



WORKING WITH THE MASS MEDIA TO IMPROVE EDUCATIONAL AND EMPLOYMENT CHOICES AMONG YOUNG PEOPLE IN ALBANIA

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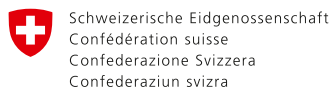
INSPIRING AND INFLUENCING THE YOUNG JOB SEEKERS OF ALBANIA
 WORKING WITH THE MASS MEDIA TO IMPROVE EDUCATIONAL AND EMPLOYMENT CHOICES AMONG YOUNG PEOPLE IN ALBANIA
 CASE STUDY

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PUBLISHED BY:  **RisiAlbania**
 Partner for Growth

SUPPORTED BY:

IMPLEMENTED BY:



Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation SDC



NOVEMBER, 2016



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Executive Summary

There are few development interventions that attempt to work with the commercial mass media in a sustainable way. Most development projects buy media space to deliver predefined information and the resulting spots, programmes and publications cease once funding stops. This case study explores a media intervention initiated under the RisiAlbania Project that took an innovative approach to improving information on youth employment by working to stimulate the launch and growth of profitable employment-oriented radio and TV programmes, print media supplements and online websites.

The RisiAlbania project was established to respond to the significant problem of **youth unemployment** in Albania. Almost one in three (33%) of young people aged between 15 and 29 are unemployed. This is leading to increasing emigration from Albania with Albanians being the 5th largest nationality seeking asylum in the European Union.

The **overall objective of the project** is therefore on i) job creation and ii) improving labour market information and intermediation services with a particular focus on youth. As part of this second component, the project embarked on working with the independent commercial mass media sector in Albania to develop and launch informative media products focused on employment information.

The **intervention rationale** was not to use mass media as a short term tool to disseminate information, but aimed to change the way that media reports on employment in a sustainable way and therefore focused on change within the mass media system. It was envisaged that the improvement in information would

influence the choices that young people make about employment and tertiary and vocational education (labour market system change) and therefore impact on the ability of young people to find employment (employment change). Sustainable change in media was therefore built into the overall intervention strategy of the project and became a core focus for the project despite its overall goal on employment.

The **RisiAlbania approach** was to offer support to media houses to develop and launch pilot radio programmes, TV programmes, print media and online media. This support was in the form of cost sharing, technical support and information on audience perceptions to the new and emerging media products. This support was provided on a rapidly diminishing basis over 3 seasons (years) to reduce the potential for dependency which would undermine sustainability.

From mid 2014 to mid 2016 RisiAlbania directly supported the launch of **6 pilot media products**. The intervention resulted in the successful launch of 2 TV programmes, 1 radio programme and 1 newspaper supplement with online presence and an online portal. These pioneering products are the first ever TV programmes, radio programmes and supplements that have focused on employment in Albania. The RisiAlbania intervention has also resulted in the planned launch for 2017 of 2 additional TV programmes and the expansion of 2 online portals to include employment and training information, all without direct financial support from the project. There is strong evidence of both product and market sustainability: product sustainability in the continuation of the media products themselves and market sustainability in the organic replication of employment oriented media.

The intervention has also resulted in significant impact at three levels (media, labour market and employment):

Media level impact: Independent media ratings information and studies undertaken by RisiAlbania show a high level of audience interest for these employment programmes, publications and websites. The flagship employment programme on the leading Top TV station, Ti Mundesh, captured on average 22% of all TV viewers for each episode in its first series. RisiAlbania research showed that 80% of young people had watched at least 4 programmes and almost 30% had watched between 5 and 10 programmes. Other media products supported by RisiAlbania also showed strong, but slightly lower, audience. The popularity of these employment oriented media products has clearly illustrated their potential from a commercial perspective. A number of the media products have also begun to attract advertising and sponsorship, although marketing could be perceived as an area where additional effort would reinforce the sustainability and replication of the programmes and publications.

Labour level impact: The surveys undertaken by RisiAlbania and subsequent interviews with viewers, listeners and readers also show that these media products are having a significant impact on the perceptions and behaviour of audiences 71%

of the audience stated that the media products have changed their perception around employment – this means more than 78'000 people. These changes were particularly strong in improving understanding and awareness of vocational training, promoting self employment and in changing perceptions around desirability of careers and skills that are in demand from employers. The studies also showed that it was not just the youth, potential employees and employers that were being influenced by these media products but parents and family members who can influence the educational and career choices of the young. The surveys also showed the impact of media information on training service providers and improving their understanding of training demand and needs.

Employment level impact: Almost one third (32%) of all the young people who watched, listened or read the programmes reported that they had directly influenced their behaviour. Investigations into this showed that the audience had changed decisions around education and training, changed the way they looked for a job or had embarked on establishing their own business. For Ti Mundesh, the flagship TV programme on Top TV, alone this would mean that over 51,000 young people had changed their behaviour around employment as a result of watching the programme

The RisiAlbania intervention therefore highlights the potential high impact of a media focused intervention in employment. It illustrates the opportunity to achieve such impact in a way that is a win-win-win for commercial media, the audience and the development project itself. The approach that was adopted by the project has promoted sustainability and replication within the media industry ensuring that impacts are ongoing and not short term.

The intervention approach and outcomes provides a number of lessons for working with the mass media not only in employment related projects but also more widely in development. These include the project's approach to financial, technical and marketing support and the monitoring and measurement of impact in a media related intervention.

1. Introduction

Fjonalda Sh. aged 27 and Eno H. aged 24 were two of Albania's huge number of youth unemployed. In a country with almost a third of 15-29 year olds officially unemployed, Albania has one of the highest youth unemployment rates in Europe. If you walk around the streets of Tirana, the country's capital city, or any other large town in Albania, you will find school leavers and youths gathered in cafes and squares talking and whiling away the hours. Many of these youths will have good school qualifications and many have university educations. What they don't have is a job that attracts them and provides them with quality employment.

Many commentators and employers suggest the problem lies not only in the lack of jobs but also in a mismatch between skills and job vacancies. During a workshop on employment in early 2016, the Albanian Prime Minister, Edi Rama, asserted that "Albania has jobs, but no professionals". But the experience of Fjonalda and Eno show that there is also a gap between understanding, aspiration and the realities of the Albanian job market. Both had their perceptions changed by exposure to information about opportunities for employment in areas that they had never considered working in previously.

"The programme has changed my perception for the professions which were not regarded as interesting or beneficial before, especially traditional familiar professions and businesses. My mother is a good tailor and she is running her own business. Now I am working together with her and I find this profession interesting and beneficial." Fjonalda Sh.

"The programme with different examples of young people working in different jobs, changed my attitude towards working. These are not bad jobs. So I decided to work in a car wash business. And I would like to have my car wash business in the future." Eno H.

The programmes which Fjonalda and Eno refer to are radio and TV programmes that, along with print and online publications, are the result of a 2 year intervention initiated by the RisiAlbania project, a Swiss Agency for Development Cooperation (SDC) project implemented by HELVETAS Swiss Intercooperation and Partners Albania. These media products have been supported by the project as a strategy to change perceptions and improve understanding around the labour market in Albania. Rather than just funding or paying for these media products to be broadcast or featured, RisiAlbania has worked to show the commercial media in Albania that reporting on youth related employment can gain large audiences and be attractive to advertisers and therefore profitable. In short, the project is working to embed employment issues within the mainstream media industry.

This case study explores and explains the RisiAlbania media intervention which aims to make mass media an ongoing provider of information on employment issues. This is one of the first times that media has been used in a sustainable way in a development project focusing on addressing youth unemployment. The experience of the project has application not only to employment interventions but also more widely in development projects which have a focus and ambition for sustainability and creating scale through replication within the market. This case study explains an intervention where mass media is not merely a paid messenger, but a stakeholder that can provide the information that is essential to the effective operation of industries, markets and sectors.



