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# STAKEHOLDERS ENGAGEMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY PLAN

## U2SID - University to society collaborations for inclusive digital transformation in the Western Balkans

Final Draft Approved on 30.10.2023 in the Steering Committee Meeting  
Draft Submitted on Continuous Reporting System on 31.10.2023  
Revised Draft after EACEA Project Officer on 22.12.2023  
Submitted Revised on Continuous Reporting System on 22.12.2023





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**Project number:** 101083131

**Project name:** University to society collaborations for inclusive digital transformation in the Western Balkans

**Project acronym:** U2SID

**Call:** ERASMUS-EDU-2022-CBHE

**Topic:** ERASMUS-EDU-2022-CBHE-STRAND-2

**Type of action:** ERASMUS Lump Sum Grants

**Granting authority:** European Education and Culture Executive Agency

**WP2:** Digital Literacies Accelerator Programme

**D2.3 – Stakeholders Engagement and Sustainability Plan**

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**Approved by:** U2SID Steering Committee

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## ABBREVIATIONS

CCIS	Center for Comparative and International Studies (Qendra për Studime Krahasuese dhe Ndërkombëtare)
EACEA	European Union or European Education and Culture Executive Agency
EU	European Union
NASRI	National Agency for Scientific Research and Innovation (Agjencia Kombëtare e Kërkimit Shkencor dhe Inovacionit)
PSC	Project Steering Committee
SCiDEV	Center Science and Innovation for Development (Qendra Shkencë dhe Inovacion për Zhvillim)
U2SID	University to society collaborations for inclusive digital transformation in the Western Balkans
UCG	University of Montenegro (Univerzitet Crne Gore)
UMSH	Mediterranean University of Albania (Universiteti Mesdhetar i Shqipërisë)
UNIBELGRAD	
E	University of Belgrade (Univerzitet u Beogradu)
UNIKO	University „Fan S. Noli” of Korca (Universiteti i Korçës "Fan S. Noli")
UNISALENTO	University of Salento (Università del Salento)
UNISHK	University of Shkodra Luigj Gurakuqi (Universiteti i Shkodrës “Luigj Gurakuqi”)
WP	Work Package





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## 1. ABOUT THIS DOCUMENT

The Stakeholders Engagement and Sustainable Plan lays out the engagement strategy, objective, approach, and activities relevant to identify stakeholders and audiences of U2SID - University to society collaborations for inclusive digital transformation in the Western Balkans, an Erasmus + project, financed by European Education and Culture Executive Agency.

The Stakeholders Engagement and Sustainability Plan outlines the steps that will be taken to achieve the overall aim of the project as well as achieve sustainability to deepen the impact of the project by establishing a long-term vision through engaging stakeholders such as business, policy makers, civil society and media to build strong partnerships for transformation in higher education by developing a knowledge transfer and innovation brokerage unit, establishing a network of partners, developing adequate structures and processes, and strengthening competencies and capacities.

## 2. BACKGROUND

Digital transformation must be done in an inclusive and safe manner and for this, the role of universities and their collaboration with civil society, business, policy, and media is of paramount relevance. Digital transformation cannot be safe without awareness raising and capacity building on privacy threats, data protection, and digital literacy, thus leading to overall digital rights. The project proposal's aim is to foster inclusive digital transformation in the Western Balkans through increased collaboration between universities with other stakeholders such as businesses, policymakers, civil society, and media. The U2SID project supports the development and uptake of digital skills to make the digital transformation as comprehensive and inclusive as possible. The specific objectives of the U2SID project are: To strengthen digital competencies of teachers, students, and professionals through the development of a Digital Literacies Acceleration Programme as a collaborative program among universities on one side and businesses, civil society, local decision-makers, and media on the other; To improve innovative teaching methods through piloting a Digital Transformation Challenge for students as a project-based and solution-oriented learning based on mentoring, coaching and placement at businesses, civil society, local decision-makers, and media; To raise awareness on the importance of inclusive digitalization by including vulnerable target groups in the digitalization process. The U2SID is in line with the Call objectives in Strand 2 for building and strengthening partnerships for transformation in higher education. The project is in line with the aim of the call to contribute to the innovation in higher education to enhance relevance to labor market, regional development, and society by strengthening university to society collaborations and setting up a Digital Literacies Accelerator Programme and Digital Transformation Challenge.

