

# Assessment on findings and recommendations to improve VET dormitories of Korca & Saranda<sup>i</sup>

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<sup>i</sup> The content of this document and set of recommendations are validated by Municipality of Saranda on 19<sup>th</sup> of March 2018 and Municipality of Korca on 20<sup>th</sup> of March 2018.

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## **Acronyms, main authorities and institutions**

### **Project**

- AL-Tour – The project: “Supporting Quality and Access to Tourism Education and Training”
- ADA – Austrian Development Agency
- KKA – KulturKontakt Austria
- CDC-TFF – Community Development Center “Today for the Future”

### **Local authorities and institutions**

- Municipality of Korca
- Municipality of Saranda
- ESSEDC – Enterprise of Supporting Service for Education and Daily Cares, Municipality of Korca
- EEO - Economic and Education Office, Municipality of Saranda

### **Acronyms**

- CoM – Council of Ministers
- DCM – Decision of Council of Ministers
- MoEY – Ministry of Education and Youth
- MoFE – Ministry of Finance and Economy
- MoSWY – Ministry of Social Welfare and Youth
- NGO – Non-Governmental Organization
- LGU – Local Government Unit
- VET – Vocational Education and Training
- VTC – Vocational Training Center

## Introduction

Residential endorsement of dormitories serves as one of the significant aspects in the framework of sustainability of professional education.

This assessment aims to identify key factors that contribute to poor occupancy of dormitories by students, especially those coming from disadvantaged families and rural areas, and girls, on two selected schools: Technical / Economic school "Isuf Gjata" in Korca and "Antoni Athanas" Professional School of Saranda.

In addition, the assessment provides a set of recommendations to be considered by both Municipalities of Korca and Saranda and further with the support of ALTOUR project to the policy and central level, on how to overcome the poor occupancy phenomena.

The assessment is built upon a thorough methodology, considering occupant perspectives, their families, dormitory's working force, central and local officials' perspective and private sector representatives.

The assessment takes into account various factors, such as technical, social, financial, legal and regulatory context. The outcome is a set of recommendations that will further influence the stakeholders' dialog in promoting dormitory as an institution that counts for VET education of youth, especially girls.

With the validation of findings from both municipalities and dormitories, and further elaboration of recommendations in the joint round tables respectively in both cities, the document will be further elaborated with an action plan for change.

## Origin of the term

The etymology of the word "Konvikt"<sup>1</sup> (for dormitory) in Albanian language, is the equivalent of convicted in English, shading lights on negative connotation of these premises in the social mindset of the past generations. This mindset somehow feeds the prejudice of Albanian families when taking decisions on their children education. The prejudice is heavily encountered towards girls coming from rural areas or marginalized groups, seriously impeding this group from achieving a sustainable education.

This assessment will try to provide practical recommendations to shift the general perception of these facilities, from secluded places, to an inclusive and safe environment.

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<sup>1</sup> Konvikt derives from "Convictus" in Latin, equivalent to convicted or imprisoned

## Methodology

This assessment is part of ALTOUR Project.

AL-TOUR – “Supporting Quality and Access to Tourism Education and Training”, aims at enhancing the quality and competitiveness of the labor force in the tourism sector through the improvement of Vocational Education and Training (VET) provision in tourism, hospitality and catering. It is implemented by KulturKontakt Austria (KKA) with the local partner Community for Development Center “Today for the Future” Albania (CDC-TFF) , with support of Austrian Development Agency (ADA).

It targets two tourism schools respectively, “Antoni Athanas” of Saranda and “Isuf Gjata” of Korca, and other vocational schools, respectively VTC of Korca and VTC of Gjirokastra with a focus on tourism, to enhance the quality of their education and training provision, their cooperation with the tourism sector and the access of vulnerable groups to these schools. A previous assessment is done on both dormitories targeting the possibilities of inclusion and application of the Austrian concept of using dormitories as “teaching light hotels” for work-based learning.<sup>2</sup>

The assessment is based the work done on the review of all relevant sectorial, financial and regulatory documentations, and on a series of site visits<sup>3</sup>, meetings and interviews<sup>4</sup> with dormitories residents, dormitory staff, VET school’s teachers, local government officials, family representatives, primary health care personnel<sup>5</sup>.

For the evidence-based input of this report, the data is required and received through close and open questions by both Municipalities and by dormitories; observation on site, interviews and collection of views and opinions. Both supervisors of dormitories in Korca<sup>6</sup> and Saranda were extensively interviewed and also officials of Korca and Saranda Municipalities.

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<sup>2</sup> “Study on infrastructure needs of professional schools and service capacities and potential of dormitories as teaching hotels”

<sup>3</sup> Site visits: Korca (27 –28 February 2017, 19 May 2017, 18 December 2017 ) Saranda (2 May – 3 May 2017, 26 December 2017)

<sup>4</sup> Data gathering tool: Direct meetings during site visits, phone interviews and email, Baseline Report Act. 7.6.

<sup>5</sup> 2 officials of ESSEDC Korca, 5 Municipality officials (3 in Korca, 2 in Saranda), 10 students, residents in dormitory (6 Korca on 18 December 2017, 4 on Saranda 2 May 2017), 4 interviews with parents’ representatives (2 Korca on 19 May – VET school open day, 2 Saranda on 3 May – VET school open day ), 5 dormitory staff (2 head of dormitories and 3 staff, 2 Saranda, 3 Korca), 1 official of health care provider in Dormitory of Korca, 2 Directors of VET Schools

<sup>6</sup> New head of Korca Dormitory informed

Private sector views and opinions<sup>7</sup> were taken into consideration when drafting the recommendations.

The assessment methodology is based on an extend search of available data. The task started by collecting information on the legislative and regulatory framework<sup>8</sup>, the budgeting and the financial implications, flow of funds between Ministry of Finance/Education to respective municipalities and other paramount financial incentives such as scholarships and refunding. The assessment analyzed and summarized the key areas with issues to be addressed.

It also looked at how to bring a set of recommendations in line with actual needs, within limited financial resources under disposal. Additionally, the assessment looked at various technical and infrastructure needs, closely combining with social needs of the target groups.

Some of the issues that assessment took into consideration were:

- At what extent can the dormitories' overall conditions be considered as "acceptable" for living?
- Comparing to the alternative living and accommodation options on the local market of Korca and Saranda, where do the dormitories stand?
- What is the trend of students' accommodation in the dormitories so far?

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<sup>7</sup> AL-Tour Workshop with private businesses 28 Feb. 2017 Korca, 3 May 2017 Saranda

<sup>8</sup> Law no. 7952 dated 21.06.1995 "On pre-university education system"

Law no. 139/2015 dated 14.01.2016 "On local self-governance"

Law no. 15/2017 "On Vocational Education in Albania"

law No. 9643 dated 20.11.2006 "On Public Procurement", as amended

Law no. 9936, date 26.06.2008 "For Budget system management in Republic of Albania"

MoF instruction, No. 8, date 29.03.2012, "On standard procedures to prepare medium term budget"

MoF Instruction, no. 7/1, date 28.02.2014, "On the local budget planning 2015-2017"

Law No.130/2016 "On the state budget 2017"

MoF instruction, No.2, date 06.02.2012, "On the standard procedures of budget execution"

Law no. 8744, date 22.02.2001 on "Transfer of state real estate property to local government units", changed with

Law no. 9561, date 12.06.2006

DCM no. 500, date 06/05/2009, on the Approval of the "National Strategy on Occupational Safety and Health".

DCM No. 818, date 26/11/2014 "On the approval of the "National Strategy on Employment and Vocational Training 2016– 2020"

DCM no.502 , date 16.4.2008, "For the administration of pre-university education dormitories", changed with DCM no.1710 , date 29.12.2008

DCM No.753, date 13.12.2017, "For financial quota of food in dormitory canteens, scholarships and students payments in public education institutions, for academic year 2017-2018"

DCM No.873, date 14.12.2016, "For financial quota of food in dormitory canteens, scholarships and students payments in public education institutions, for academic year 2016-2017"

LAW No. 7961, date 12.7.1995 "Labour code of the republic of Albania" (Amended by Law no. 8085, date 13.3.1996; Law no. 9125, dated 29.7.2003; Law no. 10 053, dated 29.12.2008; Law no. 136/2015, dated 5.12.2015.)

- Is there a correlation with trend of students' attendance in respective professional schools of Korca and Saranda? (given that the number of accommodated students coming from these schools is insignificant in both dormitories)
- What is the image / perception of dormitories at large? (accommodated students, community, parents, stakeholders etc)
- Do any prejudices / biases for students of dormitories among students in school, neighborhood and community around exist that create negative effects to them?
- Are there any hidden features in dormitories' environment that create uncertainty or insecurity in considering it as accommodation option?
- Have municipalities /dormitories carried out any analysis of situation and any measures to improve it?
- Is there any action plan for improving the attendance level of dormitories and if yes, is there a budgetary plan foreseen?
- How and at what level will the use of Dormitories as work-based learning within the concept of "Teaching light Hotel" affect the environment of accommodated students or potential ones, especially girls?

The assessment is carried out by CDC-TFF through:

- Preliminary presentation meeting with dormitories and municipalities
- Qualitative and quantitative method of data collection through interviews, especially on issues related to the social degree of the assignment.
- In-depth work meetings with dormitories' management on analysis and data collection on status quo of use of dormitories
- In-depth work meetings with municipalities on financial management, budgeting, human resources of dormitories and extent of inclusion into local plans.
- Coordinative and exchange meeting with KKA
- Deskwork



## Governance context

From legal aspects, the dormitories are subject to only two direct piece of legislation, Decision of Council of Ministers on “Management of dormitories for the pre-university education system” (Amended by the decision of CoM no.1710, dated 29.12.2008).