2. BACKGROUND

2.1 Youth unemployment in Albania - One in three

One in three (33%) of young Albanian's between the age of 15 and 29 are unemployed compared to only 13% of 30 to 64 year olds¹. This figure has been on the rise since 2011 and has become a topic of concern to the government and the nation as a whole. Albania is a country with a relatively young population and a median age of 34.7 years - almost 6 years younger than Switzerland and 8 years younger than Germany². It is a country where many young people migrate to find employment and the population of Albania has been in decline since 1990.

The country's population has in fact decreased by 12% since 1990 with an average annual net migration of almost ninety two thousand. In 2015, Albanians were the 5th largest nationality seeking asylum in EU countries after Syria, Afghanistan, Iraq and Kosovo. The number of asylum applications made by Albanian citizens to EU countries soared from 16,950 in 2014 to 67,735 in 2015³. These statistics highlight the extent of economic and employment problems facing the country.

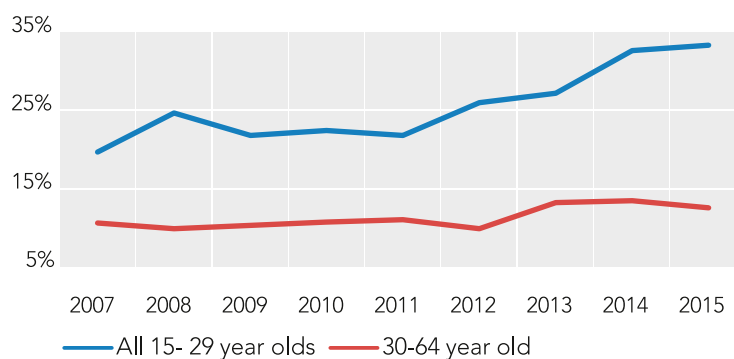
The root causes of youth unemployment are varied and complicated, but some factors are clear:

- low economic performance both nationally and regionally,
- a mismatch between supply and demand in the employment market
- and a mismatch between values and aspiration for employment and the reality of the job market

Before exploring these factors, it is useful to briefly explain Albania's recent history which has inevitably impacted on economic growth and the perceptions and values of the nation. Albania was a communist country with a centrally controlled economy up until the early nineties when wider political changes within the USSR and Eastern Europe heralded a transition towards democracy and a market economy. In the 25 years since the early nineties the country has faced huge economic, social and political change and transition. Some key aspects that are relevant to today's youth unemployment problem are:

Economic performance both nationally and regionally: Albania's economy crashed in the early nineties. GDP per capita reduced from the already low levels of the eighties (around US\$700) to a mere \$218 in 1990. The economy then grew with increased stability and economic reform with GDP per capita rising to over \$4000 in 2008. Since this point GDP and economic growth have faltered, hit by the wider global recession, European recession and the impact of the economic turmoil of Greece, Albania's important geographic

Fig 1: Unemployment rates in Albania by age



Source: INSTAT, 2015

¹ INSTAT, Albania Institute of Statistics, 2015

² World Bank, 2015

³ Eurostat 2015

neighbour. This shorter term economic impact explains to a degree the increasing youth unemployment since 2007 but it does not fully explain why the impact has been felt so heavily on the young while the older generation remains relatively immune. Youth unemployment has increased by 13% since 2007 but unemployment in the over 30s only by 2%.

Mismatch between skills supply and demand within the labour market: As Prime Minister Edi Rama highlighted, there is clearly a mismatch between the skills of those seeking jobs and the jobs available. This problem is less about lack of training and education and more about the nature of training and further education in Albania. An analysis of the employment market⁴ shows that many of the skills in demand from employers are specific, technical and practical. They are skills demanded by new types of IT, engineering and service industries that are competing on a regional, European and international level. A high proportion of school graduates attend further education in Albania but most are attending traditional university courses that have not adapted to economic realities or are theoretical in nature. In 2015, more than 20 times the number of students were enrolled in university (103,000) compared to those graduating from official vocational education (a mere 3136 students)⁵. The number of graduates from vocational schools has not increased since the early nineties.

Mismatch between values and aspiration for employment and the reality of the job market: While the economy and the supply of vocational education are clearly impacting on youth unemployment, perception and values play a huge role also. It plays a role in defining the educational paths of the young and in the way they seek employment. This can be seen as partly a legacy of the past, when university education and white-collar jobs were the prerequisites for success and where self employment was not an option. This legacy impacts on the young through parental influence and inherited values. But aspirations and values are also formed within wider society – in the interaction we have with media, the video clips and films we watch, the blogs and articles we read and the interaction we have with peers and those we respect. “No job” can often be perceived as better than a ‘bad job’ by young people. But is this perception of job quality one that is valid and based on reality? The experience of Fjonalda and Eno show that often perceptions are often based on poor information and understanding.

2.2 RisiAlbania: Working to address labour market issues

It is the premise of the RisiAlbania project that information is key to both reducing the mismatch between supply and demand within the Albanian labour market and also in changing values and perceptions around jobs and careers.

RisiAlbania was established in 2013 to address the problem of youth unemployment in Albania. The project was established by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and is implemented by a consortium of partners consisting of HELVETAS Swiss Intercooperation and Partners Albania. The 4 year project has two main pillars. The first focuses on job creation through growth in specific sectors (tourism, agriculture and ICT) and the second focuses on improved labour market information and intermediation services.

RisiAlbania’s work with mass media sits under this second component. The project design recognised the importance of formal intermediation (organisations, companies and platforms that match job seekers with employers) and labour market data, but also recognised the potentially dynamic and catalytic role that mass media, TV and radio broadcasting, print and online, can have in reaching and influencing large numbers of people.

⁴ For example: Skill Needs Analyses 2014, National Employment Service, International Labour Organisation, December 2014.

⁵ INSTAT, 2015

2.3 Mass media in Albania: Focused on ‘black news’, politics and entertainment

The media around the world plays an important role in employment markets. Many newspapers have traditionally included sections on employment and employment adverts. These sections have often linked news around sectors, commercial or public, with information on career, training and employment opportunities. Online platforms have to a degree taken over some of the traditional media’s role in job advertisements, but conventional print media continues to deliver information both in print and through their allied online services.

Broadcast media also plays a very important role in profiling and exploring sectors of employment and self employment. While often not overtly ‘employment’ programmes, shows on setting up and running a business as well as programmes focusing on business sectors such as IT and computing, tourism, agriculture and the environment influence viewers and highlight career and business opportunities. A new genre of ultra-popular shows have also emerged and been syndicated across the world – shows such as The Apprentice (employment), Dragons’ Den UK / Shark Tank US (entrepreneurship) – and been a success among audiences and highly successful commercially.

“Albanian media is more focussed on black [negative] news, but this [our new employment] supplement covers positive issues of young people”

Editor, Shqiptarja.com

An analysis of the Albanian media sector undertaken by RisiAlbania in early 2014 showed that very little existed that would give insight into employment opportunities. There was a lack of content that focused explicitly on employment, entrepreneurship or more generally on business sectors. Despite unemployment being a hot political and social topic, the mass media in Albania focus predominantly on entertainment, mainstream politics and, as one senior editor at the Shqiptarja.com Newspaper put it, “black news”.

There is a lack of diversity in media content in Albania – particularly in content which is locally produced, informative, factual and therefore effectively investigated and sourced. The Albanian media comprises around 61 TV stations, 25 daily newspapers and 75 radio stations⁶ which are predominantly commercial and rely on advertisements. For the Albanian media, focusing on entertainment, mainstream news and foreign rebroadcasted or reprinted content appears a safer route to audience ratings and commercial advertisement. In contrast, investing in informative and factual programmes and content, produced at relatively high cost by teams of journalists, editors and producers can appear a less attractive option.

For media content to be a success in a commercial industry the content needs to firstly attract sizeable audiences and secondly be able to attract advertisers seeking to reach this audience. To the Albanian media, employment focused programmes on the face of it did not appear to be a winning formula to commercial media success.

