks in upper secondary education, implementing learning support programs, and developing systems to monitor market trends and employment rates of graduates. The plan advocates for pilot projects to refine these approaches and the development of a qualification needs analysis system to guide vocational and career guidance efforts. These measures aim to align the YGIP with labour market demands, ensuring effective integration of NEETs into education, training, and employment.

Within the first phase of the Implementation Plan for the Youth Guarantee some key reforms and initiatives to identifying the target group, available services and skills needs as well as ensuring prevention through tracking and early warning systems were planned. The following are the main achievements and progress made by the institutions in specific topics related to the phase 1.

Key results during the reporting period

Develop an open NEET pre-registration system allowing to collect (on a volunteer basis) additional information about the young NEET. This will be based in an online YG dedicated portal. The pre-registration system should be integrated with the NEET platform.

Integration of Pre-Registration System: In alignment with the principles and rules established by the European Union, and with the support of EU4SI, NAES differentiated the pre-registration of young people within the Employment Services System. This differentiation led to the development and implementation of an online service on e-Albania titled "Application for the Youth Guarantee (Employment, Education and Vocational Training)." This service, which went live on November 21, 2023, marks the start of the pilot phase of the Youth Guarantee in Albania. The online service facilitates the preliminary registration of young people in the scheme. Once registered, their status is confirmed by the Employment Office as Registered Unemployed Jobseekers, officially beginning their journey in the Youth Guarantee scheme.

Within the framework of the Youth Guarantee scheme, NAES has also designed the "Youth Guarantee" portal. This portal aims to serve as an informative window for young people, providing comprehensive information about the Youth Guarantee scheme, the services, and opportunities available. The portal is populated with relevant information and is expected to be launched during the roll-out phase of the scheme throughout Albania. The Youth Portal is yet to be officially launched and promoted. <https://garanciarinore.puna.gov.al>

With regards to the development of the NEET database as provided by the Youth Law, the **National Youth Agency (NYA)** reported that the database is still in the process of being drafted. This database is essential for the integration and functionality of the NEET pre-registration system, ensuring that comprehensive data collection on young NEETs is achieved.

Scale up the piloted Early Warning System already developed and tested. This monitoring system will allow to assess the risk of failure and dropout after compulsory education.

This intervention aims to empower and engage students at risk of dropping out of school and becoming NEET, with a particular focus on girls. Throughout 2023, efforts were concentrated on establishing local and national networks for identifying at-risk youth and developing career guidance programs. These efforts included implementing an early warning system to prevent dropouts in pre-university education, including vocational high schools, with the support of UNICEF. The approach, called "Early Warning Systems" (EWS), helps children stay in school through strategies and interventions tailored to meet their specific needs. EWS enables schools or education authorities to recognize risk factors early, before a student drops out, providing them with the necessary support to remain in school through targeted strategies and interventions.

Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES) has been improving the mechanisms to prevent children from dropping out of the compulsory education system, with the support of UNICEF. During 2023, in parallel to the work with the general high school, EWS was extended also to 14 VET providers.

UNICEF has also worked with school staff and children on Social-Emotional Education (ESE). In cooperation with the Pre-University Education Quality Assurance Agency, they developed a guidance document for school directors and teachers on incorporating ESE skills in 9-year schools. As part of the "Qëndro" project, UNICEF, MoES, MECI and two local NGOs are implementing EWS and ESE in 98 schools (14 vocational schools and 84 general secondary schools) across several districts, including Dibër, Durrës, Kamëz, Krujë, Elbasan, Korçë, Fier, Tirana, Divjakë, and Skrapar.

The training modules for EWS and ESE have been adapted for both vocational and secondary schools within the Albanian context. So far, 75 VET teachers, 6 NAES employees, and 836 school staff from secondary schools have received training on EWS and ESE. Additionally, 166 secondary school principals were trained on evaluating the implementation of the Early Warning System and promoting ESE to reduce school dropouts. Schools received assistance in drawing up plans and projects for preventing dropouts, and UNICEF provided grants to 98 schools to implement these projects.

Assessment of the Implementation of social support measures to reduce disadvantage to access the education and training system. To extend the student at risk scholarships through using a funding that MoES provides to Municipalities.

Support for VET Students. NAES has initiated several measures to support vocational education and training (VET) students by reducing barriers to VET access. These initiatives are part of the broader strategy to promote VET and ensure equitable access to education and training for all students. NAES proposed significant amendments to the Council of Ministers' Decision no. 666, dated October 10, 2019. This decision, titled "On the financial quotas for food in canteens and dormitories and the definition of criteria for the benefit of payment scholarships for students of pre-university education in public educational institutions," underwent amendments in 2023 to enhance support for VET students.