Yearly DCMs are issued for financial quota of food in dormitory canteens, scholarships and student’s payments in public education institutions, for each academic year. These acts poorly regulate the transfer of responsibility from central government to local government units. There are no established standards or quality assurance mechanism. These responsibilities are left to the discretion of LGUs. Historically, the latest ones have just regulated the number and relevant education of dorms employees, with no track record of any concern about standards.

The dormitory’s facilities are considered as an annex responsibility of LGUs without providing adequate attention. The transfer from central government to LGUs was done without adequate prior consultation of assessment of LGU’s readiness to house these facilities. As such, dormitory management is done rather mechanically.

To improve the governance aspect, it would help creation of, and ad-hoc decision board, where LGU’s unit and dormitory’s main staff, are seated together to discuss the needs, and more importantly, to properly allocate available funds. Other option would be that dormitory’s supervisor may have a double sub ordinance from social units of the LGU’s. This would shift the consideration of clerical function of the supervisor from just and administrator, to a social worker.

The first two acts directly regulate the day to day activity of the dormitories. The other piece of legislation recognizes and affects the dormitories but only as a derived subject, as facilitation mean, whilst trying to regulate education or finances in general.

On the other hand, the LGUs subject of this assessment, do not take any initiative to enact secondary acts to support or enhance the activity of dormitories.

In the frame of decentralization, the dormitories are part of overall regulation of pre-university education as a joint function of both central government and LGUs. In this context, school buildings and dormitories are property of LGUs, in charge for periodic maintenance and investments. In addition, LGUs are by law, responsible for the financing of dormitories (including salaries and operational expenses) and take decisions concerning the VS scholarships. The respective funds on scholarships are allocated, previously by the MoSWY /MoE to the

LGUs and now on from MoFE/MoE to LGUs, who in turn forward these funds to the dormitory or to the account of the beneficiary student in question.

Through DCM on “financial quota of food in dormitory canteens, scholarships and student’s payments in public education institutions, for the academic year”, each LGU receives an unconditional transfer from central government to fulfill the needs. Facility maintenance costs can be covered by this transfer. In order to meet the requirements and needs, LGUs are allowed to use their own revenues in addition, but as it is not legally bounded, in reality, however in most cases, they do not use any additional funds from their own revenues.

**As a conclusion, the legislation provides for “one size fits all” approach without customizing the needs or market prices of different regions/municipality and different schools.**

With regards of LGUs of Korca and Saranda, a sound willingness is expressed from both to cooperate and to join efforts toward changing the status quo of dormitories<sup>9</sup>.

In this light, this assessment and its set of recommendations are to be validated with both LGUs and an action plan can be build up for the start of implementation step by step.

## **Organizational arrangements**

When it comes to the managing scheme of dormitories, the managing scheme is complex and inefficient, in terms of useless procedures and use of several units as models.

### **Organizational approach of Korca Dormitory**

The organizational arrangement comprises Municipality of Korca, through the Enterprise of Supporting Service for Education and Daily Cares (ESSEDC).

Korca dormitory is an administrative unit under the authority of ESSEDC, which is has the status of local public enterprise under the authority of Municipality, altogether with Public Services Enterprise, Center of Art and Culture, Multi-sportive Club “Skenderbeu”, Child House “Little flowers”, Management Unit of Social Housing, and Football Club “Skenderbeu”, by Order of Mayor, year 2017.

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<sup>9</sup> Respective meetings with representatives of Municipality of Korca on 27 February 2017, and representatives of Municipality of Saranda on 3<sup>rd</sup> of May 2017

The ultimate authority of municipality is executed through:

- Directorate of Human Resources, protocol – archive and supported services - The directorate is in charge of recruiting, administration and professional capacity of human resources including the structures under the authority of Municipality i.e. ESSEDC and its units, elaborating the competencies, roles and responsibilities as per proposals of respective directorates/enterprises.
- Directorate of Finance – The directorate is in charge for budget opening and expenditures of ESSEDC
- Directorate of Audit – The directorate is in charge of monitoring, auditing and controlling of ESSEDC.

The structure of staff of dormitory is under ESSEDC, which as a whole structure is under Directorate of Human Resources, protocol – archive and supported services based on order of Mayor. ESSEDC is the direct authority of management of its units, including dormitory. It oversees the overall administration, supervision and management of Dormitory.

The staff of dormitory is in charge of daily administration and wellbeing of students accommodated.

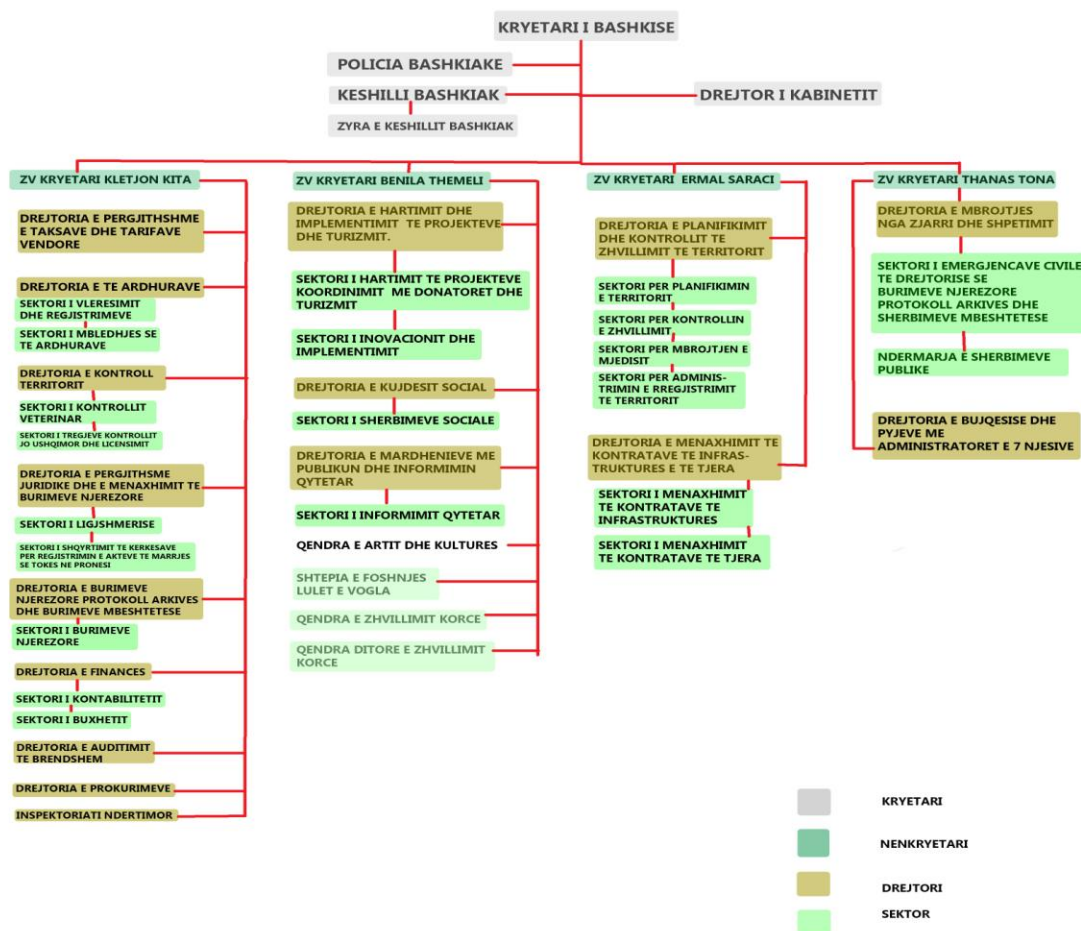
The Enterprise is the beneficiary of the unconditional funds that are assigned from the Central Government, through municipality and its functions are twofold:

- Human resources management (also responsible for the staff of the dormitory) including: salaries and insurance, employment record keeping, and amending and updating the organizational chart (with the approval of the municipality).
- management of operating and maintenance costs (including small investments of a repairing nature)

Foods and other necessary materials for cooking are purchased through online procurement.

According to the ESSEDC, the management of long-term / capital investments is part of the investment plan of the municipality. However, during the last 4 years, there have been no investments, neither in infrastructure, nor in capacity building of human resources, or review of dormitory management.

Chart of Korca Municipality<sup>10</sup>



## Organizational approach of Saranda Dormitory

The organizational arrangement comprises Municipality of Saranda through Economic and Education Office – unit of Economic Directorate, in charge for the management of kindergartens, nurseries and dormitory.

In a better position than Korca case, the dormitory of Saranda has a more direct exchange with Municipality of Saranda that recognizes dormitory as a direct structure of its own internal organizational chart, although separated responsibilities are under separated directorates.

<sup>10</sup> The updated municipal chart (2018) as per validation process – cf.7.1.b, Round Table Korca Municipality, 20 March 2018

The ultimate authority of municipality is executed through:

- Directorate of Human Resources - The directorate is in charge of recruiting, administration and professional capacity of human resources including the structures under the authority of Municipality i.e. dormitory; elaborating the competencies, roles and responsibilities as per proposals of respective directorate.
- Economic Directorate – The directorate is the direct authority of Economic and Education Office (EEO)
- Economic and Education Office (EEO) – The office oversees the overall administration, supervision and management of Dormitory.
- Directorate of Audit – The directorate is in charge of monitoring, auditing and controlling of all structures including the dormitory.