⁶ Authority of Audio-visual Media, in charge of licensing the media

3. The RisiAlbania media intervention: Acting as a catalyst

It is important to contrast RisiAlbania’s ambition and approach to working with the mass media to that of the vast majority of international development projects. Using the mass media to inform and change perceptions and behaviour is hardly new in international development. Interventions in health, education, private sector development and governance have tapped into the power of mass media to inform mass audiences, stimulate debate and influence. What is different about the RisiAlbania intervention is that they focused on creating sustainable change within the media industry and in-so-doing aimed to stimulate media to play an ongoing role in information on employment.

The vast majority of development projects use media as a tool and sponsor or pay for media airtime and space to deliver information. In those cases, mass media is therefore an unsustainable means towards a project end and the relationship between the project and the media is a commercial and transactional one - when the payment for airtime or space ceases, so does the media coverage.

RisiAlbania, on the other hand, intervened with an explicit goal of changing the way the mass media system operates. The ambition for media system change was to embed employment into the mainstream media content – programme line-ups, reporting and online portals. To achieve this RisiAlbania needed first to prove the popularity and profitability of such content and to therefore build the commercial incentives around such content.

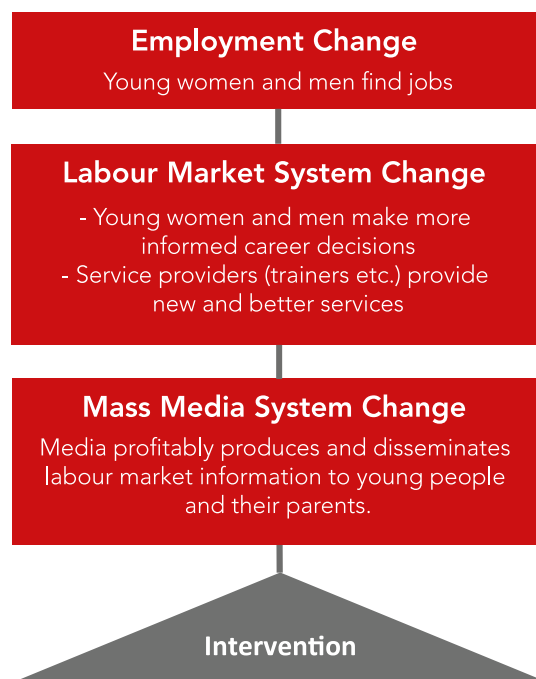
The implementation approach

Development projects which purchase media space often cite the lack of resources, both human resources and finance, as a key reason for not attempting to work in a more sustainable way. A more sustainable approach is perceived to be more time consuming and costly. It is therefore interesting to note that RisiAlbania intervened in the media market with surprisingly limited resources and, as this case study will explore, with quite substantial impact:

Human resources: Risi Albania did not have a team or even a dedicated staff member working full-time on the media component. One senior staff member allocated about 60% of her time to this intervention. This staff member did not have prior experience of the media or journalism, but did have an extensive experience in employment and career orientation.

Finance: In total RisiAlbania invested 183,000 Euro over two years in the media intervention (not including project staff costs). This finance was allocated on a reducing basis with € 103,000 in spent in the first season and €80,000 spent in the second season.

Figure 2: Risi Albania Strategic Framework for the media intervention





Nevertheless, it should be noted that one lesson learnt from the project was that the time commitment projected for the media intervention was originally underestimated by RisiAlbania. Also, the cost of working with the largest and potentially most influential TV stations was higher than originally anticipated.

At the outset the approach appeared relatively simple. RisiAlbania would raise awareness of the media to the opportunity of developing employment focused content (programmes, publications and online platforms) and then open competitive calls for proposals for new innovative media products. The winning proposals would receive cost sharing and capacity building support to pilot and launch the new media products. The aim was to reduce entry barriers to launching new approaches to content while avoiding any reliance on the finance from the project.

The intervention since 2014 has had six main stages;

Stage 1: Initial media sector research and baseline data collection: A baseline study was commissioned in early 2014. The baseline mapped the Albanian media industry and assessed current levels of employment relevant content. The study was undertaken by media experts as a consultancy assignment. In addition, an international study was undertaken to identify and analyse the best international/regional practices of dissemination of Labour Market Information through media and to assess their applicability in the Albanian context.

Stage 2: Awareness raising and call for proposals: The findings of the research were presented at a national workshop in July 2014, entitled 'Labour Market –a new business for media", with a strong focus on the commercial aspects of employment focused reporting. RisiAlbania invited a senior editor of a German newspaper (Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung) as well as other regional media to present at this workshop. This presentation focused on highlighting both the approaches adopted by German media outlets in covering employment and the commercial benefits of such coverage. A call for proposals for new and innovative media products relating to youth unemployment was launched at this workshop.

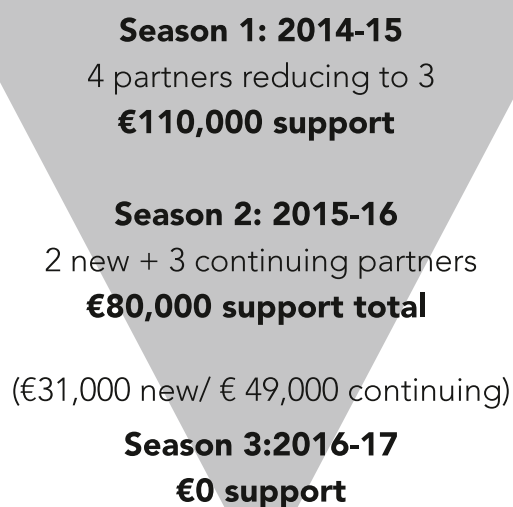
Stage 3 - Proposal development: RisiAlbania vetted the proposals and worked with a shortlist of applicants to fine tune these into fundable plans. 4 media were chosen and budgets developed for co-funding and capacity building for the first season (approximately 10 months).

Stage 4 - Support to a pilot season (season 1): The winning 4 media (one radio station, two TV stations and one print and online newspaper) were chosen in September 2014. Each winner received financial support to pilot test and launch a media product and capacity building from the international expert from Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung.

The financial support was carefully targeted to ensure that the partner was co-investing. At this stage, the anticipated budget for support was €103,000.

In order to make sure that the programmes and their content was of high quality, a monitoring process took place. For this purpose, an audience feedback group comprising young people from different backgrounds, under the supervision of

Figure 3: Overall funding support provided by RisiAlbania to media partners



a consultant, was established to monitor the programmes and give feedback for the first five months of the pilot programmes and supplement.

Stage 5 – Awareness raising for season 2: It was decided to undertake a second awareness raising workshop which was organised in July 2015 at the end of the first season of pilot programmes. The experience of the pilot media products was presented and another senior editor from Germany was invited to present at this workshop, this time from a public TV broadcaster (RBB-TV Randfunk Berlin-Brandenburg television). It was recognised at this stage in the media intervention that it was too early for crowding-in (competitors entering the market) and there was a need to create a larger critical mass of employment focused media to influence the industry. A second call for media proposals was therefore invited.

Stage 6 – Second round of support to media products: Two additional potential media partners were chosen to receive support: one TV station and one online platform. It was also decided to provide a continuing, but significantly diminished support to three of the existing partners.

RisiAlbania also embarked on a separate but complimentary activity to work with the Faculty of Journalism and Communication at the University of Tirana and develop a module on labour market reporting. This activity was supported by a trainer from the German public broadcaster Deutsche Welle. The activity had a longer term objective of bringing a new generation of journalists into the Albanian media who understand labour market issues.

4. The emerging pilot media products

Over the period of two years, from mid-2014 to mid-2016, RisiAlbania has directly supported 6 media products, 4 products in season 1 (2014-15) and an additional two in season 2 (2015-16). In addition the awareness raising activities and the success of directly supported products has resulted in a number of additional employment related media products emerging.