*Project proposal's aim:* To foster inclusive digital transformation in the Western Balkans through increased collaboration between universities with other stakeholders such as businesses, policy makers, civil society, and media.





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*The specific objectives of U2SID are:*

SO1 – To strengthen digital competences of teachers, students, and professionals through the development of a Digital Literacies Acceleration Programme as a collaborative programme among universities on one side and businesses, civil society, local decision makers and media on the other.

SO2 – To improve innovative teaching methods through piloting a Digital Transformation Challenge for students as a project-based and solution-oriented learning based on mentoring, coaching and placement at businesses, civil society, local decision makers and media.

SO3 – To raise awareness on the importance of inclusive digitalisation by including vulnerable target groups in the digitalization process.

Participants

*Project Coordinator:*

**UNISHK** University of Shkodra Luigj Gurakuqi (Universiteti i Shkodrës “Luigj Gurakuqi”)

*Project Partners:*

**UNIKO** University „Fan S. Noli” of Korca (Universiteti "Fan S. Noli", Korçë)

**UMSH** Mediterranean University of Albania (Universiteti Mesdhetar i Shqipërisë)

**SCIDEV** Center Science and Innovation for Development (Qendra Shkencë dhe Inovacion për Zhvillim)

**CCIS** Center for Comparative and International Studies (Qendra për Studime Krahasuese dhe Ndërkombëtare)

**NASRI** National Agency for Scientific Research and Innovation (Agjencia Kombëtare e Kërkimit Shkencor dhe Inovacionit)

**UCG** University of Montenegro (Univerzitet Crne Gore)

**UniBelgrade** University of Belgrade (Univerzitet u Beogradu)

**UNISALENTO** University of Salento (Università del Salento)





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### 3. STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT OBJECTIVES

#### 3.1 CLARIFICATION OF TERMINOLOGY

This section provides an overview of what stakeholder engagement and sustainability entails.

##### *Stakeholders engagement*

**A Stakeholder engagement** is a strategic process of interacting with stakeholders to gather information about a shared interest, preferences, and the potential for joint action. Learning about what other stakeholders get from us, want from us, or can do to us can contribute to decision-making in a way that is mutually value-producing and enhances sustainability.

##### *Sustainability*

**A sustainability plan entails** the ability of the project aim and results to be used and relevant even after the project has been concluded.

#### 3.2 OVERALL STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY OBJECTIVE

The main purpose of stakeholder engagement and sustainability is to contribute to the kind of sustainable development from which organizations, their stakeholders, and the wider society can benefit. By engaging stakeholders, universities may get an opportunity to better understand the market condition, promote their reputation, build trust and long-term collaborative relationships, as well as better understand and mitigate the threats and uncertainties related to the project. The entire project is designed with a sustainability built-in strategy and to strengthen sustainability, the project activities have been developed based on the following approach: first, the project is in line with key national strategies and policies. Second, the project expects to have an active participation of youth and relevant stakeholders including state and non state actors. Third, the sustainability will be also enhanced by ensuring coordination and synergies with other initiatives such as USIA, and particularly the U2SID as a continuation of the USIA project. As such the USIA offices established in 3 other higher education institutions will strengthen the support for the continuation of the dissemination. Fourth, the project activities are designed in such a way to ensure sustainability. For instance, the capacity building program will increase knowledge and competences of target groups. Also, the Accelerator programme ensures sustainability by capitalisation on experience, sharing information and knowledge. In the same way, the communication and dissemination plan will also serve for sharing lessons learnt and best practices, thus contributing to project sustainability. The awareness raising campaign and communication plan will boost its visibility to reach as many stakeholders as possible. The project will engage stakeholders in a deliberate way.





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**Financial sustainability:** Operating of the online platform will be achieved using the own fund and resources of project partners. Other major follow up activities will be implemented in collaboration with donors. The partners possess a lot of toolkits and information that will become available under the workshops and sessions for support to business ideas and start up program. The partners will initiate and support also existing and ongoing projects for replication and upgrade of this action and will potentially ensure financial sustainability through other donors, and not only EU funding. Project partners will channel additional organizational and donor funds to provide continuous services in the same area.