The amendments proposed by NAES were accepted and approved in 2023, resulting in expanded support measures, including:

- Provision of a transport allowance for students living more than 5 kilometers from their VET institutions.
- Scholarships based on academic and vocational training results.
- Dedicated scholarships, including 50% scholarships for girls in VET programs and 100% scholarships for girls enrolled in atypical courses.
- Increase in the number of VET courses eligible for scholarship support to encourage broader participation and reduce financial barriers.

Reinforcement of counselling and guidance in VET (mainly after compulsory education)

In accordance with MFE Instruction no. 14, dated May 27, 2021, each Institution Offering Accredited Vocational Programs (IOAFP) has established a Development Unit. This internal structure within VET providers is pivotal in offering orientation and career counselling services to students and trainees. The Development Unit ensures that prospective students, their parents, and the wider community have access to comprehensive information regarding the nature of the professions and qualifications offered by the VET provider. This initiative aims to create awareness and understanding of the vocational opportunities available, helping candidates make informed decisions about their educational paths. The Unit collaborates with the business relations coordinator to stay informed about labor market trends, career opportunities, potential employers, and salary levels. This collaboration ensures that students and their parents receive up-to-date guidance on the employment landscape, helping them make informed career choices.

Capacity building for career guidance in education. This initiative is designed with the aim of reducing early school leaving.

NAES established and activated the Network of Professionals (AFPro) to enhance information and career orientation, with the support of UNICEF. This network focuses on three main areas of economic development: Information and Communication Technology, Agriculture, and Hospitality-Tourism. AFPro aims to create a strong and sustainable community by bringing together students, teachers, entrepreneurs, businesses, young professionals, and policymakers. The platform promotes quality education, enriches school-business interactions, and enhances career potentials within the VET system.

Some of the main activities that AFPro conducted in 2023 were:

- ◆ **Hack for Albania:** An event designed to foster innovation and problem-solving skills among students.
- ◆ **Ask the Mentor:** Sessions where students interact with professionals to gain insights and guidance on career paths.
- ◆ **Soft Skills Training:** Workshops to develop essential interpersonal and professional skills.
- ◆ **Food Festival:** An event to showcase skills and promote interaction between students and industry professionals.
- ◆ **Exchange Days:** Activities facilitating the exchange of ideas and experiences among students, teachers, and professionals.

On this topic, the **Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES)** reported achievements made in 4 different directions.

Career Counselling in Higher Secondary Education: Career counseling is conducted in all higher secondary education institutions. At the beginning of each school year, Career Counselling Commissions (CCC) are established to develop work plans for career counselling activities targeting students in grades X, XI, and XII. These activities involve:

- Establishing Working Groups formed to focus on career counselling within schools.
- Drafting Activity Calendars made for the year's career counselling activities.
- Implementing Career Counselling Activities that involve students, teachers, parents, and professionals from various fields. School coordinators, career counsellors, and school leaders collaborate to support lifelong learning and career development, promote student autonomy, and help students transition from school to the workforce.

Additionally, MoES, in cooperation with the Chamber of Commerce and Industry, organizes "Graduate Information Days" annually. These events allow Higher Education Institutions to promote their study programs and familiarize graduating students with available opportunities for the academic year 2023-2024.

Career Guidance in Basic Education: At the start of the school year, Career Orientation Commissions (COC) are established in basic education institutions to oversee career guidance activities. Guardian teachers guide students and parents on education profiles, abilities, and career inclinations. Activities include:

- Informative Classes discussing students' abilities, preferences, and desires for further education.
- Joint Activities with Vocational Schools. Vocational schools conduct open classes and information campaigns for 9th-grade students, presenting various career paths and labor market trends. Meetings between basic education students and vocational school representatives help familiarize them with vocational courses and practice environments.

Capacity Building for Career Guidance and Counselling: Under the "Cooperation Agreement for Career Counselling for Pre-University Education Students" dated May 5, 2022, a new role of career coordinator was introduced and 300 career coordinators were identified in schools. This reform was developed initially through UNICEF support, and now is part of the policy and financing by MoES.

During 2022-2023, a pilot project was implemented as a collaboration between MoES and the Municipality of Tirana, involving four high schools and three nine-year schools. Training materials developed by the non-profit organization "RisiAlbania" and the Municipality of Tirana were used in the pilot project, benefiting 3,403 students:

1. Grades III-V: 634 students
2. Grades VI-IX: 792 students
3. Grades X-XII: 1,977 students

The pilot demonstrated the effectiveness of career education support materials, leading to the expansion of the project to additional schools for the 2023-2024 school year. Four more secondary schools and three additional nine-year schools were included in the expanded implementation.

