

LAUNCHING OF LOCAL HUMAN DEVELOPMENT LABORATORIES IN SHKODRA AND VLORA REGIONS, ALBANIA



On June 8 and 9, 2011 the Deputy Minister of Education and Science of the Albanian Government, Nora Malaj, local authorities of Shkodra and Vloa Regions, "Luigj Gurakuqi" and "Pavaresia" Universities, the local economic development agencies TEULEDA and AULEDA, representatives of UNDP and the KIP Initiative, media and other local development actors launched the first Albanian Laboratories of the KIP Initiative in Shkodra and Vloa regions. They are the first step in establishing the Albanian branch of the KIP International School for the Millennium Platform.



A national coordination committee chaired by the Ministry of Education and Science, has guided the process to establish the two laboratories, while the local authorities of Shkodra and Vloa Regions, "Luigj Gurakuqi" and "Pavaresia" Universities and the local economic development agencies TEULEDA and AULEDA are the main implementing actors. Their aim is to stimulate, analyze

and systematize innovative local practices of human development, attracting national and international researchers, practitioners and students to study and learn from them and develop and disseminate new knowledge and know-how.

With academic coordination from the involved universities, participants in the two laboratories are already engaged in identifying, analyzing and systematizing a number of potentially innovative development processes and practices in the two regions, including the implementation of the mental health reform, recuperation of architectural and cultural heritage and promotion of sustainable tourism. Several intensive and interactive modules facilitated jointly by international and local academics and experts accompany the research process. The first two of these took place from 8 to 15 June with the participation of international professors Antonio Vasquez-Barquero from the Autonomous University of Madrid, Gilda Esposito from the University of Florence and Giancarlo Canzanelli, coordinator of ILS LEDA, together with Professors Arjeta Troshani from the University of Shkodra "Luigj Gurakuqi" and Arta Musaraj, Rector of "Pavaresia" University.

In this phase, thirty participants from the public administration, the LEDAs, the universities and civil society organizations are directly involved in the laboratory activities and will receive 12 European Transferable University Credits upon successful completion of this first innovative cycle of professional development comprising both practical field research and academic teaching and tutoring. This initiative is supported by UNDP's ART GOLD Programme and KIP's Universitas Programme, in collaboration with ILSLEDA.