As the following list highlights, the emerging portfolio of media products span a spectrum of different focuses from those that are much more employment market focused (e.g. Drejt Punes in Shqiptarja.com) through to those that are more entrepreneur focused (e.g. Have you got an Idea on Vizion Plus) as well as those which cover formal employment as well as self-employment and entrepreneurship (Ti Mundesh on top TV). The portfolio also aims not just at youth (through radio, TV and internet) but also at reaching their parents with print media (Shqiptarja.com supplement) and media that attracts older audiences (report TV)

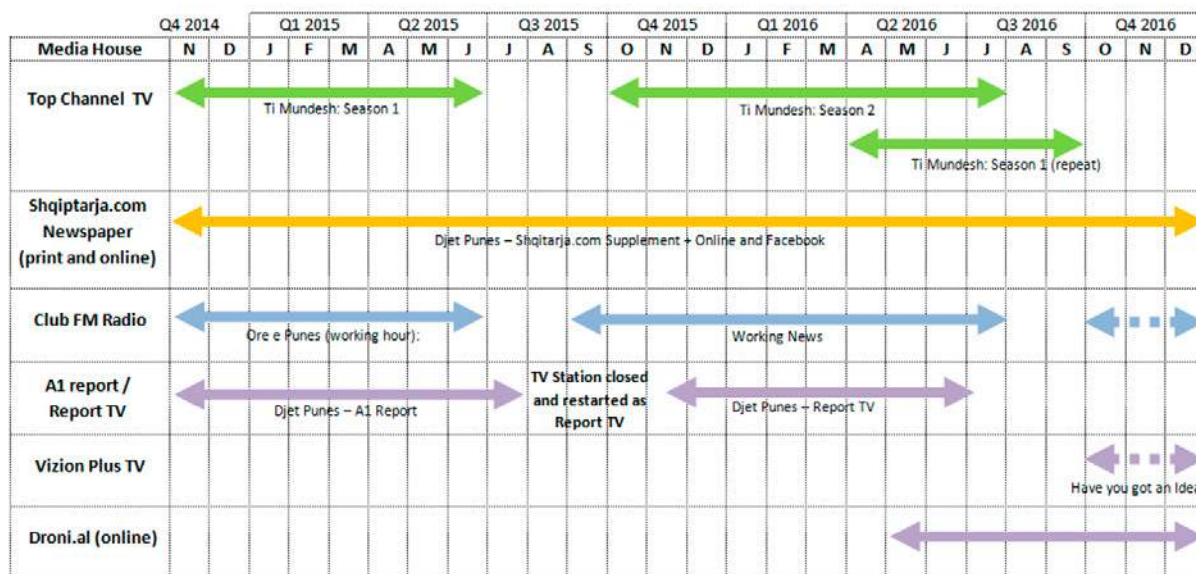
Directly supported media products

Ti Mundesh (You can do it) on Top TV: Top TV is the leading TV station in Albania consistently commanding the highest audience. The station is commercial and reliant primarily on advertising. Ti Mundesh is in many ways RisiAlbania's flagship media product. The station is an industry leader and the potential to influence an industry as well as ensure large outreach was a reason for RisiAlbania revising their initial budget to allow them to support the piloting of the programme Ti Mundesh. Ti Mundesh combines field based filming and interviews with studio panel discussions with experts and practitioners. Each programme focuses on an industry or sector and explores both formal employment and self-employment. Topics have included tourism, agriculture, beekeeping, IT and fashion. The programmes were 40 minutes long in season 1 increasing to 50 minutes in season 2 and were broadcast in the early evening as well as being put up online. Ti Mundesh is the first locally produced TV programme in Albania that focuses on employment issues. The programme has broadcast for 2 seasons with the first season being repeated in late 2016.

Ora e Punes (Working Hour) on Club FM radio: Club FM Radio is a leading Tirana based station that has a particular focus on youth. With RisiAlbania support, the station initiated a one hour programme that mixed music and entertainment with discussions on employment issues. The studio based programme used panels of experts, employers and practitioners to explore a variety of topics and sectors focusing on both employment and self-employment. A major part of Ora e Punes's success was due to the dynamic host who was able to enliven discussions in a way that was attractive to the youth. The Ore e Punes format was atypical for Club FM which was primarily a music and entertainment station with short spots for news and information. The media group also broadcast a TV version of the programme on their Club TV digital channel without RisiAlbania support and also placed the programme online on YouTube and their website. In season 2, Club FM reverted to a different, and more typical, format for covering employment issues and began developing and broadcasting short 2 to 5 minute spots which focus on employment information and news.



Figure 4 Production and Broadcasting timetable for media products supported by RisiAlbania



Drejt Punes (Towards the work) in Shqiptarja.com newspaper and online: The Drejt Punes weekly supplement emerged as the first employment oriented supplement in an Albanian newspaper and has run consistently since November 2014. The supplement provides a variety of news, interviews, job adverts and information on training opportunities. Shqiptarja.com has been transforming itself from a primarily print media into an online and print media outlet and the articles and information from Drejt Punes are also featured on Shqiptarja.com’s online news service.

Drejt Punes (Toward the work) on A1 report: Early in season 1, Shqiptarja.com collaborated with the TV station A1 Report to develop a weekly documentary programme that was also supported by RisiAlbania. Due to an ownership split A1 Report TV was closed in mid 2015. The station reopened as Report TV later in 2015 and despite not receiving subsequent support from RisiAlbania, the Drejt Punes programme was restarted and ran for a second series.

Have you got an Idea - Vizion Plus TV: Vizion Plus approached RisiAlbania at this second call for proposals stage with a concept of purchasing a license of Endemol for an Entrepreneur TV Programme, after a successful show in Turkey called ‘Have you got an idea’. This programme invites innovators and inventors to present new products and business ideas to a panel of experts and businesspeople. The programme takes winning ideas through a series of support stages towards a conclusion where the winners are provided with loans and support to take the concept to market. As such, ‘Have you got an idea’ is an entrepreneurial programme promoting new product and service development and start up business. Vizion Plus purchased the programme license in 2015 but struggled to initiate a process of identifying and short listing innovations for the launch of the 2015 season. The programme was therefore delayed and is planned to start broadcasting its first season in October 2016.

Gjej Pune (Find a job) on Droni.AI online news portal: RisiAlbania provided a small amount of cost sharing support (€5,000) for this online news portal to develop a dedicated section on employment opportunities. The section was created in June 2016 and comprised of 2 to 3 informative articles a week on

employment related issues. These articles have provided information on job seeking and interviewing as well as exploring job opportunities and entrepreneurship.

Media products initiated without direct support from RisiAlbania

Employment and training content on Duapune.com: This online portal and blog is run by an online entrepreneur who has participated in the Ti Mundesh TV programme and the Ore e Punes radio programme. The portal and blog has diversified and enhanced its content on employment with a particular focus on youth employment. Information on career and employment opportunities have been enhanced and from May 2015 Duapune began publishing the 'Employment Index' to track trends in employment based on statistics from their website and two other portals duatrajnim.com⁷ and duashkolle.com⁸ which are complimentary services to Duapune.com.

Employment and skills portal on Mundesi.al: The portal was established by a group of young people and focuses on higher skill level employment and training opportunities. The portal was established in late 2015 following interaction with RisiAlbania, but no financial support.

Drejt Punes on Report TV: As noted above the Drejt Punes programme was initiated on A1 report TV but the station closed due to a management and ownership split. Report TV emerged as the successor and re-launched the Drejt Punes programme without direct support from RisiAlbania.

Two other media products that have relevance to employment are also in the development process and due to air in from late 2016:

Tag Albania on Vizion Plus TV: A programme that focuses on different regions of Albania and explores local tourism and enterprise as well as more general local points of interest.

Made in Albania on Vizion Plus TV: a programme that specifically focuses on local handicrafts, artisans and manufacturers.