Career Orientation Guide: A career orientation guide was approved with order no. 600, dated October 19, 2023, by the Deputy Minister of Education and Sports. During August 2023 to June 2024, UNICEF supported 486 vocational school students through the "Boosting Skills" program, providing training in functional skills, life skills, and employment. The program improved students' communication, ICT skills, leadership, social-emotional skills, and critical thinking. It also facilitated regular school attendance and included meetings with businesses and industries to provide networking opportunities. 245 students from nine-year schools participated in promotional activities organized by vocational school students, where they showcased vocational education options and courses.

A [joint order approved](#) for the first time in 16.10.2023 by the MoECI and MoES establishes the conditions and procedures for transferring students between general secondary education (gymnasium) and vocational **high schools** in Albania. This order supports guidance and counselling towards the VET offer, which is highly relevant for addressing labour market needs in Albania.

Piloting the integrated implementation of several assessment tools to identify the needs of the labor market: the qualifications it requires and the job opportunities it offers.

(related to the reform above and related to the systematic implementation (starting with piloting) of the labor market analysis. Therefore, it is presented here as an initiative.)

During 2023, the **National Agency for Employment and Skills (NAES)**, conducted a series of regional meetings under the theme "Medium-term planning of the VET offer". These meetings were crucial for aligning VET with labor market needs at the regional level. The participants included leaders of Institutions Offering Accredited Vocational Programs (IOAFPs), heads of development units, heads of Employment Offices, employer representatives, and business representatives on the management boards of VET providers.

The primary objective of these regional meetings was to facilitate discussions and share opinions in joint working groups. The focus was on proposing and agreeing on the regional VET offer, ensuring it aligns with the specific needs of the labor market. Key sectors emphasized during these discussions included Hospitality-Tourism, Agriculture/Forestry, Technical courses, and Information and Communication Technology (ICT).

Based on the recommendations from the regional meetings, schools have taken several measures to align their teaching offers with labor market demands for the 2023-2024 school year. This includes:

Review of VET curricula: NAVETQ has reviewed 26 existing VET programmes to ensure they meet the current needs of the labor market. In addition, two sectorial skills committees have been established, to support this revisions, as well.

Opening of New VTC Courses: New short term curricula have been developed to introduce new courses that the labor market demands.

To systematically assess the needs of the labor market for professional qualifications, NAES is in the process of drafting a comprehensive guide. This guide will outline the procedures that schools should follow in planning their educational offerings, ensuring they are in accordance with labor market needs.

Overview of the current status of reforms and initiatives

Nr	Name of the reform/initiative	Completed	Initiated	Not initiated
Planned Reforms				
1	Including additional indicators into the LFS to better characterize young NEET to be included in the LFS		√	
2	Develop a system to assess labour market trends (1)		√	
3	Summary assessment of NAES Information System (PES)		√	
Planned Initiatives				
4	Develop an annual basis assessment of the NEET profile in Albania		√	
5	<p>Develop an open NEET pre-registration system allowing to collect (on a volunteer basis) additional information about the young NEET.</p> <p>This will be based in an online YG dedicated portal.</p> <p>The pre-registration system should be integrated with the NEET platform.</p> <p>This initiative can be supported on the database foreseen in the Law on Youth which according to the MSYC-being developed.</p>		√	
6	Scale up the piloted Early Warning System already developed and tested. This monitoring system will allow to assess the risk of failure and dropout after compulsory education. (2)		√	
7	Offer learning programmes aiming to help flagged students.		√	
8	<p>Assessment of the Implementation of social support measures to reduce disadvantage to access the education and training system.</p> <p>To extend the student at risk scholarships through using a funding that MOES provides to Municipalities.</p>		√	
9	Reinforcement of counselling and guidance in VET (mainly after compulsory education)		√	
10	Capacity building for career guidance in education. This initiative is designed with the aim of reducing early school leaving		√	

Nr	Name of the reform/initiative	Completed	Initiated	Not initiated
11	Pilot an integrated implementation of several assessment tools to identify labour market needs concerning qualifications and job opportunities		√	

2.2. Outreach

Outreach is a critical component of the YGIP in Albania, particularly given that most NEETs are inactive, with only 28.7% of unemployed NEETs registered with employment services. The outreach strategy requires a geographic and relational proximity approach, engaging young people through trusted local actors to gain their attention and build trust in the Youth Guarantee. Effective communication, especially via web resources and social media, are essential in reaching and enrolling young NEETs. The aim of the strategy is to leverage local networks, including municipalities, youth organizations, and local employment services, to register young NEETs, provide information on programs and labor market opportunities, raise awareness, and develop basic employability skills.