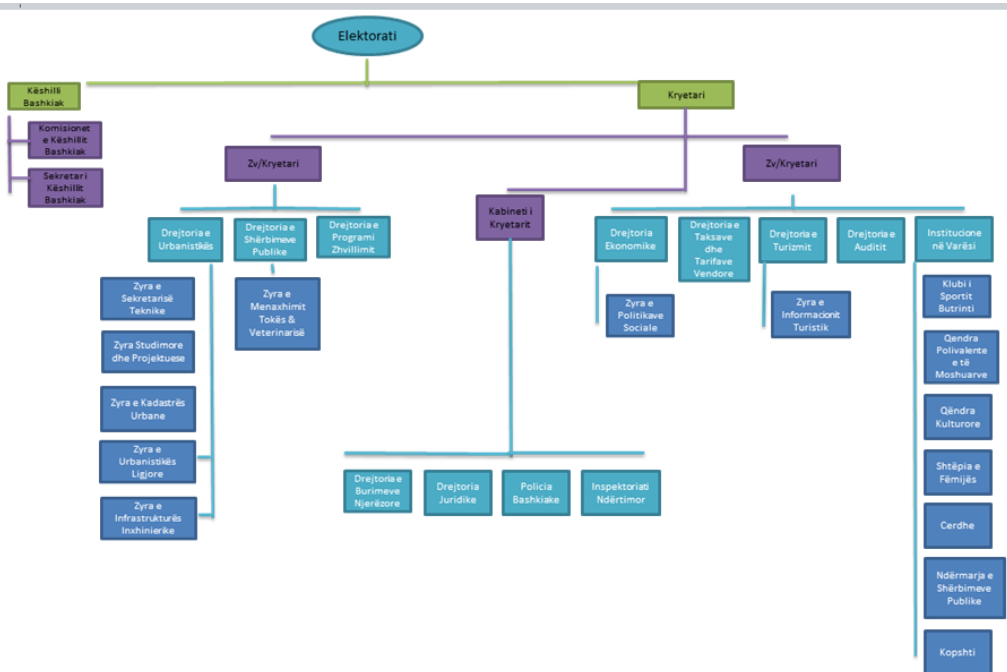
The unconditional funds that are assigned from the Central Government, through municipality (Economic Directorate /EEO) are twofold:

- Human resources management (also responsible for the staff of the dormitory) including: salaries and insurance, employment record keeping, and amending and updating the organizational chart (with the approval of the municipality)
- management of operating and maintenance costs (including small investments of a repairing nature)

Foods and other necessary materials for cooking are purchased through online procurement.

According to municipality data, investment is budgeted since 2016. However, during the last 4 years, it is not been applied neither in infrastructure, nor in capacity building of human resources, or review of dormitory management.

Chart of Saranda Municipality



## Service, management and administration approach of dormitories

The Decision of Council of Ministers on “Management of dormitories for the pre-university education system” (Amended by the decision of CoM no.1710, dated 29.12.2008) has transferred the responsibilities on management and administration of dormitories from central government to LGUs, while yearly DCMs regulate the unconditional transfer to LGUs.

The approach of dormitories as a service provider is not revisited along with the transfer of responsibility to LGUs, neither after.

The concept of dormitories is a service provider/facilitation in the system of pre-university education. Rather than an institution per se, its position is to fulfill the need/facilitate the school annexed to, on students’ living.

As such the services<sup>11</sup> are to provide for students of the assigned school, who live far from their families the basic services of accommodation, food, supervision and care and soft services of educative and recreational provision and mentoring.

<sup>11</sup> Services are specified in the regulation of the dormitories, in line with the overall mission of “provision of accommodation, food and care for students”. The CoM decision 502, dt. 16.04.2008 (amended by CoM decision 1710, dt.26.12.2008) regulates the transfer of responsibilities from central to local government on dormitories administration, yearly DCMs regulate the unconditional transfer to LGUs.

The management structure foresees the staff in three main layers: overall administration and supervision of dormitory; education and support to students; and maintenance, security and daily services.

Outdated version of internal regulation is in place for dormitories as a summary of job description for all staff. However, the competencies are not revisited as well even update of job titles

<sup>12</sup>. As per framework, a supervisor is in charge of overall administration and supervision of dormitory and acts as the representative of dormitory and as well the responsible for regular reporting to LGUs, based on monthly plans.

The education and support to students is in charge of inspectors whom competencies are to oversee the wellbeing of students, care-giving, support them with studying, and with educative & recreational activities, as well keep records of scholarships.

The daily services, maintenance and security are covered by other staff such as warehouse officer, cooks, cook assistants, guardians and janitors.

Except for the guardians whom service is foreseen for 3 shifts / day, the service of dormitory is covered by number of staff on one shift till the closure of the dormitory in evening.

Further information on each dormitory staff is given in respective sections “Boarding staff”.

## State of Play

### Dormitory of the Professional School “Isuf Gjata”, Municipality of Korca

#### **The beneficiary educational institutions served by dormitory**

Municipality of Korca owns three dormitories grouped at the same location, two are mainly occupied from dispossessed families and are out of their principal function. The third one, which is the dormitory targeted by this assessment, is serving to 7 high schools, out of them, 5 technical/ professional schools and 2 general ones, respectively:

1. Technical / economic school "Isuf Gjata"
2. The mechanical school "Demi Brogu"
3. Agricultural School "Irakli Terova"

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<sup>12</sup> An attempt to update the internal regulation of Korca Dormitory has started with the new management in the beginning of 2018. The recommendations on human resources and management, target among others, the development of job profiles and establishment of code of conduct for both dormitories of Korca and Saranda, as an intervention of AL-TOUR project.

4. ICT "Fan Noli"
5. Construction high School
6. Foreign Language School
7. School of Music

### **Location**

The dormitory is located in the ring road of the city of Korca, mostly in the outskirts of the city, with limited access to the social - cultural activities and the city's youth life, placed mostly in the city center. The area is populated mainly by dispossessed families, sheltered in the other dormitories. The dormitory is located behind the setting of the technical school "Isuf Gjata", where the internal area consists of a vast space serving as sports recreational area, isolated and without lightning system.

### **Building settings**

The dormitory itself is an old building, with little insignificant rehabilitation made time over time. The building is organized in three floors: The first floor includes kitchen and the dining area. The upper two floors house the bedrooms (around 15 rooms per floor). The second floor is being used by boys and third floor by girls). The two floors have different entrances. The dormitory has physician room. The showers and toilets are shared and placed at the end of the corridor on each floor.

The problems are enormous, from the non-isolated windows, to lack of proper heating system. Humidity is found all over. The hot water is limited to few pre -scheduled hours and only in the shower rooms. The power system is extremely amortized and does not support any other electronic supplies. The shower room has 4 showers, lacking proper closure, with broken dividers, and only half of them are working. The bathroom has 4 separate toilets and 4 wash basins, in poor conditions.

Rooms are very small and furnished to host 4 students. Furniture is highly amortized (each room has four beds (two bunk beds), two double folders, one table, and one or two wardrobes. The reading room is out of function and serves as storage of chairs and tables.

The heating is one of the most serious reported issues, considering the cold climate that city of Korca faces. The central heating is used with limitation although it appears to be the heavy ticket on the total consumable expenditures of the dormitories budget.



## Accommodation Capacity and Use

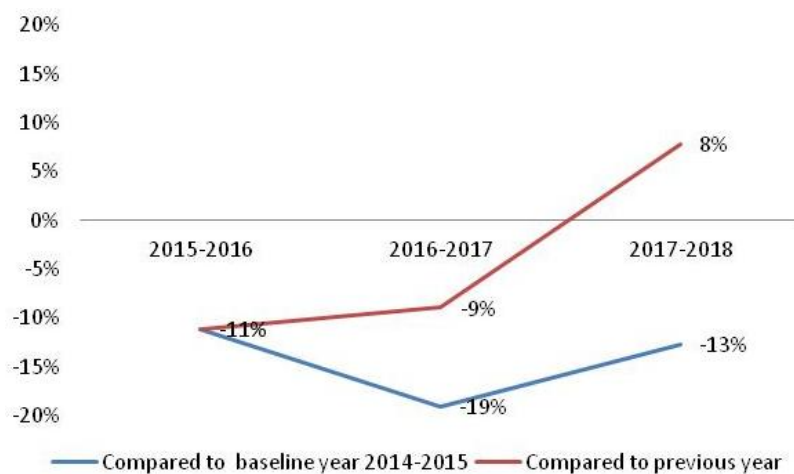
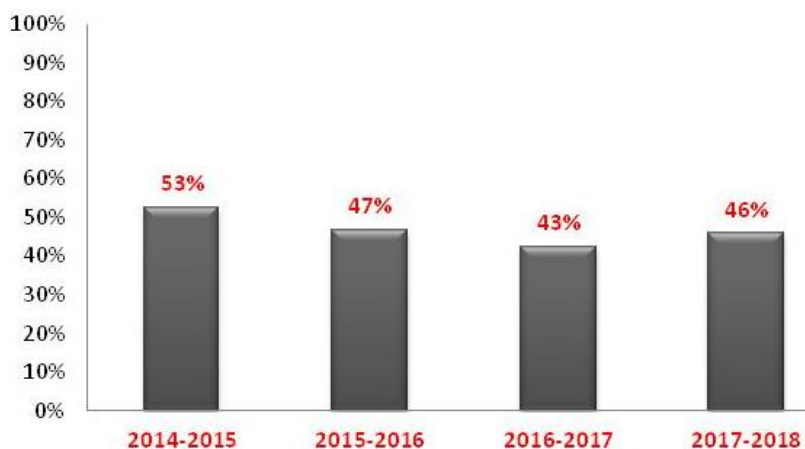
According to the management staff, dormitory can accommodate approx. 120 students. The data provided from ESSEDC for the last 4 academic years reveals a level of capacity use **decreasing** from **53% to 46%**:

Analyzing the trend of students

accommodated in dormitory for the last 4 academic years, the trend is: from academic year 2014 – 2015 to 2015 – 2016, with a decrease of 7 students or **(-11%)**, from academic year 2015 – 2016 to 2016 – 2017, with a further decrease of 5 students or **(-9%)**, from

academic year 2016 – 2017 to 2017 – 2018, with an increase of 4 students or **(8%)**.

## Capacity and use



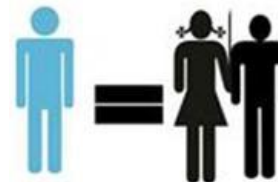
Using as baseline the most populated academic year (2014-2015) with 63 students, then the trend for the years 2015 to 2018 is appearing descending, specifically: Academic Year 2015-2016 with 56 students (-11%), Academic Year 2016-2017 with 51 students (-19%), Academic year 2017-2018 (-13%)<sup>13</sup> with 55 students<sup>14</sup>.