Complimentary Initiative: Faculty of Journalism and Communication at the University of Tirana

The RisiAlbania intervention also resulted in the design, launch and running of a module on labour market reporting at the Faculty of Journalism and Communication. This optional module is aimed at orienting future journalists on the importance and methods of reporting on the labour market and was the first of its type in Albania.

⁷ Duatrajnim.com enables the matching between the training seekers and training providers

⁸ Duashkolle.com provides a list of the Universities in Albania, Kosovo and Macedonia

5. Impact – what has been achieved through media development?

As the strategic framework for the RisiAlbania media intervention shows (figure 1), the intervention aimed to impact at three levels. The direct focus was on changing the way that the media in Albania reports on and covers employment related issues (1: media level change). The objective of this media work was to impact on the audience, in particular young people and their parents, and change their perceptions and behaviour (2: labour market change). The ultimate goal of RisiAlbania's work is to impact on employment and that young women and men find jobs that they would not have found otherwise (3: employment level change). How did RisiAlbania's work in media perform at these three levels – media, labour market and employment? Are there any signs that the changes brought about are sustainable and do they have the potential to grow organically within the media and labour markets?

To answer these questions RisiAlbania undertook a study and review in early to mid-2016 to explore the impact of the media intervention. This involved:

- Interviews with media professionals in the partner media houses.
- Interviews with selected resource people involved in the programmes and articles.
- An analysis of media ratings data to assess the reach and popularity of the specific TV programmes (similar data for radio and print media is not available)
- Survey of a random purposive sample of 700 people (audience) across Albania⁹.

It should be noted from the outset that the media intervention at the time of writing had effectively been in operation for only 2 years. This is a short period of time, particularly to thoroughly assess sustainability and to fully assess the level of impact particularly on behaviour change. The project also did not anticipate being able to assess change at the audience level and full baselines were not undertaken. In fact, the nature of this type of intervention makes it almost impossible to develop valid baselines. Unlike with a social marketing campaign which defines its objectives and messages tightly and narrowly focuses on a specific behaviour or perception change, working sustainably with media companies means that the focus of media coverage is not narrowly defined and is controlled by the editorial policy of the media itself. Assessment of behaviour change therefore needs to be undertaken on an ongoing basis or retrospectively.

5.1 Media level change: Has coverage of employment been enhanced in a sustainable way?

RisiAlbania direct support resulted in the launch of 5 new media products, 2 TV programmes, 1 radio programme, and 1 newspaper supplement with online presence and an online portal. It has also resulted in the planned launch of a third TV programme. Without direct funding support, the intervention has also influenced the planned launch of an additional 2 TV programmes and the expansion of 2 online portals to include employment and training information.

⁹ The survey had a confidence level of 95% and margin of error of 4%

The scope of content and media content stimulated by RisiAlbania's work has therefore been quite substantial but a key question arises about how sustainable these changes have been. The indications detailed in the table below show some uncertainty around Top TV and Vizion Plus but overall strong signs of both product and market sustainability. Product sustainability is the continuation of the media product itself while market sustainability is the continuation of the overall concept (content focused on employment) and therefore its replication and growth within the wider media market.

Table 1: Media products emerging from the RisiAlbania intervention

	Product	Notes on sustainability/continuation	Assessment of sustainability
Media products initially supported by RisiAlbania	Ti Mundesh – Top Channel TV	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ti Mundesh perceived as a strong brand by management. • Strong buy in from production team. • Repeat of season 1 (autonomous) • <i>Third season planned by production team but awaiting agreement from management. New programme launched on payable digital platform.</i> 	Uncertain due to ownership changes but with positive signs of potential sustainability.
	Ore e Punes – Club FM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong buy-in and ownership from management. • Second season changed from a 1 hour programme to short slots. • <i>The revised format has been renewed for a third season without RisiAlbania support.</i> 	Employment focus is maintaining but in a more reduced format than the initial pilot programme.
	Drejt Punes- Shqiptarja.com	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong management and editorial team buy-in. • Perceived as increasing circulation • Attracting advertising • <i>Has continued regularly since launch and after RisiAlbania support ceased and has entered a third season.</i> 	Strong signs of ongoing sustainability
	Drejt Punes – A1 Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Despite the fact that A1 report closed as a station, the programme was re-launched under Report TV without RisiAlbania funding. 	The TV station was closed, by the decision of the management
	Have you got an Idea Vizion Plus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have you got an idea, is slightly supported by RisiAlbania. 	Uncertain although the concept of programming appears to have been picked up strongly by the station.
	Gjej Pune – Droni.AL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only small seed funding offered. • Content appears well integrated into the overall focus of the website/blog 	Good
New media products developed without support (crowding-in)	Drejt Punes – Report TV	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The programme was re-launched under report TV without RisiAlbania funding. 	Good signs of sustainability but with some concerns around the programme quality.
	Më i miri – Digitalb Channel T	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New programme promoting 12 artisan professions on payable digital platform Digitalb (same group as TopChannel), without project support 	Good signs of sustainability (payable platform) but with lower audience outreach compared to TopChannel.
	Tag Albania / Made in Albania – Vizion Plus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vizion Plus has these 2 programmes planned for launch in late 2016 that are relevant to employment, with no direct financial support from RisiAlbania 	Good sign of sustainability as programs are designed.
	Ore e Punes – Club TV	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Replication on the tv with no direct financial support from RisiAlbania 	The content is the same as it is broadcasted from the radio.
	Duapune.com	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Replication 	Good.
Mundesial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Replication with no direct financial support from RisiAlbania 	Good.	

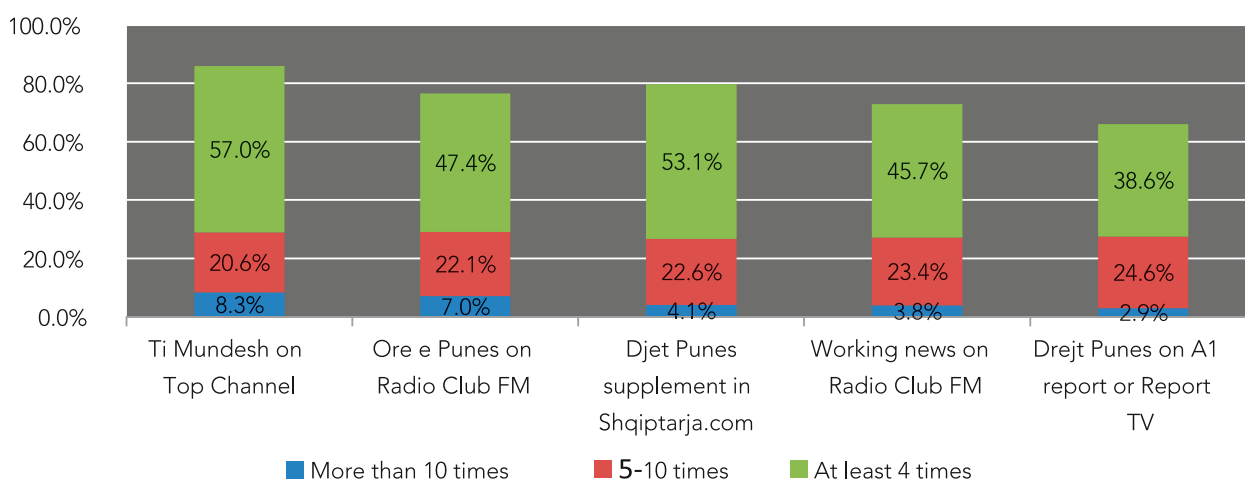


These indicators show strong initial signs of sustainability. There are three key factors that influence the longer term sustainability of media products within a commercial media industry – 1) popularity of the content and therefore audience levels, 2) profitability and revenue generation and 3) buy-in and ownership among the production and most importantly the management of media houses. The longer term sustainability of these media products can therefore be assessed against these factors:

Popularity and audience ratings

As figure 5 highlights, the media products supported have attracted very strong audiences. Research undertaken by RisiAlbania showed that 86% of the target audience had tuned into the Ti Mundesh TV programme with almost 30% having watched more than 5 of the programmes. Independent media ratings data support these findings and showed that an average of 107,500 people watched each programme of Ti Mundesh in its first airing and 52,600 when it was rebroadcast. An average of 22% of all viewers watched Ti Mundesh in the first series. The various programmes have also been watched over 16,000 times online.