Local Youth Councils, in collaboration with youth workers in each municipality, play a crucial role in identifying and addressing NEETs. These councils can communicate information to the National Youth Council, which advises the Minister of State for Youth. The registration of NEETs is a precondition for activating the Youth Guarantee, as current data shows a low registration rate in NAES databases. Bringing young people into the system is vital, and this requires building the institutional capacity of local partners. Key support actions include capacity-building programs for technical staff, implementing grant schemes to support youth organizations, and developing an online communication and data recording system for preliminary registration.

This outreach strategy aligns with the new Law 75/2019 on Youth, which allows youth organizations to receive funding from various sources and mandates the creation of local youth councils to advise on youth policies. These councils will help dynamize local networks and address capacity-building needs. Additionally, the Youth Law's provision for a youth database to provide up-to-date information and support policy planning and evaluation can be integrated with the outreach strategy's data management needs, ensuring a cohesive system for managing Youth Guarantee entries, services, and exits.

These are the main achievements and progress made by the institutions within the second phase of the Implementation of the Youth Guarantee Plan.

Key results during the reporting period

Amendments to legislation framework (by-laws) applied to youth organization grants.

Based on Law 75/2019 "On Youth" and the subsequent Decision no. 681, dated September 2, 2020, titled "On the method of creation, organization and operation of the National Youth Agency (NYA)," along with Decision no. 566, dated July 29, 2022, titled "On determining the criteria and selection procedures of Youth Organizations and Organizations for Young People, which benefit from funding from grant funds from the state budget, dedicated to youth," **the NYA** has been implementing a grant scheme for youth organizations and young people. Nevertheless, this granting mechanism needs to be revised in order to include thematic areas relayed to supporting the outreach efforts at the local level.

So far, three calls for grants have been made under this scheme. These calls aimed to support youth organizations in their efforts to carry out information dissemination and activation tasks among young people. While these projects do not directly implement the Youth Guarantee scheme, they are crucial to the outreach process for NEET youth and in connecting young people with the labor market. The

initiatives focus on engaging youth, providing them with necessary information, and activating them to participate in various programs.

It is important to note that the National Youth Organization, which is expected to play a pivotal role in these efforts, has not been chosen yet. The selection of this organization is a critical step in ensuring that the legislative amendments and grant schemes are effectively implemented and that the outreach and engagement goals of the Youth Guarantee are met.

Consolidate the network of Local Youth Councils and provide them with the capacities needed to exercise its competences.

In March 2023, the **NYA** successfully constituted all 61 Local Youth Councils across Albania. This marked a significant milestone in ensuring that these councils are established and operational at the local level. Throughout 2023, the NYA focused on enhancing the capacities of these Local Youth Councils. Periodic Trainings Sessions were conducted to equip council members with the skills and knowledge required to effectively perform their roles. These trainings covered various aspects of council operations and youth engagement strategies. Technical Assistance was provided to support the councils during their constitution and operational phases. This assistance ensured that councils were established according to best practices and could function efficiently. Instructional Manuals were developed to serve as comprehensive guides for council members, detailing procedures, responsibilities, and best practices for managing youth-related activities and programs.

Communication campaign supported, mainly, in social media channels. (Developed within the YG Communication Strategy)

In 2023, the **NAES** actively engaged in developing and conducting information campaigns for the Youth Guarantee scheme. Key activities included:

Launch of the Pilot Phase: On October 27, 2023, NAES launched the Pilot phase of the YGIP with a high-profile event. The ambassador of the EU in Albania, the deputy Minister of Finance and Economy, representatives from the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare, the Ministry of Education and Science, the Ministry of State for Children and Youth, and partners like ILO, EU4SI, and UNICEF were present in this launch.

Promotion in Pilot Regions: NAES focused on promoting and informing employers and targeted youth in the three Youth Guarantee Pilot regions. The goal was to encourage their inclusion in the Youth Guarantee Program.

Social Media Campaigns: During the October-December period, NAES utilized social media to create awareness about the Youth Guarantee, supported by the EU4SI project. This included posting calls for interest to apply to the Youth Guarantee and creating and sharing a promotional video to highlight the program's benefits and opportunities.

Throughout 2023, the **NYA** also implemented a comprehensive communication campaign to support the activities of the Youth Guarantee. This campaign included:

Digital and Physical Outreach extended beyond social networks and websites to include physical meetings and events. Key activities included organizing 12 Education, Training, and Employment Fairs across various counties: Kukës, Lezhë, Shkodër, Dibër, Elbasan, Durrës, Tirana, Berat, Fier, Vlorë, Gjirokastër, and Korçë. Hosting local meetings, summer camps, Winter School, and other interactive events were part of the campaign.

YG Application Promotion: promoting the application process for the Youth Guarantee to ensure widespread awareness and participation among eligible youth.

