

5th Conference of the LSEE Research Network on Social Cohesion in South East Europe in collaboration with EBRD
on
Economic and social inclusion in an age of political uncertainty in SEE

Belgrade, 21-22 November 2019

The correlations between social protection and migration in Albania

Professor Merita Xhumari

Department Of Political Sciences

Faculty Of Social Sciences

University Of Tirana, Albania

xhumarimerita@gmail.com

The role of social protection



ILO considers social protection as a key stone of strategies **to:**

- **promote human development,**
- **political stability,**
- **inclusive growth and**
- **to reduce the risk of social exclusion**

- The lack of adequate social protection was one of the influencing factors for Albanians who **emigrate abroad for job security and adequate standards of living**

- Migration of young population was **shaping new features of social protection** in Albania, especially for children, youth and elderly

- EU Commission emphasizes **strategic approach to tackle youth unemployment and child abandoned** in Albania (Report, 2018)

Emigration



Albania has experienced an intense period of migration since 1990:

- **1990- 2000** was estimated that 800,000 Albanian emigrants (out of 3 millions), were living mostly in Greece and Italy
- **Emigration was spontaneous and irregular, mainly of males**
- **2000-2010 Regulation policies** in Italy and then in Greece enabled many of the emigrants to normalize their life and to bring in **family** members. In 2010, Albania is ranked first in Europe for the scale of its emigrant stock indexed against the resident population, 45.4% (World Bank, 2011)
- The global economic crisis of 2008-2009 has increased **youth unemployment** and there was **another wave of emigration** from Albania to the EU countries, around 66,000 seeking asylum, mostly in Germany (Eurostat, 2016).
- A Survey during 2010-2015, ranks Albania the sixth in the world in terms of the percentage (**9.1%**) of adults **”planning to migrate”** (Gallup World Poll, 2016)
- **In 2017, INSTAT estimated that net migration was -14.902 Albanians**

The impact of Emigration



- If the European countries might consider Migration as a Policy Response to Population Ageing; in Albanian case migration is People's Response to the unemployment, poverty and low living standards
- The emigration of active population has some negative impact on:
 - decreasing the fertility rate in country at 2.1 children /women;
 - increasing the share of 65+ population at 19.4 percent (2017);
 - increasing the divorce and abandoned children placed in residential care;
 - depopulation of rural areas, CENSUS 2011 less than 50%;
 - threatening social protection sustainability by increasing dependency ratio of pension system at 1 contributor for 1 pensioner.

The Positive Impact of Emigration

- **Financial Remittances – in reducing poverty and developing economy and self-employment:**
 - in 2007 - 12.3% of GDP;
 - in 2015 - 5.8% of GDP (Bank of Albania)
- **Social Remittances - Opened opportunities for education/ training abroad, network and investment e.g.in tourism, health care and social pensions of elderly...**
- **Change the patterns of family structure, functions, way of living, mentality, work culture and the perception for the modern society**
- **BUT, Emigration is a temporary solution to tackle social problems in countries still dominated by young population as Albania**

Some Indicators that might give answer to the question: Why Albanians Emigrate Nowadays?



*Referring to the Eurofound (2019), Life and
society in the EU candidate countries,
publications office of the EU, Luxembourg*
https://www.eurofound.europa.eu/sites/default/files/ef_publication/field_ef_document/ef18032en.pdf

Living standards Indicators



		Albania	Range of all 33 countries (EQLS 2016)				
		2016	Minimum		EU28 average	Maximum	
Satisfaction with living standard	Mean (1–10)	5.1	Albania	5.1	7.0	8.3	Denmark
Making ends meet	With some difficulty, difficulty and great difficulty	76%	Sweden	11%	39%	86%	Greece
Deprivation Index	Number of items not afforded (out of 6)	3.8	Sweden	0.4	1.1	3.8	Albania
Economised on food (meat and vegetables) in the last two weeks	Q90: 'Yes' for a and b, 'No' for a or b (%)	35%	Denmark	3%	7%	35%	Albania

Health and mental well-being



		Albania	Range of all 33 countries (2016)				
		2016	Minimum		EU28 average	Maximum	
In general, how is your health? (‘Very good’ and ‘good’)	Men	69%	Latvia	46%	73%	83%	Ireland
	Women	52%	Latvia	34%	66%	84%	Ireland
WHO-5 Mental Well-Being Index (1–100)	Men	66	Serbia	53	66	72	Ireland
	Women	60	Serbia	51	62	69	Denmark
At risk of depression	Men	25%	Belgium	13%	18%	39%	Serbia
	Women	35%	Denmark	13%	26%	46%	Serbia
Take part in sports or physical exercise	At least once a week	12%	Bulgaria	10%	42%	79%	Finland