Figure 5: Audience viewing/listening/reading frequency Source: RisiAlbania research 2016



“We have received more profits and much more audience and also a different audience from other days” Q: What is different about the audience? A: “many more younger people”

Owner/manager Club FM

Other media products had a lower average audience than Ti Mundesh, but also showed strong audience levels. In interviews undertaken in 2016, both management and production staff (editors, producers, journalists etc.) showed a strong belief in the popularity of the employment focused programmes and supplements. This has been an important driver of the short term continuation of the media products with either reducing or no support from RisiAlbania and it will be a key factor in the longer term sustainability of coverage of employment issues.

Revenue and profitability derived from the media products

RisiAlbania did not actively support marketing around the media products believing that the media houses themselves have the capacity to market these programmes and content to advertisers. The media partners have had a varying level of success in attracting advertisers to these unique products. Shqiptarja.com have attracted a number of advertisers and developed a marketplace for training opportunities. They also believe that the supplement has increased circulation as a result of the supplement.

Ti Mundesh on the other hand had not gained significant advertisement or programme sponsorship despite the programme being highly rated. The Programme editor attributed this to poor marketing within their sales department, but maintained that the programme was highly marketable. Club Fm changed its programme to short spots and attracted advertisers to pay for job announcements.

Marketing and advertising is one of the areas in which the RisiAlbania intervention could be perceived to be weaker. The assumption that the media would be able to sell such products worked for some partners but less so for others. It could also be argued that the 50% cost-sharing with Top TV potentially reduced the need for pro-active marketing. Time will therefore tell whether the station is able to now package up the programme for advertisers to enable them to begin a third series. This is complicated by a management change which has resulted in all programming being placed on hold.

Buy in from production and management staff

Interviews with the production staff of the media houses highlight very strong ownership and buy in for the TV, radio, print and online media.

The programme editor of the planned entrepreneur programmes on Vizion Plus highlighted the “*attraction of a programme that is both interesting but also useful to people and the country*”. This attraction of working on programmes that are popular but also useful and contribute to the development of a nation is a recurrent theme highlighted by the teams working on these media products. The importance of this motivational factor cannot be overstated, particularly when relating to a media product that is often more difficult and time consuming to produce.

“The programme is about real experience. It’s educational and it is motivational. We should do something for society and our country and this programme does this”

Ti Mundesh programme editor

Media managers in the partner media houses also show a high level of buy-in. Nevertheless, it has been management upheavals due to ownership disputes which have caused one programme to come off air – at least temporarily (Drejt Punes on A1 Report) and another to be put on hold (the third season of Ti Mundesh).

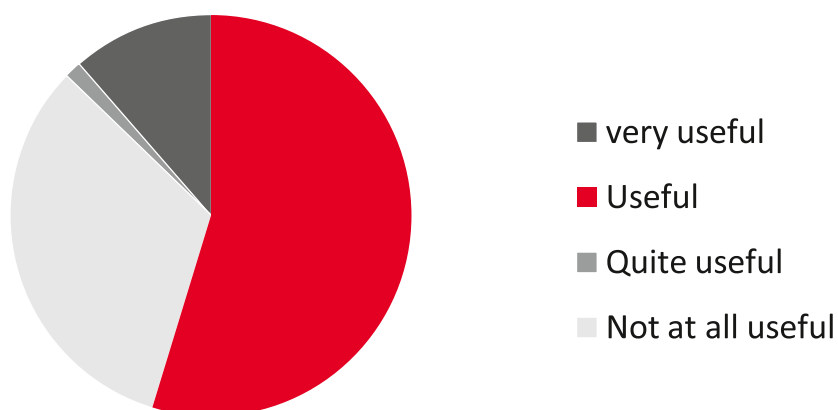
For an intervention that has only been operating for 2 years, RisiAlbania’s media work shows strong signs of sustainability. Providing more proof of revenue generating potential (advertising) around this content could enhance the sustainability and replication potential of such content, but there is strong evidence that a good proportion of these media products will continue after the intervention ceases and that the interest from media professionals is likely to result in employment related issues being mainstreamed into new programmes and content that emerge in the future.

5.2 Audience level change: To what extent have audiences changed their perceptions and behaviour as a result of listening, watching or reading the media products ?

Audiences value these media products highly and the RisiAlbania commissioned survey showed that almost 87% viewed them as being either useful or very useful. 71% of the audience believe that the programmes have changed their perception about jobs and careers and almost one in three (32%) stated that this had resulted in them changing their employment seeking behaviour. For the Ti Mundesh programme alone this would mean that over 113,000 people changed their perception around employment and over 51,000 had changed their behaviour¹⁰. Overall the impact was almost equal among women and men with 47.7%

¹⁰ This is based on average viewership to Ti Mundesh of 160,000 (107,500 to the first broadcast and 52,600 to the second broadcast)

Figure 6: Audience perception of value of programme/supplement



of those who reported a change in perception and 45.7% of those reporting a behaviour change being women.

So what perceptions and behaviours are these media products changing among the audiences? An analysis of the examples identified of perception and behaviour change among the audience identified 4 key areas of change:

- Training and employment: undertaking training to open up new employment opportunities
- Training and self employment: undertaking training to develop skills to establish their own business
- Self employment: setting up their own business.
- Employment in new sectors: taking up jobs in sectors which they would not have considered previously

These changes are effectively illustrated through the numerous real examples identified through the surveys and case studies:

"I would not have got into studying and would not have thought about a diploma in this field if I had not been urged by the interviews with Mr Pirro Jani [Director of the state training centre] in the programme 'Drejt punes' Toward Work' and the frequent information found in Shqiptarja.com... it never crossed my mind [before] to receive training in this profession"

Mentor Sh., welder

Training and employment

As highlighted by Albania's prime minister with his comment about Albania having jobs but no professionals, there is a mismatch between skills and job opportunities in Albania. Information that highlights the skills in demand and informs audiences about potential training opportunities can open up employment opportunities that were previously left unfilled.

Mentor Shyti is a returned emigrant from Greece with general skills in welding. In 2015 he decided to undertake a training course to formalise and enhance his skills as a welder in a bid to find employment. Mentor explains that one of the key inspirations for this move was his exposure to Drejt Punes on Report TV and reading

about job opportunities in the Toward Work Supplement in Shqiptarja.com. The training allowed him to rapidly find employment in a major local beer factory that requires precision welding on plant machinery.

Mentor was one of many students that Pirro Jani claims have been encouraged to enrol in training courses to improve their employability. Pirro has contributed as a resource person on TV and in print and their centre has been promoted in the Shqiptarja.com supplement.

Training and self-employment

Pirro Jani also cites numerous examples where young people had been encouraged by the programmes, supplement and online information to take up training to set up their own business. These include a 19 year old, Pavel N. from the town of Laç who enrolled in a hairdressing course and then set up his own barber shop in the town and two brothers, Klodian and Arben J., who started their own car servicing centre at a very strategic location on Tirana's ring road after undertaking a course in mechanics.

Pirro also gives an example of Adelina and Firdoze S., a mother and daughter, from the district of Shkodra who regularly watched the daytime shows on A1 Report which encouraged them to approach the labour office for assistance in setting up in business. They were referred to the training institution's tailoring course and immediately following graduation established their own tailoring business.