Portal "On youth" foreseen in the Law on Youth as the main online communication strategy under YGIP. (The "On youth" portal is also included in the mapping phase as above presented)

As part of the Youth Guarantee Scheme implementation in Albania, the **NAES** has designed the "Youth Guarantee" portal. This portal aims to serve as an informative window for young people, providing comprehensive details about the Youth Guarantee Scheme, available services, and various offers. It includes a wide range of information to support young people, such as:

- Detailed descriptions of the Youth Guarantee Scheme.
- Information on services and offers available under the scheme.
- Guidance on how young people can benefit from the scheme and access different programs.

The portal is fully populated with relevant information and is expected to be launched during the roll-out phase of the Youth Guarantee Scheme throughout Albania. This launch will ensure that young people across the country can easily access important information and resources related to the Youth Guarantee.

Local network training

The NYA has undertaken efforts to inform and train Local Youth Councils and Persons Responsible for Youth about the Youth Guarantee, its programs, the portal, and the registration system. These efforts included multiple formats to ensure broad and effective dissemination of information and training like Summer and Winter Schools, Physical Meetings, Online Fairs, etc. A formal outreach model is currently being developed with the support of EU4Youth project, funded by the EU and implemented by UNDP and UNICEF.

Overview of the current status of reforms and initiatives

Nr	Name of the reform/initiative	Completed	Initiated	Not initiated
Planned Reforms				
1	Amendments to legislation framework (by-laws) applied to youth organization grants.		√	
2	Consolidate the network of Local Youth Councils and provide them with the capacities needed to exercise its competences.	√		
Planned Initiatives				
3	Communication campaign supported, mainly, in social media channels. (Developed within the YG Communication Strategy)		√	
4	Portal "On youth" foreseen in the Law on Youth as the main online communication strategy under YGIP. (The "On youth" portal is also included in the mapping phase as above presented)		√	
5	Local network training		√	
6	Outreach contract programme			√

2.3. Preparation

The primary issue under discussion is the extent of the role that NAES plays in the implementation of the YG and the intermediate services preparing young people's participation. A preliminary assessment highlighted NAES's heavy workload and the limitations in significantly extending its current responsibilities. However, cross-national experience shows that PES typically has a central role in implementing YG, a natural consequence given the target group. Therefore, choices must be made regarding NAES's involvement in managing and monitoring YG. It appears that utilizing and further developing NAES's existing information system is the most viable option. This system should be enhanced to trace young people's paths before, during, and after YG participation. Specific

information, counselling, and guidance services could be delivered through a network of partners, including NAES local services, municipalities, schools, and youth organizations. NAES should coordinate and supervise the design and implementation of these services, ensuring consistent quality and effective delivery. Developing an integrated platform, such as the "On Youth" portal, connected to the PES database, will facilitate self-registration and data transfer, streamlining the process of creating personal records and validating NEET status within NAES's system.

Furthermore, job search assistance and specific training programs, including job searching skills, soft skills, and digital skills, are crucial components of the preparation phase. Mobilizing a network of vocational training providers to offer these short-term courses will be essential. Recent consultations with over 1,200 Albanian youngsters and children revealed significant demand for early career counselling. Currently, career counselling is provided in the third year of high school. In January 2023, the Ministry of Education and Sports issued a guidance to introduce and support career guidance and orientation for students in grade 9 of lower-secondary education⁷ and integrate it into a broader service platform. This platform aims to reach more young people and address their challenges more effectively, ensuring that their voices are reflected in the strategies, including the YG.

Some important achievements have been made for the implementation of this phase according to the planned reforms and initiatives set out in the YGIP.

Key results during the reporting period

Reform of the eligibility criteria related to the implementation of employment promotion programs.

In 2023, the **NAES** undertook significant revisions of the Employment Promotion Programs to better align them with the needs of NEET youth. This included revising the eligibility criteria in key regulatory frameworks:

DCM no. 17 outlines the procedures, criteria, and rules for implementing employment promotion programs through employment, on-the-job training, and professional practices. The revisions aimed to include NEET youth as a priority vulnerable group, providing them with enhanced access to employment opportunities and support.

DCM no. 535 governs the implementation of the public works program in the community. The revision included lowering the age criterion from 25 to 21 years old, allowing more young people who are part of the economic assistance program to participate. This change is intended to increase the inclusion of NEET youth in public works and community projects.

The revisions of the programmes incorporated several crucial elements to support NEET youth which is now recognized as a priority vulnerable group within the employment promotion programs. NEET are granted access to bonuses, providing them with additional incentives to engage in employment and training programs.