**Institutional Sustainability:** Sustainability of the action will be ensured through increase of knowledge of the target groups, and through spillover of the knowledge towards peers, friends, and colleagues and towards more stakeholders through webinars and online library and towards public at large through visibility actions. Another element of institutional sustainability relies in the increase of competences of policy makers. The lead partner and the co-applicants are proposed as a consortium that is devoted around youth, digital democracy, digital rights and policy dialogue and capacity building and will provide for an infrastructure that will retain for future projects and secure additional funds on the issue. In that regard, the partners will keep an ongoing relationship with all the stakeholders in this action and will continue to provide necessary expertise and, logistic support to grassroots organizations after the project.

**Stakeholder engagement** is a highly relevant activity, an ongoing process. This process allows stakeholders to contribute to the decision-making process.

This process includes:

- Providing information.
- Building capacity to equip communities and stakeholders with effective engagement.
- Listening and responding to community and stakeholder concerns.
- Including communities and stakeholders in relevant decision-making processes.
- Developing goodwill and understanding of objectives and priorities will lead to confidence in decisions.
- Establishing a realistic understanding of potential outcomes, and
- Building an understanding of the decision-making process.

### 3.3 STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT PLAN SPECIFICS

The stakeholder engagement strategy and plan will focus on increasing the overall collaboration between universities, researchers, and stakeholders outside academia this will allow the following objectives to be achieved:

- professional growth and increase in revenue: networking, knowledge acquisition, skills development, financial gains, exchange of experiences, mobility options, public exposure, and diversification of expertise;







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- curricula development and improvement of teaching;
- students' internships and job fairs;
- contribution to regional development, community, and society at large (engaged university) ;
- research quality and communication to diverse audiences;
- access to data, technology, decision making processes and real-life problems;
- research funds and joint projects;
- collaborative research;
- publication of applied and policy-oriented research;
- communication to external audiences and wider publics;

**The Engagement Plan** will describe the process of identifying stakeholders, and the approach to their involvement in collaboration with the higher education institutions to turn this cooperation network into a concrete product of scientific research based on objectives specified in the project. The development of the Stakeholder Engagement Strategy will allow universities and researchers to work concretely on building a **Digital Literacies Acceleration Programme** to strengthen digital competences and collaboration between Higher Education Institutions and Stakeholders. Another objective is that of learning based on a project based Digital Transformation Challenge whereby students and staff will work on learning based on mentoring, coaching and placement at business, civil society, local decision makers and media. Furthermore, this collaboration will be expanded with vulnerable target groups to raise awareness on the importance of **inclusive digitalization**. For the optimal organization of this strategy, the strategic plan is divided into two phases of implementation, which include:

1. Detection of stakeholders and continuation of cooperation with all identified stakeholders.
2. Construction of cooperation stages through examples of concrete collaboration and monitoring activities to measure the impact of this collaboration.

More specifically, the first phase includes an overview of all dissemination opportunities identified through the experiences to date with all stakeholders identified through communication tools, such as event attendance (e.g., conferences, workshops, etc.), project presentations (e.g., to local stakeholders, etc.) and by online activities based around the project website, and through the main social platforms. The communication and dissemination activities have been designed and are addressed to target the key audiences and stakeholders and to maximize awareness of the project objectives, means, and results.

The second phase involves the construction of collaboration phases through the construction of concrete work to reach the objectives of cooperation of the university with all the stakeholders identified.

### 3.4 STAKEHOLDERS MAPPING

The goal of the stakeholder mapping process is to determine which stakeholders must be involved in the project to have the greatest impact. The stakeholders are chosen based on the content, expected outcomes and implications of the project, as well as the available resources, the objectives of the engagement and the willingness or ability of the stakeholders to interact and participate in the project. It should be specified that the choice of stakeholders has a meaningful impact on the outcome of an





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engagement process. Additionally, an effective representation can improve the ability of participants to learn and trust one another, whereas an unrepresentative or limiting participant selection can lead to less positive project outcomes and even greater conflict.

Stakeholder mapping is collaborative research, debate, and discussion process that draws on many views to identify a core list of stakeholders throughout the stakeholder range. Mapping can be broken down into three stages as determined below.