<sup>13</sup> “Altour” Project has started during the academic year 2016-2017 which is the baseline year with 51 students.

<sup>14</sup> For the academic year 2017-2018 there were registered 55 students (ESSEDC), while at the beginning of the academic year, 5 additional students had provisory accommodation as reported by dormitory management on 60 students (17 girls organized in 6 rooms) and (43 boys organized in 14 rooms). The permanent total number of accommodated students remains 55. (validated in the Round Table with Korca Municipality, 20 March 2018, - cf.7.1.b).

## Boarding staff

The unit responsible for day to day management of the dormitories is composed of 25 employees<sup>15</sup>, or in other words **1 employee for approx. 2 students**. As resulting from the organizational chart of the ESSEDC, the job positioning, number of staff per each job position and education level of each staff is as follows:



No. of Staff	Position	Education
1	Supervisor <i>General supervision and management tasks</i>	University education
4	Inspectors/caregivers <i>Tutors in charge for wellbeing of students / keeping the schedule, daily supervision of students</i>	University education
1	Warehouse officer <i>In charge of administering the inventory</i>	High school education
2	Cook	High school education
4	Cook assistant	High school education
7	Guardians	High school education
6	Janitors	High school education
<b>25</b>	<b>Total</b>	

The boarding staff demonstrates a weak general education and capacity, with gaps in pedagogical and educational skills. In addition to the supervisor and the inspectors/caregivers, the rest of the staff completed only the high school. The caregivers are relatively unskilled to perform a demanding job that requires additional abilities and skills to deal with teenagers. They are limited in keeping the control and schedule and have no preparation or vision to see their role as an educator or role model. According to internal regulation of dormitory, pedagogical functions are part of positions of supervisor and inspectors/caregivers.

In addition to the boarding staff, dormitories are benefiting from the medical service of doctor and 2 nurses under organigram of Public Health Department.

<sup>15</sup> The guards under dormitory staff structure serve for guarding the materials deposited in the ex-dormitories – “State of Play – Dormitory of professional school “Isuf Gjata”, Municipality of Korca, pg.12 of this document.

## Financial aspects

The above-mentioned staffing tickets a budget for the salaries of at least 12,638,610 ALL for the year 2017, categorized into:

- Category 600 "Salary" 10,830,000 ALL
- Category 601 "Social and health Insurance" 1,808,610 ALL

Compared to 2016, when this fund was in the amount of 11,766,669 lek, the budget of the year 2017 just for salaries and health and social insurance has been **increased by 7% or 871,941 ALL**.

Whilst, if compared to 2015, when this fund was in the amount of 10,935,000 lek, **the increase is 15.5% or 1,703,610 lek**. It is noted that since 2015, salaries and insurance increases are at the level of **7.6% to 7.4% per year**, antagonizing the number of students dropping over these years. The increase is the result of the overall increase that the Government did for the minimum salary in the country.

A part from the salaries ticket, which were positively impacted by 7.5 %, the operating costs of category 602 "other expenses" for the fiscal year 2017 are in the amount of 8,860,898 ALL, experiencing **a decrease by -3.6%** compared to the available funds for 2016 in the amount of 9,190,184 ALL. This fund for the fiscal year 2015 was in the amount of 4,000,000 ALL.

The "other expenses" category comprise all expenses related to: electricity, water, telephone, cleaning /disinfection materials/spare parts, hydraulic / electrical materials/spare parts, various materials, drugs and medical, oil, gas, and food.<sup>16</sup>

## Scholarship

The food quota is calculated to be **206 ALL per day**<sup>17</sup>.

Full and partial scholarships represent a ticket of **9,323,050 ALL**.

The monthly quota of the scholarship is calculated in the amount of **4,532 ALL / month** (full scholarship) for **22 days per month**. Food quota and consequently the scholarship are extremely low and merely allowing for a living.

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<sup>16</sup> The financial information is given by ESSEDC as shown in the informative table. Presentation of financial aspects was found compliant with the financial information of Korca Municipality – Round table, 20 March 2018.

<sup>17</sup> DCM No.873, date 14.12.2016, "For financial quota of food in dormitory canteens, scholarships and students payments in public education institutions, for academic year 2016-2017"

Other significant fact is the way the scholarship eligibility criteria are applied, excluding for its benefit, the students coming from rural areas whose families have land into possession (*intended by the selective criteria of “economic aid” for students coming rural areas*<sup>18</sup>. *Note: economic aid is received if families do not possess land. Partial economic aid is given after deducting the land value and recalculation of incomes per capita.*). Land property in Albania has not shown to eradicate families from poverty, especially as being very fragmented, or not fertile. The latest DCM 753 dated 13.12.2017, has removed this specific criteria and has solely the exclusion criteria of “private activity by students’ families”. This requirement should be further elaborated by the DCM and to be equally applicable from all LGUs. The latest DCM gives priority to female applicants for scholarship towards male ones.

The other aspects to be addressed, is the long-lasting procedures to apply and receive the scholarship. It requires more than 8 different pieces of documents and at least 6 months to make possession of the finances from the scholarship<sup>19</sup>. Even if the applicant is successful, it will not be before February of the next calendar year that it becomes effective. It is inexplicable why this procedure is so complicated and how is the student in need supposed to carry on until February.

***Steps of scholarship process:***

- 1. The Council of Minister Decision is announced (usually in December);*
- 2. Application for Scholarship requires several documents (7-8) and is submitted to the Regional Education Directorate;*
- 3. The Education Directorate drafts the list of all students applying for scholarships with relevant explanations;*
- 4. The Municipal Council approves the lists;*
- 5. The approved list is submitted to the Ministry of Education and Sports for budget approval;*
- 6. With the approval and allocation of budget (usually not earlier than February), starts the scholarship disbursement with a retroactive reimbursement of due amount from September to the date of disbursement.*

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<sup>18</sup> DCM No.873, date 14.12.2016, “For financial quota of food in dormitory canteens, scholarships and students payments in public education institutions, for academic year 2016-2017”

<sup>19</sup> Scholarship scheme is found as one of the top factors influencing the number of students. It requires complete, thorough and clear framework reconsideration from the central government.

## Informative table

<b>Informacion per Buxhetin e Konviktit Viti 2017</b>			
<b>Transferta e pakushtezuar</b>			
<b>1</b>	<b>09230 Konviktet e Arsimit Parauniversitar</b>		
	Llog Ekonomike		
	600 Paga	10,830,000	
	601 Sigurime	1,808,610	
	602 Shpenz te ndryshm	8,860,898	
	<b>Total Transferta</b>	<b>21,499,508</b>	
<b>2</b>	<b>Organika e Konviktit Nr I Punonjesve 25 vete</b>		
	1 pergjegjes	Specialist I Larte	
	4 inspektor	Specialist I Larte	
	1 magazinier	Arsimi I mesem	
	2 guzhinier	Arsimi I mesem	
	4 Ndih. guzh.	Arsimi I mesem	
	7 roje	Arsimi I mesem	
	6 pastruese	Arsimi I mesem	
	<b>25 Total Nr I Punonjesve</b>		
<b>3</b>	<b>Numri I Femijeve</b>	<b>55 vete</b>	<b>Per viti 2017-2018</b>
	<b>Numri I Femijeve</b>	<b>51 vete</b>	<b>Per viti 2016-2017</b>
	<b>Numri I Femijeve</b>	<b>56 vete</b>	<b>Per viti 2015-2016</b>
	<b>Numri I Femijeve</b>	<b>63 vete</b>	<b>Per viti 2014-2015</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>Kuota Ushqimore 206 leke</b>		
<b>5</b>	<b>Shpenzime te detajuar si me poshte</b>		
	1 Energji		3,100,000
	2 Uje		2,800,000
	3 Telefon		100,000
	3 Materiale Pastrimi , dezinfektimi		500,000
	4 Materiale Hidraulike		300,000
	5 Materiale Elektrike		200,000
	6 Materiale te ndryshme		210,898
	7 Medikamente mjekesore		50,000
	8 Naftë		1,100,000
	9 Gaz		500,000
	<b>Total ne vlere</b>		<b>8,860,898</b>
	<b>Fondi nga Ministria e Mireqenies per Bursa</b>		
<b>6</b>	Bursa dhe Gjysen Bursa per Nx Konviktove Viti 2017		<b>9,323,050</b>

<b>1</b>	<b>Transferta e Pakushtezuar Viti 2016</b>		
	<b>09230 Konviktet e Arsimit Parauniversitar</b>		
	Llog Ekonomike		
	600 Paga	10,117,153	
	601 Sigurime	1,649,516	
	602 Shpenz te ndryshme	9,190,184	
	<b>Total Transferta</b>	<b>20,956,853</b>	
<b>2</b>	<b>Transferta e Pakushtezuar Viti 2015</b>		
	<b>09230 Konviktet e Arsimit Parauniversitar</b>		
	Llog Ekonomike		
	600 Paga	9,405,000	
	601 Sigurime	1,530,000	
	602 Shpenz te ndryshme	4,000,000	
	<b>Total Transferta</b>	<b>14,935,000</b>	

## **Social Aspects**

Dormitory as an institution is not seen as an integral part of the educational, social and inclusive action plan of the municipality. Although Korca Municipality has endorsed schools in the action plan for social projects for the years 2017, 2018, these plans have not considered inclusion of dormitory, simply as it not conceived as institution and integral component, but rather as facilitation premises, thus leaving it outside the scheme of social inclusion and empowerment. Although there is a collaboration spirit, the complexity of the hierarchy of decision-making process, initiations and approvals, make it rather far the interaction between municipality and dormitory and thus out of sight for taking into consideration when detailing action plans.