In addition to revising existing programs, NAES implemented a new program, 264/2023, titled "On the job training, according to the Youth Guarantee Scheme." This is a *Traineeship model* designed specifically under the Youth Guarantee scheme and targets the NEET demographic. The program includes 3 to 6-month courses focused on on-the-job learning, followed by an additional 6 months of employment for participants. The program will be initially rolled out in the three pilot regions of the Youth Guarantee scheme, allowing for targeted support and evaluation.

Capacity building of NAES by developing staff skills (articulate with new job descriptions in development under SREP/VET) and increasing the number of human resources.

As part of the initiation of the Pilot phase of the Youth Guarantee, NAES has undertaken extensive efforts to enhance the capacities of its staff across various employment offices, Training Centers, and

⁷ The approved guidance can be found at: <https://www.ascap.edu.al/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/Udhezuesi-i-karrieres-klasa-9-Final-1.pdf>

Vocational Schools. These efforts have been crucial for the effective implementation of the Youth Guarantee scheme and have been supported by the EU4SI project.

Portal "On youth" (foreseen in outreach strategy)

As part of the broader Youth Guarantee Scheme implementation in Albania, NAES has developed the "Youth Guarantee" portal. This portal is designed to be an informative resource for young people, offering comprehensive details about the Youth Guarantee Scheme, the services available, and the various opportunities it offers. The portal has been populated with some relevant and helpful information for young people. It is expected to be officially launched during the roll-out phase of the Youth Guarantee Scheme across Albania. This launch will ensure that young people nationwide have easy access to vital information and resources related to the Youth Guarantee, facilitating their engagement and participation.

Consolidation of the Pre-University Information Management System (SMIP)

The Pre-University Information Management System (SMIP) is designed to facilitate the online registration and transfer of students in public and non-public pre-university education institutions through the e-Albania government portal. This system aims to streamline administrative processes and improve the management of student information.

During 2023, significant progress was made in achieving the objectives set for SMIP. Key accomplishments include:

Online Registration and Transfer: The system enables the registration and transfer of students online, reducing the need for physical paperwork and visits to local education offices.

Interaction of Systems: Through the interaction of various educational systems, SMIP generates receipts, certificates, and tracks student career data throughout their school years. This integration ensures that all relevant information is consolidated and easily accessible.

Real-Time Information for Students: Young people over the age of 18 can access real-time information about their academic results and generated documents. The digital stamp provided through e-Albania eliminates the need for students to physically visit pre-university education offices or the Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES) for these documents.

The Educational Services Center (ESC) plays a critical role in supporting the effective functioning of SMIP. ESC ensures that the system operates smoothly and provides necessary assistance to users.

Methodological Guide to Support counselling and guidance according to NEET

In the context of career counselling and guidance, NAES has developed and implemented a relevant guide for Career Guidance and Professional Training. This guide is specifically designed to assist the staff of Employment Structures at the local level in effectively supporting NEET youth.

Deliver short training courses addressing employability skills of the NEET (job search skills, labour market soft skills, digital skills).

NAES has integrated soft and digital skills into the package of employment services provided to all unemployed jobseekers, including NEET youth. These skills are essential components of the Youth Guarantee scheme and are critical for improving the employability of young people.

The training courses offered by NAES cover various essential skills to prepare NEET youth for the labor market like job search skills, labor market soft skills, digital skills, etc.

An integral part of the process includes personalized counselling and adaptation of job search methods to the individual needs of each participant. Through this approach, NAES ensures that all participants in the Youth Guarantee program receive tailored support that addresses their specific challenges and enhances their employability.

Overview of the current status of reforms and initiatives

Nr	Name of the reform/initiative	Completed	Initiated	Not initiated
Planned Reforms				
1	Reform of the eligibility criteria related to the implementation of employment promotion programs.		√	
2	Establish a network of counselling and guidance services - "open door shops" - managed in partnership between NAES, Municipalities and NGOs. (Delivered within the context of Local Youth Councils and in articulation with their role in the outreach strategy. To involve the youth workers)		√	
3	Capacity building of NAES by developing staff skills (articulate with new job descriptions in development under SREP VET) and increasing the number of human resources.		√	
Planned Initiatives				
4	Train staff from NAES regional and local agencies, municipalities, and NGOs		√	
5	Portal "On youth" (<u>foreseen in outreach strategy</u>)		√	
6	Consolidation of the Pre-University Information Management System (SMIP)	√		
7	Reinforce counselling and guidance within education and training system (mainly after compulsory education)		√	
8	Methodological Guide to Support counselling and guidance according to NEET		√	
9	Deliver short training courses addressing employability skills of the NEET (job search skills, labour market soft skills, digital skills.		√	

2.4. Offer

The YG in Albania aims to offer opportunities across four branches defined by the EU framework: Employment, Education, Traineeships, and Apprenticeships. Initial proposals focus on three primary program groups: employment support, initial VET and continuous training and second chance opportunities. Employment and internships measures leverage existing Employment Promotion Programs, including a self-employment program regulated by the Council of Ministers. Key developments to enhance these programs include increasing budgetary allocations for labor market policies, building the capacity of NAES services, developing forecasting systems to align measures with labor market needs, and removing the requirement for unemployed jobseekers to be registered for three months before accessing Employment Promotion Programs. A medium-term objective is to evaluate and refine these programs based on previous impact evaluations and ongoing assessments to ensure their effectiveness in increasing employment probabilities.