1. Identify all potential stakeholders
2. Assess and prioritize stakeholders needs in terms of co-production and knowledge
3. Develop an understating of stakeholders

The U2SID unit will interpret the findings of the stages to determine what level of engagement is required, the role of the engagement, and finally, which techniques of engagement are to be used for each of the stakeholders. Stakeholder information will be recorded on the online collaborative platform of U2SID. In this platform, each partner institution will upload the required information according to Appendix 1. The stages of the stakeholder’s engagement will include the following steps:

Project Stakeholders	Identification of those stakeholders is considered important to foster inclusive digital transformation in the Western Balkans through increased collaboration between universities with other stakeholders such as businesses, policy makers, civil society, and media.
Stakeholder analysis	Determining where stakeholders stand now in terms of their contribution and participation in the development of structures and processes that enable and nurture long-term and meaningful collaboration between universities, businesses, policymakers, civil society, and the media;
Stakeholder management	Determining the actions required to preserve or modify the stakeholders’ positions within the map to increase proficiencies and capacities to co-produce knowledge and research that carries an impact, i.e. to network, knowledge acquisition, skills development, financial gains, exchange of experiences, mobility options, public exposure, and diversification of expertise to have a digital transformation in the Western Balkans.
Strategy review	Defining the method to determine whether engagement actions have been or are likely to be successful, as well as whether this strategy needs to be refined.

#### 4. STAGE 1 – STAKEHOLDER IDENTIFICATION

During this phase, determined stakeholders will be responsible for not simply contributing to the project, but also in inspiring them to participate actively in it. All people, or groups of people, who may influence and can affect, or/and may have an importance in the project must be considered to identify all interested stakeholders. Stakeholder participation in the recognition process is also pursued to define and clarify the issues being evaluated, as well as to provide more detailed information about who might be affected by those issues. Provided that, by the conclusion of the project, higher education in Albania and Montenegro will strengthen the digital literacy of their students, teachers and professional at local





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level. Enhance the relevance of universities for the local and national labour market as well as regional development. It is necessary to stimulate cooperation between stakeholders and universities starting from local and national level ensuring capacity building and exchange of good practice and expanding it at Western Balkan level and EU and Western Balkan level.

The stakeholder identification process, on the other hand, should be often reviewed during the project to ensure that no groups or individuals are overlooked. This could imply recognizing new stakeholders who need to be involved. Stakeholders were initially chosen using the ex-ante strategy, in which stakeholders are defined ahead of time in connection to expected stakeholder categories, considering specific sectors or groups of interest, as well as specific responsibilities or activities of certain stakeholders. This was also tied to the previous partnership between universities and institutions. The identification of the stakeholders was also completed through the interaction and brainstorming process with project partners and other institutions engaging in comparable tasks.

Stakeholders	Reasons to involve	Benefits
Government / Policy makers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Provision of data access.</li> <li>-Encourage the dissemination of findings.</li> <li>-Assistance, insight, and competence in the development and implementation of a national strategy.</li> <li>-Assistance, knowledge and expertise in determining the regulatory and standardized framework.</li> <li>-Identify policy priorities and challenges, evaluate policy alternatives, put policies in place, and evaluate solutions;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Possibility of developing further policies based on rigorous scientific knowledge</li> <li>- Funding options for significant projects.</li> </ul>
Business Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Encourage the dissemination of findings and the ratification of policies.</li> <li>-Better evaluation of risks.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Compile a database of the issue's practices and leading methods.</li> <li>-Application of recommendations for policy development.</li> <li>-Increasing academic staff and students' interest related to new research topics</li> </ul>
Civil Society Organizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Stronger networking with organizations.</li> <li>-Need a skilled workforce.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-The engagement resulted in better publicity.</li> <li>-Funding opportunities.</li> <li>-Usage of the data produced.</li> </ul>
Media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Extensive dissemination of project results.</li> <li>-Active connection to citizens.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Resource for news/stories.</li> </ul>





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The project engagement plan foresees the identification of stakeholders who might be interested in collaborating with our universities, benefiting from:

- Increase Awareness: People have heard of the addressed issue
- Clearer Understanding: People understand the addressed problem and each partner needs
- Gain Acceptance: People understand the issue/problem addressed and accept their role in addressing it and what they need to do differently.
- Build support: People support the issue/problem that need to be addressed and are actively engaged in satisfying needs.
- Increase the pace of project progress

Following is an initial identification of the stakeholders' groups that are thought to be relevant as follows:

### **Government/ Public Policy Making Institutions**

This stakeholder category includes the ministries (ministry of Foreign Affairs), municipalities (Shkodër Municipality, Korçë Municipality), district councils (Shkodër District Council) ...