Although it is neither defined nor recommended in the legal framework, the dormitory closes at the weekend: from Friday to Sunday, with the justification of low occupancy. This closure erupts the normal activity of the students, provides additional costs to them (transport to their families) and does not allow for their socialization. The dormitory timing should be revised to meet the needs of the students.

As already mentioned, the location penalizes the students from their engagement in the cultural and social life of the city or more importantly in the labor market. Alternative and cheap means of transport can be considered, such as bikes.

The dormitory has an internal regulation for facilitating the accommodations of the students, which is very outdated, does not respond either to the daily time available for the seasons, nor to the needs for integration into the life of the city and the student labor market. Students coming from families with an average of 5 members, from the poorest social groups, or from the rural areas of Korca and Pogradec, generally lack the information or self-awareness to create or take initiatives to promote student's life. To their perception, as reported by the interviewed, social activity in most of the cases relates to shopping in the supermarket in small groups of two or three.

The supportive services of dormitory are limited to ensuring the schedule time, and to check the students. No cultural or social activities, counseling services are provided to students. The only activity is for example, the New Year eve, for which the students gather on their own some money and are allowed to make a small party.

The need for socialization and safety brought them to accommodate into groups of 4 people in a room, when there are enough rooms available to accommodate two per room. Being in a group of four is frequently related with a warm family environment.

**Family connection:** Most of student's families have never come to the dormitory, or have only accompanied them for the registry at the beginning of the academic year. They consider the dormitory as the "most acceptable offer" in their economic misery and the same mentality is transmitted to their children.

Being fenced by inhabitants that have occupied the former dormitories, the students, especially the girls, are being isolated from the surrounding environment and far away from their classroom peers. If they had the opportunity to rent a room within a house, they should group into at a minimum of four to be able to support the monthly rent that varies from of 6,000 to 8,000 ALL. And even if they would form this group, renting a room would cost them the scholarship that is conditioned with being accommodated into the dormitories. Furthermore, they would be far away from the school.

In terms of safety and security, the girl's students feel abandoned after the working hours of the caregivers are over (19:30 p.m.). They are left with only the guards. The lack of parental role creates an emotional disturbance especially considering the sensitive age of the students.



According to the schedule placed in the premises of dormitory, the day starts with wake up on 6:30 am and breakfast, lunch between 13:30-14:00 p.m, followed with free time, study time is between 15:30 to 16:30, followed by dinner and free time. The closure of dormitory is 19:30, followed by time to sleep on 21:00.

In terms of health safety, the common reported issues associates with season flues and rarely with cases of usage of alcohols or narcotic drugs.

The need for better conditions in rooms, heating, food and recreational activities prevail.

Given the gap in recreational activities, extra curricula, there is plenty of time to study, however not efficient, given the fact that no support to research is linked with studying, such as computers and internet connection, library could offer<sup>20</sup>.

### **Recommendations based on State of Play**

1. Infrastructure set up does not meet the basic health and safety standards. It lacks fire drill, evacuation exit and emergency exit/entrance. Infrastructure rehabilitation is the outmost initiative to be considered to create a safe and welcoming environment for young girls. Urgent intervention is required in toilets and shower rooms.
2. Private bathroom for each of the rooms should be a standard and hot water should be available within the toilets. Considering the small number of occupied rooms, the initial interventions should not be large in terms of expenditures and can be done on a step by step approach.
3. The dormitory should be equipped with a laundry room to be available at least on weekends. The heating system should be upgraded and be available at least 10 hours per day.
4. The areas dedicated to social activities should be revitalized and at least a TV room should be present. A library should be added to the reading room and it should be turned into a cozy comforting place.
5. The dormitories should be equipped with a tea kitchen unit per floor so students will have an opportunity to cook their own food. This small tea kitchen unit would also create a friendly environment for students with special dietary needs.

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<sup>20</sup> New code of conduct and updated job descriptions should include as annex the updated time schedule for students, based on their needs.



6. The inherited mega structures of dormitories require enormous efforts and resources to be maintained. Their running costs are not supported from the frequency volumes. The Municipality of Korca should try to attract other ways of financing the capital investments and operating costs rather than relying on the unconditional funds from the Central Government.
7. It should consider options of restructuring the available space to accommodate other activities that will contribute to general maintenance cost.
8. Especially the ground floors than can be rented to NGOs or private start up. Options of public private partnerships may also be considered as successfully implemented in other countries.
9. With the new territorial reform, ESSEDC is responsible for the management of all rural schools and kindergartens added up to the ones under Municipality' administration. The reform doubled the number of schools under management of ESSEDC, which should face these changes with the same staffing. Under these conditions, a review of the allocation of human resources is needed, first and foremost with a dormitory staff, opening hours of dormitory, internal regulation, safety and training plan to especially caregivers and supervisor, social activities and students/ parents supporting services.
10. The dormitory should be revamped and brought out to public attention, by starting to use it as focal points for the surrounding community.
11. It should provide access to community profile centers and / or youth center.
12. It should be safely connected with city centers with bus services or bike paths.
13. The municipalities should start organizing some of the cultural activities within the common areas of the dormitory to bring attention and diversity in the student's life.
14. Different fairs like labor fairs or other youth attraction can be organized within the common area of dormitory.

## **Dormitory of Professional School of Saranda “Anthony Athanas”**

### **The beneficiary educational institutions served by dormitory**

Municipality of Saranda owns the dormitory of the “Antoni Athanas” school. The dormitory serves to the other educational institutions such as:

1. Professional school "Antoni Athanas"
2. High School "Hasan Tasimi”
3. University of Saranda – Tourism branch
4. 9<sup>th</sup> grade school “Adem Sheme”

### **Location**

The dormitory is located only 10 minutes walking from the school. It is positioned in a good location within the city, where the neighborhood is friendly and is not a threatening environment for students. Contrasting Korca’s dormitory, the dormitory in Saranda has a heterogeneous composition, housing also the university students of Tourism and Hospitalization University.

### **Building settings**

The dormitory in Saranda, built in 2011, is considered recently reconstructed, thus it offers better conditions and services for the students compared to the one in Korca. Saranda's dormitory is composed of three floors, with a capacity of 27 rooms. There are 7 rooms in the first floor, 8 rooms in the second and third floor. The dormitory is equipped with 2 reading rooms, same size as the other rooms. Each room have an area of 24 m<sup>2</sup>, equipped with 2 bunk beds for 4 students and with shower. The furniture status of rooms in dormitory of Saranda is very old but compared to Korca dormitory is better.

The kitchen, the dining room and the laundry room are all situated in the first (ground) floor. In the upper floors, there are also warehouses. Each floor has collective bathrooms (consisting of 6 separate toilets and equipped with washing basins).

Compared to the dormitory of Korca, Saranda's dormitory:

- Lack the physician's room. The health service is offered by the local health center.
- Rooms are equipped with showers.

No humidity or other damages were noticed. The electrical system meets the working conditions.

The reported needs from dormitory management for intervention and capital investments are the following:

- a) renovation of infrastructures mainly in repairs,
- b) Renovation of the electrical system, mainly enhancing the electricity capacity to support the boilers in the showering rooms.
- c) Total renovation of electrical circuit, distribution boxes such as plugs, lighting etc. This intervention is required mostly in the reading rooms to make them fully functional.

In terms of equipment, the reported needs are:

- Creation of a leisure and recreational room, television room, living room and
- Equipment for reading rooms with books, computers, books etc.

These needs are in line as well with identification of needs from Municipality who recognizes the following needs:

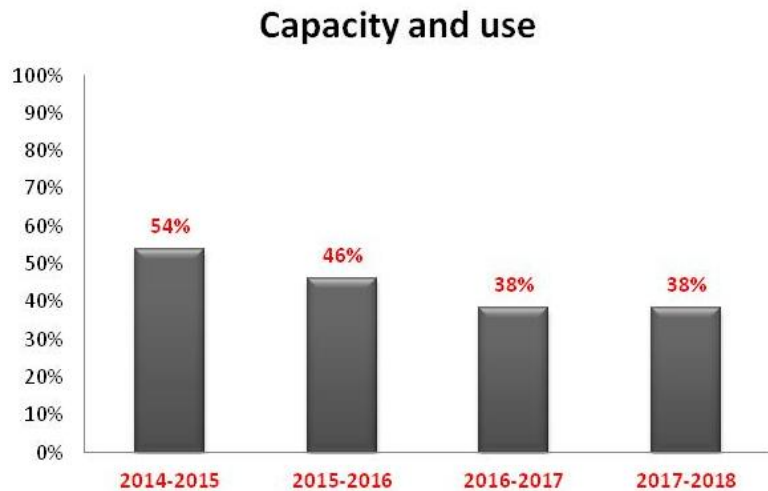
- Restoration of toilets (WC)
- Furbishing the reading rooms
- Making the heating system fully operational
- Upgrade to solar panel heating

## Accommodation Capacity and Use

According to the management staff and Municipality information, dormitory can accommodate approx. 130 students. Analyzing the trend of students accommodated in dormitory for the last 4 academic years, a negative trend is encountered.

The data provided from

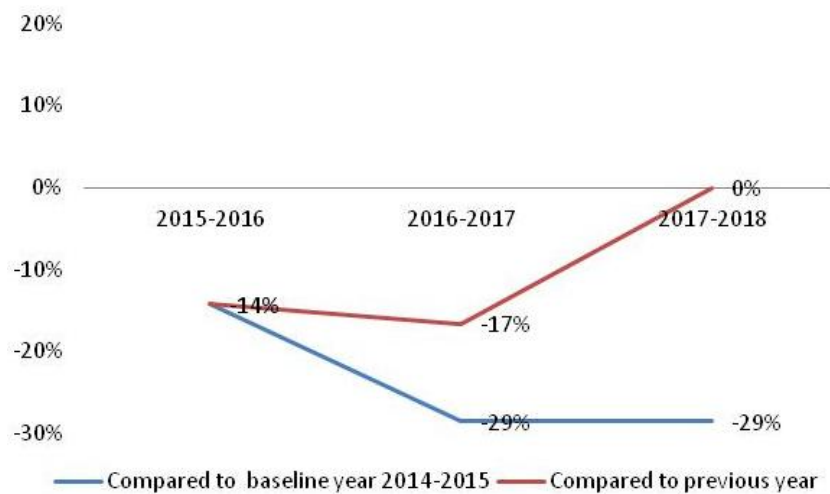
Municipality for the last 4 academic years reveals a level of capacity use **decreasing** from **54%** to **38%**:<sup>21</sup>



Analyzing the trend of students accommodated in dormitory for the last 4 academic years, the trend is: from academic year 2014 – 2015 (70 students) to 2015 – 2016, with a decrease of 10 students or **(-14%)**, from academic year 2015 – 2016 (60 students) to 2016 – 2017, with a further decrease of 10 students or **(-17%)**, from academic year 2016 – 2017 (50 students) to 2017 – 2018 (50 students), with no change in students' number or **(0%)**.