Not only does the information inspire the likes of Adelina and Firdoze to get into business, but it is also the success stories that are motivational and inspiring. As a student who watches Ti Mundesh, Florjan A., noted when interviewed *"these programmes have been so special and meaningful that they have changed several things in me. [I realise that] I should have more confidence in myself and in my skills and by doing this I can also have a success story like the ones I saw in the TV programme"*. Florjan now has an ambition to establish a tour company to organise tours to natural and historic areas of her city.

Self-employment

Self-employment also does not necessarily require formal training, but a confidence in being able to make it on your own. This confidence has clearly been awoken in some of the audience of the various media products. Rubin Kadiru is one such entrepreneur. Rubin has established an innovative IT service shop which he says focuses on "servicing the relationship between man and computer". He clearly attributes this move to the Club FM program 'The Working Hour' stating that "there were a lot of people on this show who had taken the plunge and opened their own business and all of a sudden it had become unavoidable for us to". Rubin partnered with his brother Alfred and established the shop in 2015. The business now employs 5 young people and has an ambition to grow in the future.

" We have noticed an increase in the number of enrolments of young people in different branches of the school after the publications in Shqiptarja.com and on A1 report...These [media]outlets have encouraged many young people to view vocations as the real path to employment in Albania"

Pirro Jani, Director for Regional Public Training Directorate Nr.4 Tirane.

"What I got from the programme was that those people who followed their dreams, they made it to wherever their goal was. It is passion that drove them and it is passion that drives us"

Rubin K., founder of the Wilson square electronic Line shop.

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Employment in new sectors that were not considered before

Another significant area of change identified was in changing the audience's perception of business sectors that they had not previously known about, not considered as being a potential for employment or had a poor view of. The examples detailed at the start of this case study of Fjonalda Sh. who began working in her mother's tailoring business which she had previously ignored as an option, and Eno H. who decided to seek employment in a car washing business are examples of this.

When asked whether her perception had changed as a result of listening to and reading the employment focused media, a university student from Durres, Jonida H., confirmed the impact on opening her mind to new career possibilities *"yes, my perception has changed because occupations which seemed to be less productive are the ones which prevail in the labour market"*.

An important aspect of perception change is parental influence. Parents exert a significant influence over the aspiration and choices of their children. Gazmir B., a parent, commented about Ti Mundesh on Top TV that *"I have seen that people who master an occupation/vocation are needed in the market, which is why I have told my son to take up learning a profession such as electrician or mechanic"*. This parental influence is also highlighted by Florjan N., a student at a local vocational training centre *"I was affected by both the programme and my parents who persuaded me to attend the culinary school"*. To be effective on employment, media clearly needs to reach not just to the young but also their parents who are the ones that can influence career decisions at pivotal points in education and early job seeking. This supports RisiAlbania's strategy of working with various media channels, broadcast, print and online, and media houses and not focusing on one channel alone.

Service level change

RisiAlbania's clear objective on embarking on this work with media was specifically on changing perceptions and behaviour among the youth and their parents. Nevertheless, this exploration of impact also highlighted an additional area of influence. In focusing on employment, the media utilised various experts as resource people for the programmes and articles. They engaged with government officials and training experts and providers. Evidence shows that these people also became viewers, listeners and readers of these media products and in some circumstances these programmes had a profound impact on them as well.

One example of this is Gladiola Dona who was a listener to Club FM's Ore e Punes programmes on hospitality and later became a participant on the programme. Gladiola had returned to Albania after many years of living in Austria. She had graduated from a prestigious Austrian hospitality school "Salzburger Tourismsschulen" and worked at an international level in tourism and education. Her listenership to the radio programme helped her to recognise a missing niche and awoke a dream that she had held for many years to establish a hospitality and tourism school in Albania *"Time and time again in the show there were people who stated that it was very hard for them to get people who are ready to work at an international (quality) level...all of them stated basically the same thing – we can't get trained people, and that is where we come in"*.

"Through these programmes I have understood the way the world of work functions. Before watching these programmes my information on the labour market was scarce and more generic than specific"

Elio Sh., Upper Secondary School student.

"After watching the TV programme Ti Mundesh and [reading] Djet Punes I have suggested to my son the orientation towards a professional career about which these programmes have provided a lot of information"

Bilbil Z., a parent from Durres.

“A Hospitality training centre was something I had in mind but I had given it up. Hearing about the need on radio reawakened the idea”

Gladiola Dona, Founder and Director of the newly established Hospitality and Tourism Academy in Tirana.

As a direct result of this exposure, Gladiola founded the Hospitality and Tourism Academy in October 2015, the first private dedicated hospitality training centre in the country. 36 students graduated from the training centre in mid 2016 and Gladiola plans to train 110 people in 2016-2017 session. The demand for her graduates is large and 90% of her students had jobs on graduation with an additional 18 positions remaining unfilled. Businesses are contacting Gladiola to employ her students. Tourism and hospitality is a growth sector with foreign tourism in hotels increasing almost fourfold in the last 10 years¹¹. The demand for skilled hotel staff far outstrips the supply and skilled job seekers have enhanced job prospects and higher salaries as Gladiola

explains *“Most of the graduates are employed in very good hotels, gourmet restaurants and lounge bars where a specific level of professionalism is required and is therefore better paid. An example: a bar keeper gets 200-300 euro a month, one of our barkeepers at one of the best and newest hotels in Tirana gets 500 Euros a month”*. Gladiola now utilises Club FM and other employment focused media programmes to promote these opportunities and her training courses.

As Gladiola’s example shows, it is not just job seekers and their parents who need to adapt to the realities and opportunities of an ever changing labour market. Service providers, policy makers and employers themselves also need to stay abreast of changes and opportunities and to adapt their way of operating.

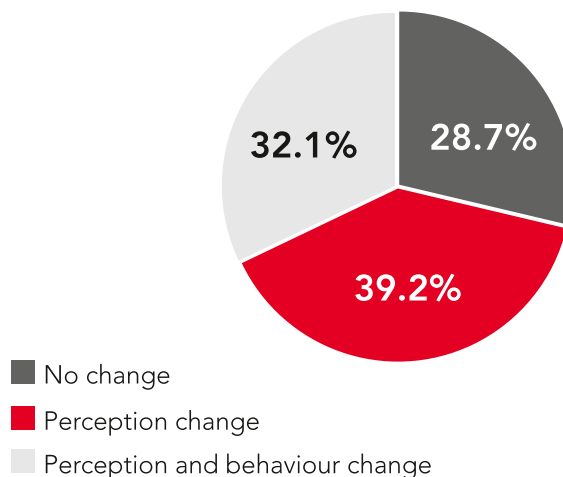
5.3 Employment level change: To what extent have media resulted in audiences finding employment ?

All the examples above show instances where mass media has influenced key aspects of job seeking behaviour among the young. It is these changes that have the potential to reduce the 20% employment gap between the under 30s and over 30s in Albania. Young women and men who are more willing to take jobs in sectors they had ignored before, who decide to pursue training and education in areas that are more likely to lead to good job prospects and those who take the plunge and strike out on their own to establish businesses that will employ them and often others as well. These young women and men are the ones who are unlikely to continue to suffer the ill effects of unemployment and will in turn stimulate economic growth that can reduce unemployment overall.