These stakeholders will be involved in the project mainly in the following actions:

- Collaborate on the co-production of knowledge and research with impact in cooperation with trained students, lecturers, researchers, assistant lecturers, and master students.
- Participate actively in invalidating models and guidelines for best practices in setting up and operating the coordination network in partnership with universities.
- Engage in actionable knowledge and research coproduction with institutions.
- Enhance collaboration between multidisciplinary groups of local and international researchers through collaborative projects and initiatives.
- Dissemination of project findings to other institutions, with an emphasis on encouraging them to join the designed collaboration network.
- Take part in a communication campaign to promote awareness about the importance of partnership between universities and the public sector.

### **Business Community**

This stakeholder category will be involved in the project mainly in the following actions:

- Contribute to the establishment of continuous cooperation relations with the university.
- Evaluate the aspects in which it will have to collaborate with the university in the digital literacy acceleration programme.
- Adopting the proposed methodology of work.





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- Dissemination of project findings to other institutions, with an emphasis on encouraging them to join the designed collaboration network.

### Media

This stakeholder category will be involved in the project mainly in the following actions:

- Assisting in the effective dissemination of university-based research.
- Assist in publicizing and disseminating the success stories of relationships formed throughout the project and afterward.
- Intensify collaboration with universities.
- Increasing awareness and trust across the network through exposure.
- To assist in the formation of a long-term collaboration with the university.

### CSOs and NGOs

This stakeholder will be involved in the project mainly in the following actions:

- Approach universities for benefiting from their knowledge and expertise.
- Maintain a database of local/national CPOs in the country,
- Maintains a database of international NGOs, their field of expertise,
- Monitors the CSOs/NGOs landscape: call for contributions, applications, funds,
- Maintains links with the PR unit of the university to enable successful dissemination of the partnerships created and the results obtained.

## 4.2. STAGE 2 – EVALUATION AND ANALYSIS

The second stage of the stakeholder mapping process is to determine and evaluate stakeholders to classify them in terms of the influence of their cooperation.

To determine how stakeholders are best to contribute and how they will be affected by the project, it is more necessary to identify their interests and roles in the project and prioritize them according to their importance and influence on the project to achieve the main goal of this network creation, whose goal is to coordinate the efforts of the main actors to foster inclusive digital transformation in the Western Balkans.

### Inform and Discuss

Stakeholders should be properly informed about the capacity of the model network creation, the problem-focused on, the purposes, and the results to support them in identifying a problem,





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evaluating the alternatives, perceiving opportunities, and detecting plausible explanations. The information of each stakeholder group must constantly be adapted to their demands. Stakeholders should be informed and consulted on a variety of issues, including the parameters used to design the type of coordination, the methodologies used to impose susceptibility, the estimate of alternative transformation steps, and the decision-making process for establishing transformation strategies for stakeholders. It shall be taken care not to confuse stakeholders with knowledge that is outside of their area of commitment or competence.

Suggested tactics to be used at this stage are:

- local media/ internet portal
- reports
- websites/newsletters
- social networks
- conferences/ seminars/ webinars
- project events (and common agenda with other relevant ongoing projects)

### **Involve**

Stakeholders should work precisely with the university's trained responsible representatives (staff members, project students) during this phase to ensure that their interests and demands are fully recognized, accepted, and where pertinent, met through the definition of issues that should be supported in terms of scientific research.

Suggested tactics to be used at this stage are:

- advisory boards
- stakeholder forums
- participatory decision-making processes
- focus groups
- online engagement tools

### **Cooperate**

In this phase, stakeholders should collaborate with identified trained university representatives on relevant improvements features by producing valuable knowledge in providing explanations to simple questions, providing extensive counseling, essential training and expertise to meet their demands. This includes, for example, any measures required to ensure that these stakeholders are completely





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accomplished, such as developing solution oriented project based learning via optional techniques mainly in mentoring, coaching, placement in business, as well as identifying desirable results or outcomes.

Suggested tactics to be used at this stage are:

- joint projects
- partnerships
- multi-stakeholder initiatives
- Collaborative Online Platforms

**Several techniques can be used in the consultation process with stakeholders:**

- questionnaires
- focus groups
- workshops
- open events
- Social media (online tools)
- stakeholder panels

### **4.3. Stage 3 - Develop an understanding of stakeholders**

It is critical to gain better knowledge of the motivations, interests, expertise, and capacity of identified stakeholders to interact when computing them and choosing how and when to engage with them.

Likewise, in this relation, it is important to explore.