Using as baseline the most populated academic year (2014-2015) with 70 students, then the trend for the years 2015 to 2018 is appearing descending, specifically:

Academic Year 2015-2016 (-14%), Academic Year 2016-2017 (-29%), Academic year 2017-2018 (-29%)<sup>22</sup>.

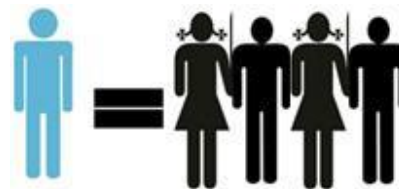


<sup>21</sup> The decrease in the number of students, is in proportions of the decrease in population growth of Albania. Population is decreasing by 0.18 % per annum according to INSTAT data : [www.instat.gov.al](http://www.instat.gov.al)

<sup>22</sup> “Altour” Project has started during the academic year 2016-2017 which is the baseline year with 50 students.

### Boarding staff

The unit responsible for day to day management of the dormitories is composed of 12 employees<sup>23</sup>, (3 with university education, 9 with high school education) or in other words **1 employee for approx. 4 students**. As resulting from the organizational chart of the Municipality, the job positioning, number of staff per each job position is as follows:



No. of Staff	Position
1	Supervisor <i>General supervision and management tasks</i>
3	Inspectors/caregivers <i>Tutors in charge for wellbeing of students/keeping the schedule, daily supervision of students</i>
1	Warehouse officer <i>In charge of administering the inventory</i>
1	Cook
1	Cook assistant
2	Guardian
3	Janitors / laundry
<b>12</b>	<b>Total</b>

The boarding staff reveals gaps in pedagogical and educational skills, although better communication and relationship with students is noticed compared to Korca case. An assumption to this comparison may be linked with gender composition of both boarding staff where 75% of Saranda Dormitory staff is women compared to 47% in Korca, and a maternal behaviour is added to the overall daily management. However, they are relatively unskilled to perform a demanding job that requires additional abilities and skills to deal with teenagers and have no preparation or vision to see their role as an educator or role model.

According to internal regulation of dormitory, pedagogical functions are part of positions of supervisor and inspectors/caregivers.

Considering the human resources, there is a need for a maintenance specialist to provide on time assistance. Actually, any defect or need to repair something should pass through various requests and clearance procedures to the Municipality.

<sup>23</sup> Information given by Municipality of Saranda, presented in the respective informative table

## Financial Aspects

A part from the infrastructural point of view, all other financial and legal findings apply the same in all dormitories throughout the country.

The above-mentioned staffing tickets a budget for the salaries of at least 7,900,000 ALL for the year 2017, categorized into:

- Category 600 "Salary" 6,500,000 ALL
- Category 601 "Social and health Insurance" 1,400,000 ALL

Compared to 2016, when this fund was in the amount of 6,300,000 lek, the budget of the year 2017 just for salaries and health and social insurance has been **increased by 25% or 1,600,000 ALL**.

Whilst, if compared to 2015, when this fund was in the amount of 5,135,000 lek, **the increase is 54% or 2,765,000 lek**. It is noted that since 2015, salaries and insurance increases are at the level of **23% to 25% per year**, antagonizing the number of students dropping over these years.

The increase is the result of the overall increase that the Government did for the minimum salary in the country.

A part from the salaries ticket, which were positively impacted by 25 %, the operating costs of category 602 "other expenses" for the fiscal year 2017 are in the amount of 5,730,000 ALL, experiencing **a decrease by -6%** compared to the available funds for 2016 in the amount of 6,100,000 ALL. This fund for the fiscal year 2015 was in the amount of 5,400,000 ALL.

The "other expenses" category comprise all expenses related to: electricity, water, telephone, cleaning /disinfection materials/spare parts, hydraulic / electrical materials/spare parts, various materials, drugs and medical, oil, gas, and food.

Differently, from Korca Case, the Saranda financial plan has foreseen investments within the unconditional transfer since 2016, amounted 5,297,000 ALL. As not applied in 2016, it was reallocated in the financial plan of 2017 in the amount of 4,421,000 ALL and lately reallocated in the financial plan of 2018 in the amount of 3,640,000 ALL<sup>24</sup>.

With this financial situation, the possibilities of Municipality to intervene in the dormitory infrastructure are optimal.

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<sup>24</sup> The public procurement was successfully completed in March 2018, as reported by Municipality of Saranda during the validation Round Table of 19<sup>th</sup> of March 2018.

## Scholarship

The food quota is calculated to be **230 ALL per day**<sup>25</sup>.

Full and partial scholarships are respectively 4 and 1 student.

The monthly quota of the scholarship is calculated in the amount of **approx. 6,000 to 7,000 ALL / month** (full scholarship) for **30 days per month**. Both food quota and the scholarship are extremely low and merely allowing for a living.

The scholarship eligibility criteria are the same as Korca case (unified in Albania) and the same procedures are applied and same barriers are found out<sup>26</sup>.

## Informative table

### *Konvikti i shkolles se mesme “Antoni Athanas “Sarande. Viti akademik 2016-2017*

Konvikti ka 12 punonjes

- 3- me arsim te larte
- 9- me arsim te mesem
- Pergjegjes konvikti 1, edukatore 2, magazinier 1, kuzhinier 1, ndihmes kuzhinier/ pjatalares 1, pastruese 3, lavanteri 1, roje objekti 2.

Ne vitin shkollor 2016-2017

- 4- nxenes me burse te plote
- 1- nxenes me ½ burse

Kuota ushqimore

- 230 leke ne dite

Studente ne konvikt ne tre vitet e fundit

- Viti 2014-2015 70 studente
- Viti 2015-2016 60 studente
- Viti 2016-2017 50 studente

Buxheti ( ne mijra leke)

	Totali	Paga	Sig shoq.	Shpe. Oper.	Investime
2015	10.535.	4.431.	704	5.400	0
2016	17.697	5.300	1.000	6.100	5.297
2017	18.051	6.500	1.400	5.730	4.421
2018	18.189	6.700	1.400	6.449	3.640

- Zeri i investimeve nuk eshte kryer ne asnje vit buxhetor.

<sup>25</sup> Based on DCM No.873, date 14.12.2016, “For financial quota of food in dormitory canteens, scholarships and students payments in public education institutions, for academic year 2016-2017”, information as per Informative table provided by Municipality of Saranda.

<sup>26</sup> Scholarship scheme is found as one of the top factors influencing the number of students. It requires complete, thorough and clear framework reconsideration from the central government.

## Social aspects

Saranda's dormitory is positioned in a good location within the city, where the neighborhood is friendly and is not a threatening environment for students. Contrasting Korca's dormitory, the dormitory in Saranda has a heterogeneous composition, housing also the university students of Tourism and Hospitalization University.

In academic year 2016-2017, there were only 7 students accommodated from the professional school, while for the year 2017-2018 there are 10. The other part is mostly students from the Economic Faculty of Tirana (Saranda branch) and high school.

The university students occupy the first floor, while the second and the third floors are reserved for the high school students, separating boys and girls in different floors.

The university student's representation maps a wide and diverse geographic area (with students coming from Mirdita, Berat, Lushnja) whilst the high school students are coming mostly from the nearby cities or villages. There is a significant representation of Greek minority through students coming from villages situated in the Albanian-Greek border.

Saranda's dormitory, having a more complex typology, offers a relatively easy and manageable environment. It shows to be more flexible and relaxed towards student needs than the one of Korca that still preserve an authoritarian and autocratic approach. Time schedules are adjusted per students need and varies according to seasons, for example: if in the winter the boarding closes at 21:00, in the summer it allows for up to 22.30 or 23.00<sup>27</sup>.

The overall environment is friendly and social. Students find it easy to socialize and interact among them. Social activities are evidenced, and study hours are applicable at study rooms.



The improvement of conditions in rooms, food and recreational activities prevail. Given the limited recreational activities, extra curricula, there is plenty of time to study, however not

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<sup>27</sup> New code of conduct and updated job descriptions should include as annex the updated time schedule for students, based on their needs.



efficient, given the fact that no support to research is linked with studying, such as computers and internet connection, library could offer.

### **Recommendations based on State of Play**

1. The dormitories should be rehabilitated to offer first and most importantly the basic commodities to insure a smooth accommodation and further on to offer a safe and family alike place for young girls.
2. Dormitories should be revamped to respond to student's expectancies with study rooms, support for students during study time in books and assistance. Other courses (like arts or foreign languages) may be offered in the premises of dormitories.
3. The rooms should be refurbished and brought to acceptable standards. Each of the rooms should have a private bathroom with hot running water. It can start as a pilot project targeting several rooms.
4. Dormitories should be equipped with functional laundry room, reading room, library, computers and TV room.
5. They should offer minimum standards of health and safety and be equipped with heating and cooling systems.
6. The dormitory should be equipped with a tea kitchen unit per floor so students will have an opportunity to cook their own food. This small tea kitchen unit would also create a friendly environment for students with special dietary needs.
7. The dormitory should be revamped and brought out to public attention, by starting to use it as focal points for the surrounding community.
8. It should provide access to community profile centers and / or youth center.
9. It should be safely connected with city centers with bus services or bike paths.
10. The municipalities should start organizing some of the cultural activities within the common areas of the dormitory to bring attention and diversity in the student's life.
11. Different fairs like labor fairs or other youth attraction can be organized within the common area of dormitory.
12. Review of the allocation of human resources is needed, first and foremost with the dormitory staff, opening hours of dormitory, internal regulation, safety and training plan to especially caregivers and supervisor, social activities and students/ parents supporting services.