The survey undertaken by RisiAlbania suggests that more than two thirds (71%) of the total audience of the media products were impacted by the programmes. 39% were impacted on their understanding of employment issues and almost a third 32% changed their perception and behaviour as a result of listening, watching or reading employment focused media. For the audience of Ti Mundesh alone this would mean

Figure 7: Impact on audience

(source: RisiAlbania research 2015)

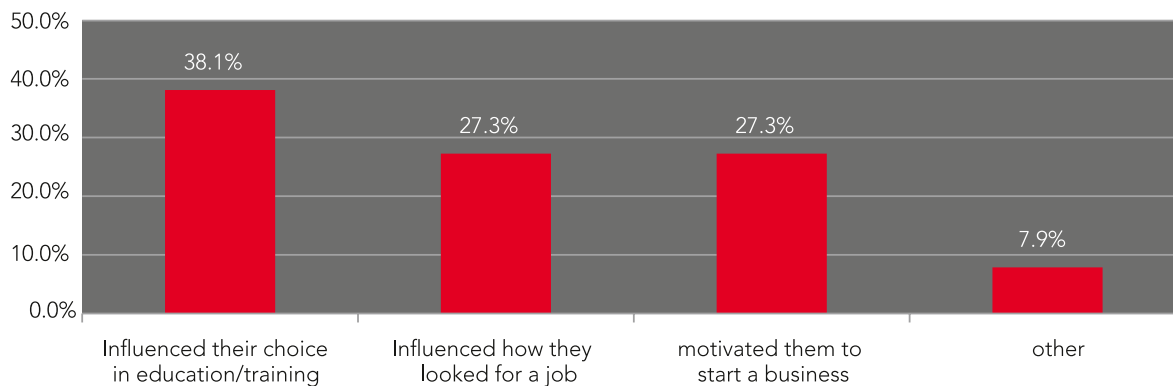


¹¹ INSTAT, 2015 – Overnights of foreigners in Albanian hotels increased from 130,000 in 2005 to 484,000 in 2015.

that over 51,000 people had changed their behaviour as a result of watching the TV programmes. If the media products piloted with the support of RisiAlbania prove sustainable then this figure will grow and the impact on the employment problems of Albania can be profound.

When asked how the media had changed their behaviour, almost one in four stated that they were influenced in their choice of education or career; more than a quarter were influenced on how to look for a job and a further quarter were motivated to start a business.

Figure 8: How the media products impacted on behaviour



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6. Key lessons and conclusions from this experience

This case study was developed with the support of an international consultant with specific experience in sustainable media development. It is therefore possible and useful to assess RisiAlbania's experience in the context of international media development. As stated earlier in this paper, approaches to working with the commercial media in a sustainable way are relatively rare in international development. An early experience (which partly inspired the RisiAlbania project) was the work of the FIT programme in Uganda (FIT Uganda and FIT-SEMA – Small enterprise Media in Africa) a series of interventions over a 7 year period ending in 2006 which focused on developing small enterprise and agricultural radio programming in the commercial media. More recently the ENABLE Programme in Nigeria has applied this concept to improving the business policy environment and working with both print and broadcasting. Other interventions have been undertaken in Nepal, Kenya and Ghana and the approach has also been expanded to health.

The RisiAlbania approach was similar in objective to these other media interventions. The RisiAlbania project aimed to build the commercial incentives for the media to cover development issues and was therefore focused on sustainability from the outset. The project also was different in some key respects. The interventions noted above relied heavily on technical inputs to the media as a key part of the 'offer' and most avoided financial cost sharing. The interventions also relied on recruiting project staff with media and journalism experience. To a degree, the media product innovations were inspired by the projects themselves while RisiAlbania actually maintained a lower level of influence. Other international projects often provided quite intensive technical hand-holding and scrutiny from trainers/mentors. This was not provided or deemed necessary in the RisiAlbania Project. These contrasts provide some interesting lessons for adapting the sustainable media development approach to a middle income country such as Albania:

The need for technical support: The media in Albania is relatively sophisticated compared with many media industries in Africa and Asia. While the RisiAlbania intervention may have been enhanced by more technical inputs, it did not appear necessary within the context of some of the Albanian media. Channels such as Top TV were more than capable of developing and producing quality programmes without external support and only really required the initial catalytic input. Nevertheless, some emerging media products were weaker than Ti Mundesh, such as Drejt Punes on Report TV for example, and could have benefitted from technical input and support to improve the timing, content and format of the programme.

Marketing support: Other international media interventions have also offered marketing support (mentoring and hand holding) to support the revenue generation around the emerging content. Experience in Africa and Asia show that marketing departments are often weak at packaging and promoting new products to potential advertisers – preferring to meet sales targets by selling proven products or more generic airtime and space. Focused support to marketing can assist in rapidly proving the commercial profitability of a new programme concept. It is difficult to assess whether marketing support would have assisted Club FM to maintain a more focused programme rather than changing to shorter info spots or if it would have increased the likelihood of a Ti Mundesh third season, but it is an area of focus that has proven important (and sometimes critical) for sustainability.

The use and possible limitations of financial support: Without a strong technical or marketing offer, RisiAlbania's main tool for catalysing new product development was financial cost sharing with two calls

for proposals. This proved effective in Albania and resulted in good partners emerging who were more interested in programme development than just tapping into donor finance. This approach of using finance as the main offer is more problematic in countries where there is a greater prevalence of donor activity and donor purchasing of media space. The fact that Albania has a relatively low level of donor involvement with the media will have assisted this intervention to succeed. It is also important to note that RisiAlbania vetted financial support carefully and most importantly made it clear to media partners about the short term and rapidly diminishing nature of the financial support. These factors are critical for financial support to succeed in catalysing sustainable changes in the media.

The influence of regional and international experience: While RisiAlbania did not provide ongoing technical inputs, they did provide exposure to international media – senior editors from German newspapers and TV. This exposure was clearly important and the choice of German media is a good one in the Albanian context. In Albania, the media clearly perceives itself to be part of the wider European and global media and Germany is perceived as being a role model. Albanian media looks towards the experiences and models of European media and the media of other regional countries as the purchase of the licence of ‘Have you got an idea’, which was successfully run in Turkey, illustrates.

Media monitoring and impact tracking: RisiAlbania embarked on the media project with a view that it would not be possible to quantify employment level changes in a way that can contribute directly to project (logframe) targets. The survey and case study work undertaken in 2016 has shown that it is in fact possible to identify and explore impacts and potentially to quantify this impact. To effectively undertake this, media development projects need to initiate a process of monitoring the content and following up potential impact examples. If this is undertaken, it is highly likely that more impacts such as Gladiola Dona’s founding of the Hospitality and Tourism Academy would have been identified. Undertaking an impact analysis retrospectively on 2 years of broadcasting is likely to result in missing and not learning from key impacts stimulated by the media coverage. To effectively measure the audience level impact of media content where the content is not predefined, requires projects to implement an ongoing content monitoring process - monitoring all content and identifying topics that have potential for sizeable impact. These topics then need to be investigated in a systematic way to assess whether change has taken place and to quantify the impact. Such a process is of course both time consuming and potentially costly, but would enhance the understanding of the media in impacting on perception and behaviour change.

This intervention has illustrated the potential impact of information from media in an employment focused project and it has also illustrated that an approach focusing on sustainability can have significant impact and creates changes that appear well embedded within an industry. An extension of the RisiAlbania project would provide a good opportunity for the project to build on the achievements to date. An area not yet explored by RisiAlbania is in working with the media to provide a platform for influencing policy on youth employment issues and therefore focusing more on ‘voice’ than on pure ‘information’. This would expand the coverage from being predominantly informative to having influence on policy making in areas of employment and to being more direct in identifying and investigating successes and failures within public and private training and education.

The intervention adopted what is known as a Market Systems Development (or Making markets work for the poor) by focusing on sustainability and building the commercial incentives for the media to cover development issues. This approach has enabled the intervention to not only achieve sustainability but also lay the foundation for potential scale with other media adapting and copying the approach. It has also resulted in the intervention achieving impact with a high level of efficiency or, in development terms - value for money. Time will provide important additional lessons to understand the longer term sustainability and impact of this important and interesting project intervention.



RisiAlbania was established in 2013 to address the problem of youth unemployment in Albania. The project is supported by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and is implemented by a consortium of partners consisting of HELVETAS Swiss Intercooperation and Partners Albania. The 4 year project has two main pillars. The first focuses on job creation through growth in specific sectors (tourism, agriculture and ICT) and the second focuses on improved labour market information and intermediation services.

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