- Relationships between universities and stakeholders that already exist.
- Relationships between stakeholders that are not anymore existing, lessons learned from these experiences
- To achieve objectives, appropriate communication methods must be used and adapted
- The knowledge that various stakeholders have could be useful.

It is crucial to conduct an analysis process that identifies the various degrees of involvement required, the stages at which engagement should occur, the relevant engagement activities, and any potential barriers to engagement. When a greater grasp of stakeholders is gained, this process becomes clearer.





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Building trust-based relationships with stakeholders plays a vital role in ensuring successful collaborations. More than one engagement method does exist to best approach different stakeholders, depending on the level of confidence and relations established with them.

The communication strategy will facilitate effective communication with stakeholders using all the up-mention tools in fulfilling the objectives of the strategy. One of the prior objectives of this strategy is to transmit pertinent knowledge to potentially impacted stakeholders in a timely and appropriate manner and to create a regular two- way flow of information between universities and these stakeholders. Furthermore, support rigorous, prolonged, comprehensive, and renewed communication, education, and cooperation on the benefits of the established network to promote good public behavior change and support a wider use of scientific knowledge in relevant public policies.

-Distinct stakeholder groups involving will be targeted through various communication activities. The key group of stakeholders are those who may be impacted by the project, which includes groups from local/ national authorities, Academia, Civil Society, business, media, and Public Sector

- Transmitting information to the stakeholders: Informative materials and reports will be distributed to stakeholders who may be influenced by the project to provide advice on the project as an entity consisting of procedures and estimated impacts.

- The U2SID unit will be in charge of completing and observing all stakeholder communication, digital knowledge transfer process, education, and information dissemination and publication, as well as establishing a focal point who will be in constant communication with all the interested stakeholders.

- Collecting feedback and establishing two-way information flow: The Informative materials and reports shall identify how stakeholders can approach researchers and the appointed focal point. Periodic meetings will ensure that adequate and careful feedback is obtained from stakeholder groups.

- Acknowledgment: Under the Public Communications Strategy, all necessary documents will be uploaded to the website and important documents and information will be distributed on the project website, which will combine the attending information: meetings and assigned agreements; various collaboration activities, and progress of network enrichment. Another essential aim of the communication strategy is to select the best digital communication platforms to keep stakeholders updated. Stakeholders are updated and informed appropriately through the publication of updates. Because they can engage broad groups of stakeholders, social media can be a very useful component of a communication strategy. Besides disseminating material, social media may engage and build connections with stakeholders. This takes the form of content sharing and token platform actions, such as “liking” or “re-sharing” content.

#### 4.4 SUSTAINILITY PLAN SPECIFICS

##### Establish a long-term vision

The project has established a long-term vision to guide all activities. The vision has been developed in







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collaboration with all project partners as well as keeping in mind research conducted on needs of stakeholders, including businesses, policy-makers, civil society, and the media. Based on the WP1 work and assessment the project working group has started developing the program on digital literacies, workshops of mobility training have taken place with all the partners and universities involved. During this time-frame and activities the vision of the project has been communicated to all stakeholders and has been used to ensure that the U2SID project is sustainable in the long-term. This is by making sure that there has been effective engagement, communication strategy has been used in promoting the campaign, and roundtables between various stakeholders have been conducted to insure correct evaluation.

### **Develop a stakeholder engagement plan**

The U2SID project has developed a stakeholder engagement plan to engage all stakeholders, including universities, businesses, policymakers, civil society, and the media. The stakeholder engagement plan has been designed to build partnerships and ensure that the project's activities are aligned with the needs of stakeholders. The stakeholder engagement plan has been reviewed and updated regularly to ensure that it remains effective.

### **Establish a network of partners**

The U2SID project will establish a network of partners in to ensure that the project is sustainable in the long-term. The network of partners includes universities, businesses, policy-makers, civil society, and the media. The network of partners has been developed in collaboration with all stakeholders.

### **Strengthen competencies and capacities**

The U2SID project has strengthened competencies and capacities of teachers, students, vulnerable groups to enhance the innovation in higher education through partnership via society collaborations in the region but also locally and increase the relevance of such partnership in the labor market, regional development, and society. The strengthening of competencies and capacities was implemented to ensure that the project is sustainable in the long-term and that it contributes to development and EU integration.