## Joint Recommendations based on State of Play

### Financial remodeling

1. The paramount change in the financial model, concerns the scholarships scheme. As the process is a scheme at national level, involving central government decision making (Council of Ministers, Ministries of Education and Finance) and subordinate institutions such as Directorates of Education and Schools; local government decision making (Municipalities and responsible units/departments) and a complex schema of procedures (application package, approval, budgeting and disbursement) an initiative may be start by AL Tour project following the validation and consensus of LGUs of Korca and Saranda for establishment of a joint working group to be recommended to the AL-Tour Steering committee:
  - 1.1. It needs to be revised, first to shorten the procedures and secondly, to make it available in the beginning of the academic year. The scholarship criteria should become more flexible to allow for more students to benefit from it. Arbitrary criteria especially for students coming from rural areas such as “private activity of student family” should be reconsidered.
  - 1.2. There is a need to revisit the total amount of scholarship to reflect the market prices and standards to allow the students to accomplish the basic needs.
2. Although the complexity of the schema, involving central government decision making, leaves little or no role to LGUs, there are some small improvement that still can be made.

Some possible scenarios can be:

- 2.1. Refunding the students from other available funds from the municipalities (such as contingency funds) and subtract the same amount once the scholarships are made cacheable, for repetitive cases (*when it's not first application and conditions are known*).
- 2.2. The students can be enrolled in different paid internship within private sector and part of their salaries can be financed from the municipalities through the scholarship funds. This requires an active role of the municipalities to enter into an agreement with private sector organization or public institution. This recommendation would require consultation

during round tables with LGUs (tax office and labor office), and discussion on a set of bylaws criteria/incentives that may be developed to attract involvement of private sector, i.e. tax incentives, etc.

2.3. There is a need to revisit the total amount of scholarship to reflect the market prices and standards to allow the students to accomplish the basic needs. The municipality should try to top up the scholarships through their own funds. This recommendation would require consultation during round tables with LGUs and discussion on a set of criteria/positive discrimination measures, piloting with a group of students i.e. girls, students coming from rural areas, with the poorest families, students that show good progress/talented in schools, etc.

3. Financial management of dormitories should be improved. Audit department of LGUs should lead the process.

3.1. The execution of costs should follow the effective cost management. Clear segregation of costs and efficiency and effectiveness of each category should be easily identified and reported at any time. A set of criteria should be elaborated/update with audit department to be followed by respective unit in charge of financial management of dormitories, i.e. the cost per student, developing practices of keeping comparative track of costs (in time, category of expenditure, cost per student in years, etc)

3.2. The food should be drastically improved, in terms of allowance amount, quality and menu. The Municipality may perform a Framework Agreement Supply Contract, allowing the dormitory administration to have access to fresh food. Students should be allowed to have access in the kitchen or this service can be outsourced from private suppliers. The Municipality can reach out to the suppliers that are already delivering these services to hospitals or kindergarten.

3.3. To improve the governance aspect, it would help creation of, and ad-hoc decision board, where LGU's unit and dormitory's main staff, are seated together to discuss the needs, and more importantly, to properly allocate available funds.

## Legal aspects

From legal aspects, a regulatory reform should provide customized approach to different schools' dormitories. It should decentralize more initiatives to the local government and make the schema less complex.

1. The recommendations on financial remodeling should go parallel with updating of legal aspects and framework.
2. Municipalities may see the legal possibilities as owners of building, the renting of some of premises to NGOs or private start up. Options of public private partnerships may also be considered as successfully implemented in other countries.
3. Cooperation with NGOs as co-applicant to funding programs of different donors and central government, using as asset the dormitory and adding students as beneficiaries to developing programs (in those programs that is applicable and create added value to the dormitory and wellbeing of students). Such programs may tackle among others the emigration, education, promotion of girls/students from rural areas.
4. Legal and structural reconsideration of managing unit of dormitories in the structure of Municipality is recommended in both cases. Use of intermediary and multiplied units in charge, leaves little space for identification of legal responsibilities on sound management of dormitories. A piloting ambitious approach regulated with set of legal framework may consider status of dormitory as direct subordinate institution of Municipality.

## Human Resources Management

From the information given by both municipalities, the actual capacity of dormitories does not justify the numerous staff in dormitories (1:2 Korca, 1:4 Saranda), although a minimum number of staff is absolute for operation. From human resources point of view, there is a great potential for change.

1. Updating the profiles: The staff hiring should be done based on a set of given criteria to match the required skills and standards. The role of caregiver should be revised to bring it close to a parental figure for the students.
2. Capacity building programs should include dormitory staff (supervisor and inspectors/caregivers). LGUs should be part of planned activities of AL-Tour for development of code of conduct, updating of job profiles, and creation of inclusive culture and update accordingly the human resource structure of dormitories, internal regulation and responsibilities.
3. Dormitory's supervisor may have a double sub-ordinance from social units of the LGU's. This would shift the consideration of clerical function of the supervisor from just and administrator, to a social worker.
4. The boarding staff may be enhanced with a social worker to offer the right counseling to the students, especially girls in freshmen year.
5. Some of the staffing should be downsized (guards, maintenance, laundry) and opt for more efficient solution such as outsourcing. The budget ticket designated to the salaries would be relieved and the saved amount may be used to top up the scholarships.
6. The caregivers/supervisors should be appointed to cover 24 hours the students in dormitories, thereof number of caregivers/supervisors should be in line with their duty hours organized in shifts. Additional responsibilities in job profiling should tackle this gap.
7. Time schedule of dormitories (regulation) should reflect the proper needed time for each activity and services provided to students. It should not include only free time, besides meals, study hours, but should make room for social, educative, cultural, and sportive activities. Monthly plans should be sent to municipality for monitoring. Weekly plans should ensure that the variety of these 4 categories of activities is distributed in days.
8. For Korca case, it is recommended to reconsider the closure of dormitory at weekend. It is recommended to give to the students the possibility to stay if they want to.
9. Performance monitoring is a must. Monthly reporting on students' wellbeing should be accompanied by monitoring visits by Municipality (unit in charge), to have a better overview of progress, problems, students situation, checking even the status of students' accommodation, food and services.

## Students approach with special focus to girls

Initiatives of LGUs for enhancing number of students in dormitories should start with provision of conditions that offer security, friendly environment, services and well-being. Besides improving the financial management, human resources, infrastructure and equipment, LGUs should:

1. Encourage students to create board of students and to regulate the activity of this board in the internal regulation, i.e. participating in meeting with LGUs, representing the dormitory in different activities and forums etc.
2. Include open days to parents and community as part of internal regulation. Exchange visits of schools and dormitories should be included, as well joint visits to rural areas for attracting students especially girls.
3. Create possibilities of students, especially for girls in order to support them with soft skills i.e. internships in different local institutions, inclusion in social activities organized by municipality.
4. Public investments are needed in the surroundings such as lighting the place around the dormitory, and police presence.
5. If possible for Korca case, a free transportation from dormitory to the center and vice versa may be put into operation at least one time per day, covering the free time as per time schedule of dormitory. For Saranda case, bikes can be invested for dormitory to be used by students.
6. Health service should be included for Saranda dormitory, while a monthly report for health wellbeing of students should be sent to both municipalities.
7. As recommendations for each case is included in the document, in overall as a joint recommendation is the renovation of premises including the concept of completed large study room / library, room for social activities/ indoor sports /leisure time.
8. An extra-curriculum space may be created i.e. computer and foreign language (at least English) under supervision of caregivers. Teachers of schools may give additional lessons, or a peer to peer education may be an initiative.
9. Concept of youth center and / or community center may be initiated from municipalities through small piloting approach such as advising/supporting NGOs to conduct meetings and

events at dormitories, some of youth activities planned in yearly program of municipalities, etc.

10. Capacity building for life skills should be provided regularly to students in dormitories, especially to girls. This may include, fostering NGOs that apply for local funds for social educative projects to include students of dormitories and/or dormitory as beneficiaries of their proposed action plan. In addition to the recommendation of inclusion of a social worker in the structure of dormitory, the respective job profile should include training to students, especially girls.

### **Information, Awareness and promotion**

Other soft measures should be focused on:

1. Providing access to information and organizing promotion adds on the official website of the municipality and info at the centers.
2. There should be a promotional campaign by local authorities for opportunities for safe and friendly environment, especially for girls as per recommendations in students' approach set of recommendations. Local media is most recommended in this case through informative news, series of shows etc.
3. The municipalities should take into consideration the possibility to apply positive discrimination criteria for girls following the recommendations in students' approach set of recommendations.

## **Round tables with Municipalities of Korca and Saranda**

The round tables with municipalities of Korca and Saranda were conducted as a second-step on the recommendations for enhancing access by vulnerable groups through better conditions in Dormitory (cf.7.1.b)

### **The round tables were conducted in chronological order:**

- The round table with municipality of Saranda took place on 19<sup>th</sup> of March 2018 with decision-making representatives of municipality respectively: Vice Mayor and General Secretary and technical staff of different departments (including EEO), altogether with Dormitory and professional school “Antoni Athanas” representatives.
- The round table with municipality of Korca took place on 20<sup>th</sup> of March 2018, with decision-making representatives of municipality respectively: 2 Vice Mayors and technical staff of different departments (including ESSEDC), altogether with dormitory and professional school “Isuf Gjata”, agricultural school “Irakli Terova” representatives.