Table 10. Participation and exclusion

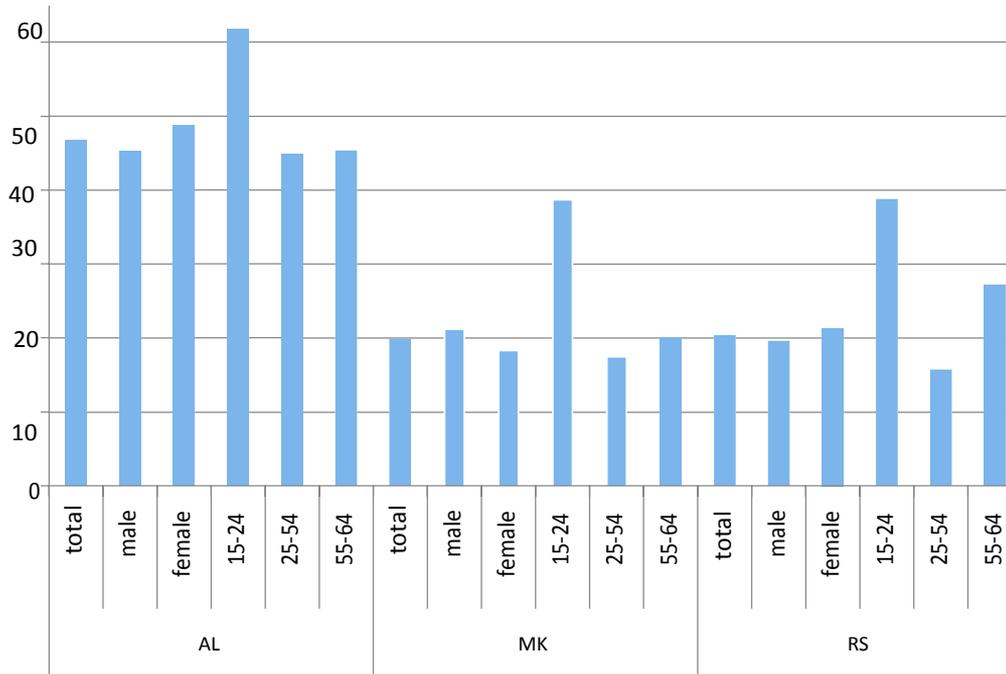
Indicators	Measures	Albania	Minimum	EU28 average	Maximum
Social exclusion index*	Mean (1-5)	2.7	Sweden 1.6	2.1	Albania 2.7
Civic and political involvement	Q.30 (only a, b, c, d)	13%	Hungary 8%	26%	Sweden 54%
Involvement in unpaid voluntary work	% "at least once a month"	4%	Montenegro 2%	10%	Netherlands 25%
Participated in training or courses (for professional/ work-related or nonprofessional reasons)	%	10%	Albania 10%	30%	Sweden 61%

* The SEI refers to the overall average score from responses to four statements in Q36: 'I feel left out of society', 'Life has become so complicated today that I almost can't find my way', 'I don't feel that the value of what I do is recognised by others', and 'Some people look down on me because of my job situation or income'. Responses are scored on a 1–5 scale, where 1 = 'strongly disagree' and 5 = 'strongly agree'.

Work–life balance

		Albania	Range of all 33 countries (EQLS 2016)				
		2016	Minimum		EU28 average	Maximum	
I have come home from work too tired to do some of the household jobs that need to be done (at least several times a month)	Total	72%	Netherlands	45%	59%	83%	Serbia
	Men	64%	Netherlands	35%	57%	83%	Serbia
	Women	86%	Germany	51%	62%	86%	Albania
It has been difficult for me to fulfil family responsibilities because of the amount of time I spend at work (at least several times a month)	Total	56%	Denmark	24%	38%	71%	Turkey
	Men	49%	Netherlands	19%	38%	72%	Turkey
	Women	67%	Austria	25%	38%	68%	Turkey
I have found it difficult to concentrate at work because of family responsibilities (at least several times a month)	Total	37%	Netherlands	8%	19%	60%	Turkey
	Men	35%	Netherlands	6%	18%	58%	Turkey
	Women	41%	Netherlands	10%	20%	64%	Turkey
How do your working hours fit in with your family or social commitments outside work? ('Rather not well' and 'Not at all')	Total	22%	Slovakia	12%	22%	41%	Bulgaria
	Men	21%	Netherlands	11%	22%	45%	Bulgaria
	Women	23%	Netherlands	13%	22%	41%	Bulgaria