### **Concrete Action Plan for Stakeholders Engagement**

The following plan outlines specific steps and tasks that will be undertaken as part of the sustainability plan and stakeholders engagement to provide concrete actions which are practical, measurable and catering to our work plan and the specific objectives of our project.

Each partner regardless of their task's deadline, should update every 3 months their engagement stakeholders plan. The updates allow the project team to monitor and quickly reflect on the collaboration for all project activities, the stakeholders that provide a substantial involvement and contribution in the field of digital skills in the country.





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Task	Description	Role of each partner	Deadline
Development of Template Stakeholders Database	SCiDEV prepares the template and instructs U2SID partners how to complete it	Each partner develops database of stakeholders	20.10.2023
Finalization of Stakeholders Database	SCiDEV puts together the final Database of Stakeholders and stored in U2SID Shared file	Each partners confirms final version	31.10.2023
Update of Stakeholders Database	Regular update of the database	Each partner updates every month	Ongoing
Engagement of stakeholders in the Digital Literacies Assessment	SCiDEV prepares the methodology, the tools, survey and focus groups	Each partner conducts the research and focus groups with stakeholders and provides written report	15.12.2023
Organisation of mobility for training for staff and students	1 workshop 5 days in Belgrade with staff and students 1 workshop 5 days in Salento with staff and students	Uni Belgrade organises and prepares report of the workshop Uni Salento organizes and prepares the report for the workshop Uni Shkodra ensures visibility in social media and website article for both workshops Each partner promotes participation in their social media for each workshop Each partner informs stakeholders about the results SCiDEV prepares working document on AI	13-16 December 2023 – Belgrade  Report of the workshop to be published on website 20 December 2023  April 2024 – Salento, Italy  Workshop report to be published on website





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		<p>and ethics in higher education based on session 1 in Belgrade and upgraded with similar workshop in Salento</p> <p>All partners promote the working document with their own staff and students and stakeholders and gather feedback – SCiDEV prepares final draft for publication</p> <p>Uni Shkodra promotes the working document in website</p>	<p>on 10 May 2024</p> <p>AI and ethics working document to be finalised published by 30.06.2024 and shared with stakeholders</p>
<p>Collaborative training with lecturers and professionals from civil society, business, and policy on digital literacies</p>	<p>1 workshop in Podgorica with lecturers and professionals from civil society, business, and policy on digital literacies</p> <p>1 workshop in Shkodra with lecturers and professionals from civil society, business, and policy on digital literacies</p> <p>1 workshop in Korca with lecturers and professionals from civil society, business, and policy on digital literacies</p> <p>1 workshop in Tirana with lecturers and professionals from civil society, business, and policy on digital literacies</p>	<p>University of Shkodra based on the Digital Literacy Accelerator Programme provides concrete guidelines to Uni Montenegro, Uni Korca, UMSH on how to organise the collaborative training workshops with lecturers and professionals from civil society, business, and policy on digital literacies</p> <p>University of Shkodra ensures all trainings are delivered, visibility is ensured, and detailed reports are published on website</p> <p>CCIS does online evaluation form per each workshop, each partner ensures the form is completed at the end of the trainings</p> <p>Each partner is responsible for hiring services of trainers,</p>	<p>All 4 workshops and reports to be completed by 31.05.2024</p>





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		<p>engaging stakeholders, ensuring participation, developing agenda, organising workshop and deliver draft reports. Uni Shkodra based on all this input by each partner, develops overall report for task 2.3 including CCIS evaluation</p> <p>This report will feed in the post evaluation study to be developed and submitted by SCiDEV by 30.06.2024</p>	
Promotion and engagement of stakeholders	Digital campaign Online events Media appearance Roundtables	<p>SCiDEV completed the Stakeholders Engagement and Sustainability Plan and the Database</p> <p>During all project lifetime ALL partners engage stakeholders in their activities and promote this with website articles and social media posts. University of Shkodra follows this</p>	<p>31.10.2023</p> <p>Ongoing</p>
Digital Literacy Accelerator Programme	Engagement of stakeholders of each partner university in the design, promotion and implementation of the programme and final evaluation	Each partner identifies the stakeholders to be engaged and ensures participation and promotion	29.02.2024
Study on results of WP2	SCiDEV publishes final assessment report and organized event to share with stakeholders	Each partner identifies the stakeholders to be engaged and ensures participation and promotion	30.06.2024
Manual for digital transformation and inclusivity in higher education	Partners develop and promote the manual with the stakeholders of each partner university in the design, promotion and outreach	Each partner identifies the stakeholders to be engaged and ensures participation and promotion	31.12.2024