### **Focus of round tables:**

- To validate the set of recommendations (presented in this document) on enhancing the access for vulnerable groups, especially vulnerable girls, to tourism schools through better conditions in the dormitories”
- To discuss potential recommendations doable within the context of AL-Tour project
- To establish a common approach on further action for scholarship scheme at central level

### **Conclusion**

Saranda and Korca Municipalities expressed willingness and commitment to cooperate with AL Tour project to improve conditions of dormitory in terms of infrastructure, human resources management, program content and approach toward community, students and education.



## Discussion and validation of set of recommendations

### Validation of set of recommendations for Korca Dormitory

#### 1. Financial remodeling

- Recommendation at central level is strongly supported regarding time rescheduling of scholarship scheme as it constitute a valuable change in consideration of students coming from vulnerable strata.
- The financial remodelling at local level is appreciated as long term recommendation, as it requires prior design of the framework from central level on legal competencies at local level.
- It is widely discussed and agreed to consider in the recommendations at central level on scholarship the following:
  - To add tourism sector to the list of priority sectors for benefiting scholarship schemes without supporting documents (only with certification as students);
  - To prioritize the use of dormitory as a conditional provision for benefiting the scholarship for students depending on distance, as it is in other cases.

This will reduce the double standards in enrolment of students, especially in Korca case, where the students of agriculture school next to the dormitory, benefit full scholarships without supporting documents but do not use services of dormitory, due to unconditional scholarship.

- Financial management is considered good, recommendation to improve the clear segregation between costs and establishing a more thorough financial monitoring is endorsed.
- Establishing a ad-hoc committee was endorsed, (actually considered as a good practice starting with the joint work on dormitory situation as intervention of AL-TOUR)
- Recommendation on improvement of food is considered accurate, was endorsed and will follow with high priority measures on the quality of food in procurement, monitoring and menu specifications (with support of professional school as intervention of AL-TOUR)

## **2. Legal aspects**

- Legal aspects of scholarship schemes and internship programs, as well use of dormitories in the status quo of owner are subject of reframing the legal framework as mentioned in financial remodelling.
- Recommendations on improving the dormitory management is considered valuable and it was agreed that the ad-hoc committee will act as direct board with municipality regarding monitoring, verification and identification of problems/improvements needed to be tackled.
- Use of dormitory premises for youth activities, social empowerment programs is accepted and it will be added to the calendar of activities of municipality and subordinate institutions.

## **3. Human resources management**

- Recommendation on double sub-ordinance from social units of municipality is considered valuable. The structure will remain the same; instead ad-hoc board will ensure a closer, more transparent and efficient management of the dormitory. Monitoring visits and a re-conceptualization of reporting with focus on wellbeing of students is endorsed.
- Recommendations on reconsideration of human resources and positions required were considered very valuable and endorsement is given to the following:
  - The number of guards will be reconsidered by municipality, as they actually are performing guarding on materials deposited in ex-dormitories.
  - Creating a safe environment for students especially for girls, was strongly accepted and endorsed by municipality. Adaptation to ensure the safety of outdoor premises was directly given as a task to technical staff of municipality.
  - The review of job profiles, internal procedures, regulations, inclusion of students in the ad-hoc board, code of conduct were considered valuable, and municipality accepted and endorsed the intervention of AL-Tour at this aspect.

- Reorganization and rescheduling of job positions to ensure 24 hrs of service was endorsed by municipality. Job descriptions, transparent schedule of service and criteria for staff recruitment, monitoring of performance were considered a must by municipality and endorsed.
- Regarding extra-curricular subjects such as English language it was agreed by municipality to appoint a peace corps volunteer to conduct English teaching for students accommodated in the dormitory.

#### **4. Student approach especially to girls**

- Recommendation to establish the Board of students is endorsed and it will be part of Ad-hoc board (committee) of dormitory. Calendar of activities, to promote engagement of youth, especially of girls will be part of municipality calendar.
- Municipality agreed that more sensitive approach should be placed by municipality and all stakeholders, starting with awareness information, activities, inclusion of subordinate institutions.
- Recommendation on transport was agreed and detailed in use of special card for free use of transport and adding a transport line to the city center.
- Recommendation on conducting joint action to attract students especially girls in school through dormitory (dormitory, school, municipality AL-Tour) was agreed.

#### **Mutual agreement with AL-TOUR for joint intervention**

- Municipality will proceed with infrastructural interventions needed for establishing joint premises for students (library and the recreational room).
- Municipality will intervene for improving the infrastructure of dormitory, starting with ensuring the outdoor premises for creating a safe environment for students accommodated in dormitory.

- AL-Tour will proceed with furnishing of joint premises and making them functional (library and the recreational room)
- Municipality will ensure the social inclusion of students by adding the dormitory in the social activities calendar of municipality.
- Municipality endorsed the AL-TOUR intervention on job profiles, procedures, internal regulation, code of conduct, time rescheduling of services, training of dormitory staff.
- Municipality will ensure the improvement of status quo on safe environment for students especially girls.
- Access will be ensured to students by equipping them with special card for free use of transport, free entrance in social activities of cultural center, etc.
- AD-hoc board for ensuring a closer, more transparent and efficient management of dormitory will be in place and double sub-ordinance of dormitory from economic office and social support and policies office will be a practice.
- Joint actions on attracting students especially girls in school through dormitory was agreed (school, dormitory, municipality, ALTour, other relevant stakeholders)

## **Validation of set of recommendations for Saranda Dormitory**

### **1. Financial remodeling**

- Recommendation at central level is strongly supported regarding time rescheduling of scholarship scheme as it constitute a valuable change in consideration of students coming from vulnerable strata.
- The financial remodelling at local level is appreciated as long term recommendation, as it requires prior design of the framework from central level on legal competencies at local level.
- It is widely discussed and agreed to consider in the recommendations at central level on scholarship the following:

- It can be part of the bylaws' package of local self governance law 139/2015 that is under elaboration.
- A possibility to support the scholarship of students through internships may be considered with Ministry of Finance and Economy through employment promotion program of labour offices.
- Financial management is considered good, recommendation to improve the clear segregation between costs and establishing a more thorough financial monitoring is endorsed.
- Establishing a ad-hoc committee was endorsed, (actually considered as a good practice starting with the joint work on dormitory situation as intervention of AL-TOUR)
- Recommendation on improvement of food is considered accurate, was endorsed and will follow with high priority measures on the quality of food in procurement, monitoring and menu specifications (with support of professional school as intervention of AL-TOUR)

## **2. Legal aspects**

- Legal aspects of scholarship schemes and internship programs, as well use of dormitories in the status quo of owner are subject of reframing the legal framework as mentioned in financial remodelling.
- Recommendations on improving the dormitory management is considered valuable and it was agreed that the ad-hoc committee will act as direct board with municipality regarding monitoring, verification and identification of problems/improvements needed to be tackled.
- Use of dormitory premises for youth activities, social empowerment programs is possible and can be applicable regarding the cooperation with local NGOs or start-ups (as far as the mission and security of students is preserved)

### **3. Human resources management**

- Recommendation on double sub-ordinance from social units of municipality is considered valuable. The Economic Directorate has two units: the Economic and Education Office (in charge for dormitory) and Office for Social Policies and Support. The office for social policies and support will be considered to become a directorate (with the review of municipal chart 2018), and will have under its responsibility the social aspects of dormitory. Thereof, dormitory can be direct subject of social aspect of responsibility of municipality, besides the economic one.
- Recommendations on reconsideration of human resources and positions required were considered very valuable and endorsement is given to the following:
  - The number of guards will be considered in the frame of the ongoing work for application of public security law for all public institutions. The municipality will consider in terms of legal and economic terms if subcontracting of Security Company is doable and fulfils the required standards.
  - The review of job profiles, internal procedures, regulations, inclusion of students in the ad-hoc board, code of conduct were considered valuable, and municipality accepted and endorsed the intervention of AL-Tour at this aspect.
  - Reorganization and rescheduling of job positions to ensure 24 hrs of service was endorsed by municipality. Job descriptions, transparent schedule of service and criteria for staff recruitment, monitoring of performance were considered a must by municipality and endorsed.
  - Regarding extra-curricular subjects such as English language it was suggested by municipality that school can support based on teaching program and working hours.

### **4. Student approach especially to girls**

- Recommendation to establish the Board of students is endorsed and it will be part of Ad-hoc board (committee) of dormitory. Calendar of activities, to promote engagement of youth, especially of girls will be part of municipality calendar.

- Municipality agreed that more sensitive approach should be placed by municipality and all stakeholders, starting with awareness information, activities, inclusion of 3 to 4 active local civil society organizations.
- In addition to recommendation at the central level it was proposed by Municipality to include recommendation on legal provision on incentives for those subjects operating in tourism sector which employ girls and women at a certain level.
- Recommendation on conducting joint action to attract students especially girls in school through dormitory (dormitory, school, municipality AL-Tour) was agreed.

### **Mutual agreement with AL-TOUR for joint intervention**

- Municipality will proceed with infrastructural interventions needed for establishing joint premises for students (library and the recreational room).
- Municipality will intervene for improving the infrastructure of dormitory. (The planned investment will take place during 2018, as the process of public tendering was completed)
- AL-Tour will proceed with furnishing of joint premises and making them functional (library and the recreational room)
- Municipality will ensure the social inclusion of students by adding the dormitory in the social activities calendar of municipality.
- Municipality endorsed the AL-TOUR intervention on job profiles, procedures, internal regulation, code of conduct, time rescheduling of services, training of dormitory staff.
- Municipality will ensure the improvement of status quo on safe environment for students especially girls.
- AD-hoc board for ensuring a closer, more transparent and efficient management of dormitory will be in place and double sub-ordinance of dormitory from economic office and social support and policies office will be a practice.
- Joint actions on attracting students especially girls in school through dormitory was agreed (school, dormitory, municipality, ALTour, other relevant stakeholders)

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