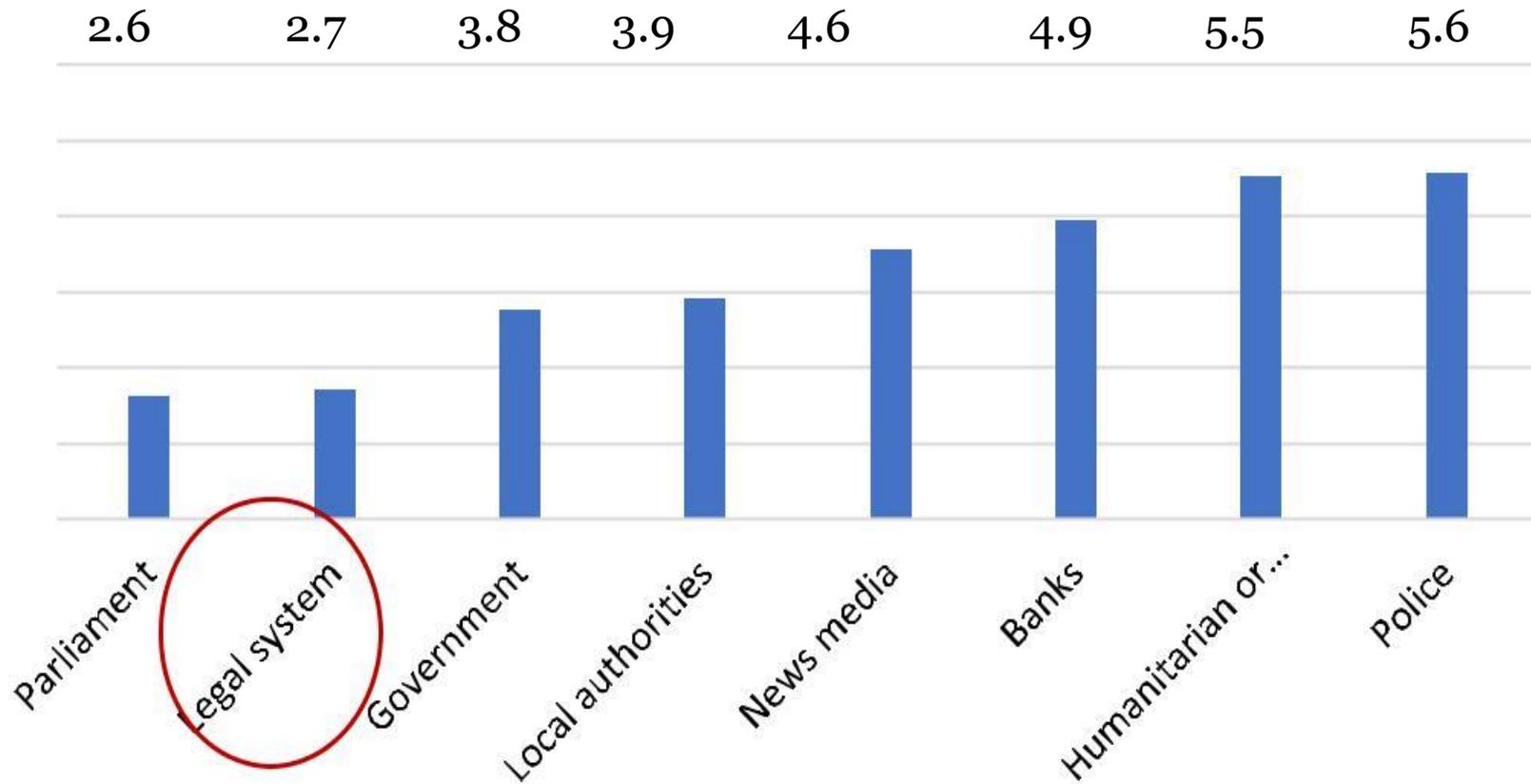
Informal employment in % of total employment of the respective gender & age group, in Albania, North Macedonia & Serbia



