



The impact of the local administrative division to the Durrës citizen's well-being, Albania 2015

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<http://www.sustainicum.at/en/modules/view/352.The-impact-of-the-local-administrative-division-to-the-Durrs-citizens-well-being-Albania-2015>



Group work



5 to 10 students



**Up to 3 lecture
units**



**Internet
connection
necessary**



English, Shqip

Students will be mapping the possible increase of the citizen's well-being in relation to the new municipality of Durrës. It will provide them with concrete theoretical and practical knowledge in picturing: firstly, the impact of the new administrative reform, and secondly, the citizen's real interest in representing this change. Some of the administrative changes will be discussed. Also is the impact to the citizens in the political arena, making them able to a modest contribution in the rising the level of democracy?

On its way to decentralization, the local administrative-territorial structure in Albania has gone through many changes from 1990. On 31 July 2015, the Albanian government started to implement the new approved territorial reform. Thus, this is the first year of the reform implementation.

There has been a change of local governmental structure, from smaller local units to bigger ones, in total 61 (municipalities) instead of 373 (municipalities and communes). One of its biggest efforts is to fulfill the citizen's expectations in local service and economic development. The target is the increase of local units (municipal) effectiveness. In this matter, the main objectives are: raising the local unit's capacity in offering high quality services for their citizens and raising the efficiency in managing their local resources.

The applied mechanism of the reform would be:

Capacity of the administration consolidation

Structure consolidation

Local strengthening of fiscal autonomy

Fairness in competition

The necessity to respect the European standards in local service

Demography changes, etc.,

The project will focus on "the possible increase of the citizen wellbeing in relation to the efficiency of services provided". The quality of life is an important indicator for a sustainable social system. In this regard, if the citizen has the feeling of having a qualitative life which can come as a result of the political, economic, social stability, etc. policies implemented from the local authorities.

This project will serve as a control instrument if there have been changes in this period of time. The research will have as a study population the local citizens. Focused mostly on the citizens that have the legal rights to choose by vote and make decisions for their representatives in local/governmental unit.

Student's research and data gathering will be focused on mapping and describing the administrative changes; the citizen's perceptions of their real interest in representation from the local governance; and mapping the level of minimizing their problems from it.

More specifically the main lines of research would be as follows:

Citizen representativeness in local units

Citizen desiderate outcomes and problems in local units

Citizen happiness/satisfaction

Local institution activity

The purpose is to provide students practical knowledge and the

opportunity of a modest contribution in this area. They will gather data, discuss and analyze the administrative changes and the citizens perceptions. They also will try to find its impact in raising the level of democracy. Locally, citizen wellbeing would be defined as a state of being comfortable, healthier and happier, etc., from the local politics and activities representativeness. How well does the local government administration focus on the local recourse from the citizen's interest point of view?

The citizens perceptions will be accessed by the students through small groups (8-10) (contact with the information desk officer of the municipally, or other officers), conducting short interviews with citizens in their local area. Through active learning projects is the most beneficiary way for a student to become an efficient citizen and researcher.

On the other hand, stakeholders, throughout the political issues regarding wellbeing, will gain an academic view to develop the most suitable policy for their local citizen. Thus, all parties involved will contribute to a more sustainable social development. Though the citizens wellbeing access in relation to political reforms and services provided would be an efficient way for students, to benefit in a win-win situation for both parties.

This experience will provide students with the necessary knowledge in local administrative political reform. They will practically undertake basic research and discuss its pros and cons. At the end of the project, students will understand how local policy is developed and its connection to the citizens wellbeing; the theoretical and practical differences from the past territorial division for this projects objectives; the difficulties of implementing the new reform; and in some cases how the local officers solve local problems.

Teaching Tools & Methods



Field study



Case study



Computer program

Integration of Social Stakeholders

The project is a triangulation relationship of: students, interested parties/citizens and politician (local administrators).

The local government benefits by receiving external perspectives on their activities on the new administrative division issues. Stakeholders will be involved in this project as information providers. Also the outcomes will be available to them and the citizens through the methods mentioned in the instruction file (such as local news papers, citizens contact, etc.)

Strength

A very constructive way for the students to actually apply theoretical issues and both students and local administrate benefit from collaboration and the connection from theory to practice in raising the level of democracy

Main points:

- Active learning experience for students
- Stakeholders benefit from network building
- Students think about their own opportunities and responsibility in the context of global change

Weakness

- Occasional issues of confidentiality
- Example: Stakeholder must agree to discuss their own plan and problems with students. Therefore it might be easier to involve former students who already successfully performed this type of research before

Learning Outcomes

- Undertake basic research (theoretical and practical)
- Conduct basic qualitative analysis
- Work in groups
- Learn to give suitable recommendations for a specific problem
- "Assess citizens well-being in relation to political reforms and services provided"

Relevance for Sustainability

- The quality of life is an important indicator for a sustainable social system
- In this regard the first connection with sustainability is cooperation with the local government
- Sustainable cooperation with the local unit which provides "citizens access" through well-being activities and their perception of a good life, work, etc., will provided from the local unit
- The project will provide an important contribution (connection) from the

micro (local) to the macro level (country) of democracy development
– Sustainable entrepreneurship of field research (students will gather and elaborate real life problems data). Connecting the theoretical and practical knowledge.

Related Teaching Resources

No specific previous knowledge / related resources required

Preparation Efforts

Medium

Preparation Efforts Description

Preparation and the lectures: 7 hours; Identification of suitable actors involved in the new reform. They should provide promising data and must be open for cooperation with students. A scheduled plan is made for a) presentation and introduction to the issues b) student discussions c) students data gathering and analyses d) open lesson with a representative (expert) of local administration Scheduled time: – 2 hours and 20 minutes in class – 4 hours (throughout the week) field work (contacting and discussing with stakeholders and citizens)

Access

Free

Assessment

As students will work in groups, the evaluation will be based on group work. Students will be evaluated at a maximum of 100 points

Credit/Certification Description

Students will be evaluated at a maximum of 100 points.

Sources and Links

<http://reformaterritoriale.al/>

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