Improvements in VET are essential to expand capacity and better meet young people's needs. Key proposals include expanding VET offerings in both public and private sectors, autonomous completion of upper secondary education within VET paths without the Matura Examinations for those not pursuing higher education, allowing VET enrolment beyond age 21, creating short and medium-duration vocational training courses aligned with labor market demands, and expanding level 5 qualification courses in the National Qualification Framework. Additionally, reinforcing work-based learning and enhancing career counselling, information, and communication are crucial. These initiatives aim to position VET as a dual-path system, providing both a skilled workforce and a route to higher education, as highlighted in the 2020 UNDP Review of VET in Albania.

The development of an Apprenticeship system is a challenging but essential component of the YGIP. Although its short-term impact may be limited, establishing a robust Apprenticeship system could significantly enhance vocational training and align it more closely with labor market needs. Current apprenticeship experiences, regulated by the Law on Crafts and led by the National Chamber of Crafts, are limited and primarily focused on craft occupations. New developments in the VET sector are supporting the provision of dual programmes within the VET programmes (AQF level 2-4). A broader approach, involving more VET and training providers and aligning training with national qualification standards, is necessary. Recently approved regulations set procedures for business apprenticeships by VET students and trainees, representing a starting point for an institutionalized Apprenticeship System. The Youth Guarantee provides an opportunity to support and accelerate the development of this system, contributing to the consolidation of the Albanian Qualifications Framework and making VET more responsive to labor market demands.

Key results during the reporting period

Expand offer of post-secondary vocational courses addressing level 5 of qualification of the Albanian Qualification Framework. Courses with 1 year of duration for both graduates of general secondary schools and vocational schools, and other interested young individuals.

Review and support the part time system of MoES that works for students beyond the age of secondary education (needed for soft skills, career orientation, ... as part of this programme)

The MoES is focused on expanding the availability of post-secondary vocational programmes that align with level 5 of the Albanian Qualification Framework. These one-year courses are designed to cater to graduates from general secondary schools, vocational schools, and other young individuals interested in acquiring advanced vocational skills. The goal is to provide a comprehensive educational pathway that equips students with the necessary skills to meet labor market demands and enhance their employability.

Part-time education is a crucial component of the pre-university education system in Albania, offering flexibility for students who need to balance education with other commitments. For the 2023-2024 school year, part-time education is available in 16 institutions for Basic Education, with a total of 317 students enrolled. Similarly, in Higher Secondary Education, part-time education is provided in 16 institutions, accommodating 4,570 students. This system plays a significant role in supporting students beyond the age of secondary education, providing opportunities for those who may have missed out on completing their education earlier.

To further support the part-time education system, efforts are being made to integrate essential components such as soft skills development and career orientation into the curriculum. This holistic approach ensures that part-time students not only complete their educational qualifications but also gain valuable skills that are critical for their personal and professional development. By addressing these needs, the MoES aims to create a more inclusive and supportive educational environment that caters to diverse student populations.

The goal of expanding level 5 offer must contemplate the need to revise the current training programmes.

For the academic year 2023-2024, public higher education institutions in Albania offer a total of 52 professional study programs at Level 5 of the AQF. These include 51 two-year programs enrolled by 4,981 students and 1 one-year program enrolled by 21 students.

In non-public higher education institutions, there are 54 professional study programs at Level 5 of the AQF, which include 53 two-year programs enrolled by 1,612 students; and 1 one-year program enrolled by 11 students.

The current training programs for Level 5 qualifications have been developed based on an analysis of labor market requirements and economic development priorities. This ensures that the programs align with the needs of the country's economy and provide relevant skills to students.

Establishing the Work Based Learning System within the system of the VET sector

In alignment with the Youth Guarantee Plan and with the aim of diversifying opportunities for the target group, the NAES has approved a new Employment Promotion Program titled "Work base learning, according to the Youth Guarantee Scheme." This program, approved under DCM 264/2023, is designed to provide vocational training through on-the-job learning, followed by employment.