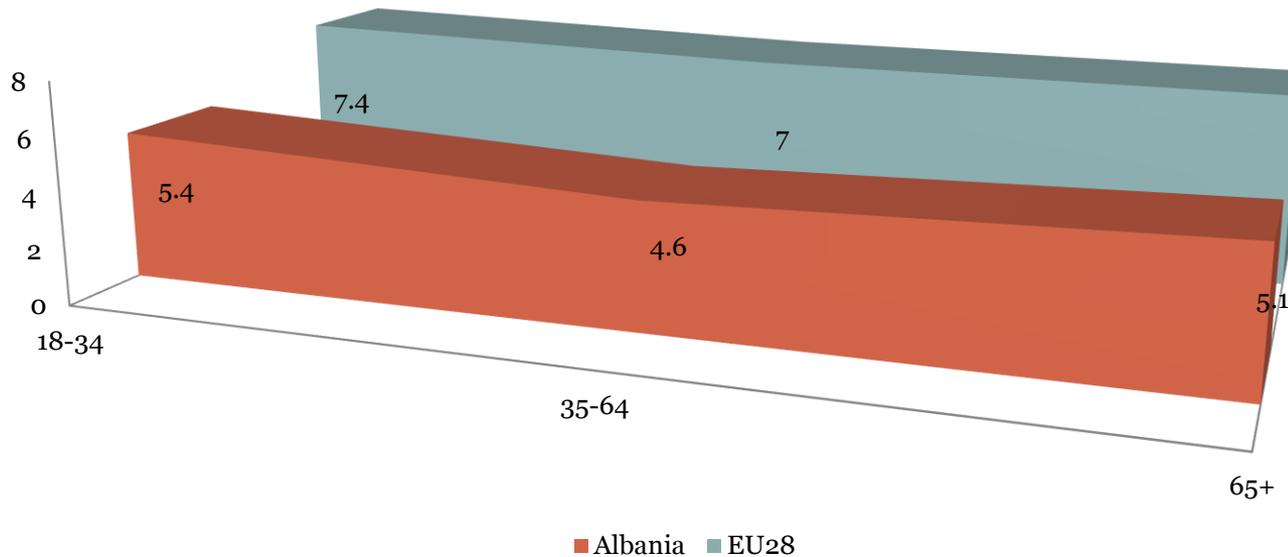
Source: SEE Jobs Gateway Database, based on data provided by national statistical offices and Eurostat, 2017

Q35: Please tell me how much you personally trust each of the following institutions?

(Scale of 1 to 10, where 1 means that you do not trust at all, and 10 means that you trust completely)