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Public events and final event	Partners engage with stakeholders in final event and university presentations	Each partner identifies the stakeholders to be engaged and ensures participation and promotion	Ongoing End of project
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### Project Sustainability upon completion of project implementation

Area of Focus	Objective	Actions	Deadlines
Digital Competence Enhancement	Strengthen digital competencies sustainably.	a. Continuation of Digital Literacies Programme in each of 4 partner universities. b. Establish an alumni network and have regular meetings, at least twice per year in each of partner universities.	a. Q3 2025 onwards b. Q4 2025 onwards
Innovative Teaching Methods	Maintain and evolve digital teaching methods.	a. Institutionalize Digital Transformation Challenge in each of partner universities as achieved during U2SID.. b. Update teaching methodologies regularly based on the lessons achieved during U2SID.	a. Annually (from Q4 2025) b. Bi-Annually (from Q2 2026)
Inclusive Digitalization	Promote inclusive digitalization awareness.	a. Conduct regular awareness campaigns. b. Develop programs for vulnerable groups.	a. Bi-Annual (from Q2 2026) b. Q1 2026
Stakeholder Collaboration	Foster lasting stakeholder collaborations.	a. Establish ongoing collaboration forums. b. Formalize long-term partnership agreements.	a. Quarterly (from Q3 2025) b. Q2 2026
Monitoring and Evaluation	Continuously assess and adapt strategies.	a. Conduct annual impact assessments. b. Revise and update strategies based on evaluations.	a. Annually (from Q4 2025) b. Bi-Annually (from Q1 2026)
Financial sustainability	Ensure ongoing financial support for project activities post-2025.	a. Online Platform Operations: Secure funding for the continued operation of the online platform using the resources of project partners. b. Expansion of Funding Sources: Identify and engage with new donors for diversified financial support.	a. Quarterly (from Q3 2025) b. Q2 2026
Institutional Sustainability	Enhance the capacity of stakeholders for long-	a. Strengthen the consortium infrastructure for future projects and	Annual (Starting Q2 2026)





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Area of Focus	Objective	Actions	Deadlines
	term project impact.	funding. b. Ensure knowledge transfer with other faculties within the university of the Digital Literacies Acceleration Programme and Digital Transformation Challenge	
Communication and visibility	Maintain and expand project visibility and knowledge sharing.	a. Awareness Campaigns: Execute regular awareness campaigns to engage a broader audience based on the results of U2SID. b. Best Practices Sharing of U2SID results with other HEIs: NASRI and CCIS and SCiDEV can help to share the lessons learnt and best practices. c. Stakeholder Communication: Regular updates and communications with stakeholders as per the database developed and updated.	Annual (Starting Q2 2026)
Stakeholder Engagement	Foster active participation and collaboration with stakeholders for project sustainability.	a. Stakeholder Forums: Organize regular forums for stakeholder engagement and feedback based on the events organized during U2SID project implementation. b. Partnership Strengthening: Develop strategies to strengthen partnerships with state and non-state actors at the local communities where each university is based. c. Youth Involvement: Implement specific initiatives to engage and empower youth in digital literacies by working with the alumni network and students trained in U2SID.	Annual (Starting Q2 2026)

### 2.3 STAKEHOLDER’S MAPPING IN ALBANIA (Example)

Potential stakeholders in Albania will be considered based on different actors who have given their substantial contribution and have had a relevant involvement in the field of improving digital skills in the country. A diverse representation is needed based on the key groups mentioned in the stakeholder’s engagement and sustainability plan which are suitable and willing to develop good partnerships with the project partners.

#### Government/Policy makers stakeholders

Ministry of Education and Sports – as the main implementer of the National Strategy on Scientific





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Research, Technology and Innovation for the time frame 2023-2030

Ministry of Infrastructure and Energy

National Agency of Society Innovation (AKSHI)

National Agency of Employment and Skills (AKPA)

National Agency of Higher Education Funding (AKFAL)

## Business Community

Union Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Albania

Women's Economic Chamber

British Chamber of Commerce

Albanian Business Partner

American Chamber of Commerce

Programs/Projects/ Donors

Women Techmakers Albania

EU for InnovationAlbaniaTech

UpLift StartupGrind Tirana Inc.

UNDP

GIZ