The new program targets young people aged 15-29 who are not employed, not enrolled in professional training or education, and not following any educational cycle. It offers 3 to 6-month vocational training courses delivered through on-the-job learning. These courses are designed to provide practical skills and hands-on experience in various industries. After completing the vocational training, participants are employed for an additional six months. This ensures a seamless transition from training to employment, providing young people with valuable work experience and increasing their employability.

The program will be implemented for the first time in the three pilot regions of the Youth Guarantee. This initial phase aims to test and refine the program's effectiveness, allowing for adjustments and improvements before a broader rollout.

Capacity building of NAES by developing staff skills (articulate with new job descriptions in development under SREP VET) and increasing the number of human resources. (see in articulation with reform included in preparation phase)

In preparation for the Pilot phase of the Youth Guarantee, NAES has undertaken a series of training programs to develop the capacities of staff in employment offices, Training Centers, and Vocational Schools. These training initiatives are supported by the EU4SI project and aim to ensure the effective implementation of the Youth Guarantee scheme.

The EU4SI project has played a crucial role in supporting these capacity-building initiatives by providing resources, expertise, and logistical support. This collaboration has enabled NAES to deliver comprehensive training programs that align with the new job descriptions being developed under the SREP VET initiative.

In addition to developing staff skills, NAES is also focused on increasing the number of human resources to better support the implementation of the Youth Guarantee scheme. This includes hiring additional staff to manage the increased workload and ensure that the programs are delivered effectively and efficiently.

Overview of the current status of reforms and initiatives

Nr	Name of the reform/initiative	Completed	Initiated	Not initiated
1	Planned Reforms			

Nr	Name of the reform/initiative	Completed	Initiated	Not initiated
2	Review the VET regulation to enable youngsters over 21 years old to enter and re-entering the VET offer.			√
3	<p>Revise the current VET structure in order to avoid State Vocational Matura for the students that will not continue higher education, aiming to enter in employment.</p> <p>To create an autonomous certification.</p> <p>(Amendment of point 4b) of article 16 Revision of law no. 15/2017 "On education and vocational training in the Republic of Albania")</p>	√		
4	<p>Expand offer of post-secondary vocational courses addressing level 5 of qualification of the Albanian Qualification Framework.</p> <p>Courses with 1 year of duration for both graduates of general secondary schools and vocational schools, and other interested young individuals.</p> <p>Review and support the part time system of MOES that works for students beyond the age of secondary education (needed for soft skills, career orientation, ... as part of this programme)</p>		√	
5	Comprehensive Impact Evaluation of the Active Labour Market Policies		√	
6	Establish an Apprenticeship System within the VET sector system		√	
7	<p>Assess the needs to expand offer and make it more attractive.</p> <p>Implement measures and strengthen the second chance opportunity programme</p>			√
8	<p>Capacity building of NAES by developing staff skills (articulate with new job descriptions in development under SREP VET) and increasing the number of human resources.</p> <p>(see in articulation with reform included in preparation phase)</p>		√	
9	Continuous education and training		√	
Planned Initiatives				

Nr	Name of the reform/initiative	Completed	Initiated	Not initiated
10	Raise the offer of Internships Program Open access to a wider target group. (1)		√	
11	The National Internship Program, 7th call, will be administered by the MSYCH, unlike the previous six calls managed by MAS. It offers young people aged 21-26, who have completed at least a bachelor's degree, the opportunity for a 3-month internship in central and local institutions, businesses, NGOs, and more.	√		
12	Employment Programme		√	
13	On the Job Training		√	
14	Self-employment Programme		√	
15	Financial support for Roma and other vulnerable groups as migrants. Scholarship program for high school students (post compulsory education including VET paths) from families in economic difficult.		√	
16	Vocational Training Courses The offer should prioritise emergent transversal skills (as digital skills) and relevant economic sectors (as tourism).		√	
17	VET short courses – from 3 up to 12 months – organized in modules.		√	
18	Increasing VET courses		√	
18	Apprenticeships Courses		√	
20	Support small social enterprises promoted for imprisoned youngsters		√	

Section 3: Direct Monitoring Indicators

The direct monitoring indicators have not been developed during 2023. NAES is working to develop and produce data for 2024.

Section 4: Conclusion

The Youth Guarantee Implementation Plan has achieved notable progress in its first year of implementation, laying the foundation for a more inclusive and effective approach to youth activation and integration in the labour market. The achievements outlined in this report reflect the commitment of institutions, partners, and stakeholders to addressing youth inactivity and unemployment, and fostering opportunities for education, training, and employment. While the progress so far is encouraging, the journey continues. The second year of implementation will build on these successes, ensuring that Albania's youth are better equipped to navigate the labor market and secure sustainable futures. The lessons learned and experiences gained will serve as a basis for refining strategies and expanding the reach of the Youth Guarantee, reinforcing its role as a key instrument for youth inclusion and economic empowerment.