Life satisfaction

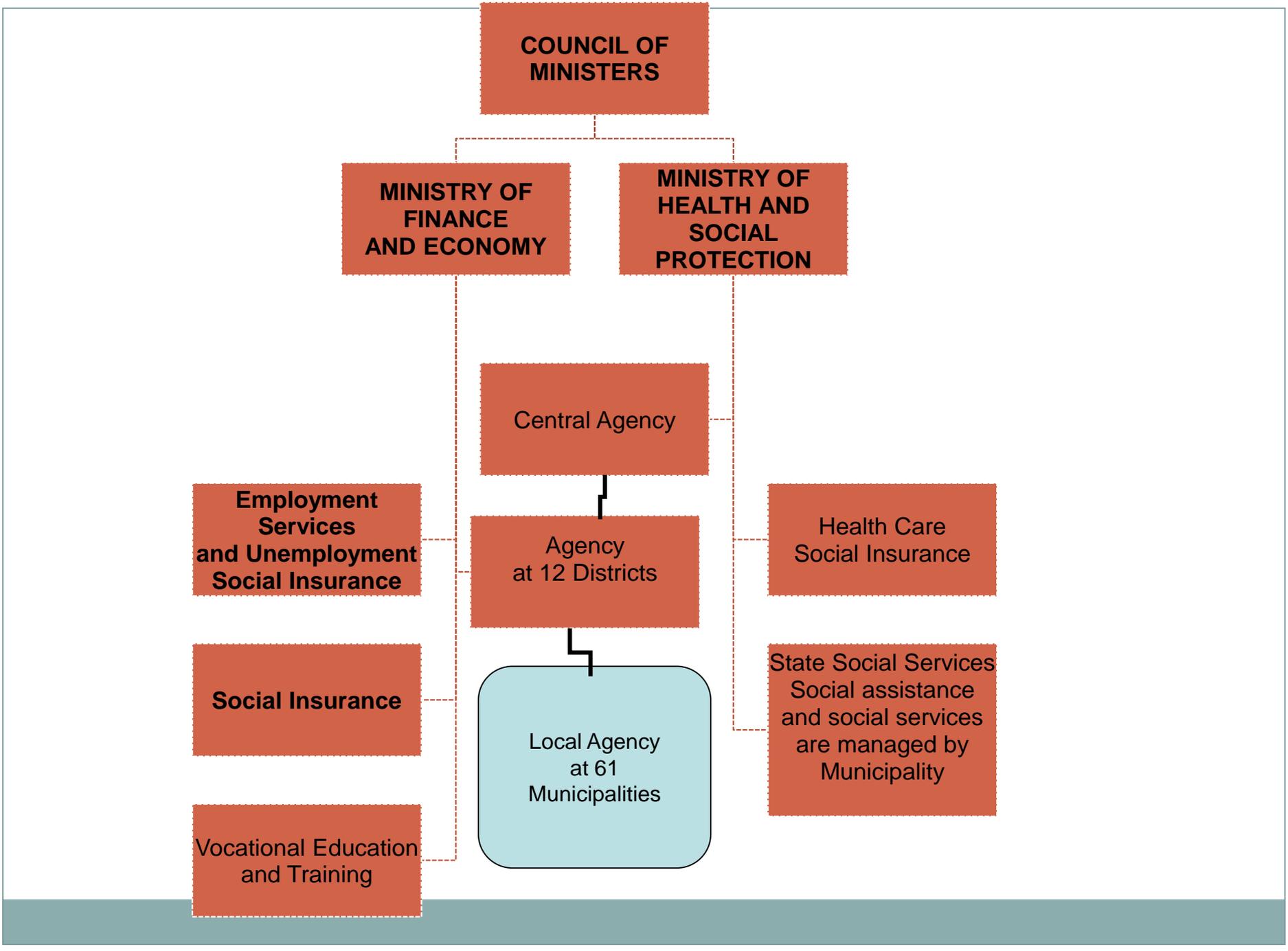


Indicators	Measures	Albania	Minimum	EU28 average	Maximum
Life satisfaction	Mean (1-10)	4.9	Albania 4.9	7.1	Denmark 8.2
Taking all things together on a scale of 1 to 10, how happy would you say you are?		5.2	Albania 5.2	7.4	Finland 8.2
Optimism about own future	Agree & strongly agree	67%	Greece 31%	64%	Sweden 85%
Optimism about children's or grandchildren's future		75%	Greece 25%	57%	Sweden 83%

Integrated approach in National Strategy for Development and Integration



- **Integrated approach through:**
 - **economic policies;**
 - **education and training**, with effect on the development of a qualified, competitive and productive labour force;
 - **labour market policies**, to mediate between labour supply and demand;
 - **Effective social protection**



**COUNCIL OF
MINISTERS**

**MINISTRY OF
FINANCE
AND ECONOMY**

**MINISTRY OF
HEALTH AND
SOCIAL
PROTECTION**

Central Agency

**Employment
Services
and Unemployment
Social Insurance**

Agency
at 12 Districts

Health Care
Social Insurance

Social Insurance

Local Agency
at 61
Municipalities

State Social Services
Social assistance
and social services
are managed by
Municipality

**Vocational Education
and Training**

New features of social protection



- Universal allowance for the child birth was introduced for all mothers
- Maternity social insurance benefits (one year) was extended to fathers
- A foster care system was established for children without parental care
- Internships for new graduates was offered for having job experiences
- A basic pension for elderly above 70 years old without means of living (means tested) as a zero pillar of Pay-As-You-Go pension system
- There is a public voluntary pension scheme for the Albanian emigrants and all those who want to increase the benefits and insurance periods.
- Professional pension schemes was created as supplementary benefits to the compulsory public social insurance scheme to increase the replacement rate

Main challenges of social protection



- **Social Cohesion** - through equal opportunities for rural population – in employment services, education and training opportunities, care services for children and elderly
- **Social Inclusion** – interventions to the youngest group of society to avoid emigration
- **Social Insurance Sustainability** – implement social solidarity against informality
- **Diversification of:**
 - Instruments of social protection (children and youth)
 - Resources (employer, tax system, CSO)
 - Providers (private, CSOs, partnerships)

Thank you for attention!



xhumarimerita@gmail.com