

# DRIVE DEVELOPING RESEARCH AND INNOVATION CAPACITIES IN ALBANIA AND KOSOVO

## METHODOLOGY FOR THE SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY (D 9.1)

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## Introduction

Sustainability of project results in the context of the DRIVE project is understood as the ability of the institutions involved in the project to continue the project mission and the overall project vision far into the future, leveraging on the knowledge and experience gained during the project. In terms of sustainable project development, the focus is on the lessons learnt and the uptake of the results and outcomes achieved during project implementation to meet future needs for effective and efficient exploitation of the resources (human, material, financial, technology, etc.) deployed during the project period. From this perspective, sustainability is a **holistic systematic approach** that focuses on the governance, dissemination and exploitation of project results to ensure project continuity from a social, economic, environmental, educational and institutional perspective. This document addresses the overall methodology for the sustainability of the DRIVE project results and outcomes after the project lifetime. This document also outlines the various metrics and indicators necessary for an efficient and effective DRIVE project implementation, as well as represents various sources required to best sustain the project results and outcomes. The sustainability methodology covers the entire WP9 Sustainability (D 9.2 “Sustainability plan for online networking platform” and D 9.3 “Sustainability plan for RISS”) and is closely linked to the Dissemination and Exploitation activities of the project (WP 7 Dissemination & Exploitation).

## 1. Objectives

The overall objective of the present methodology is to provide a procedural framework for the sustainability of the DRIVE project results and outcomes. The methodology for the project sustainability comprises the entire **project period** and the **follow-up period** (which lasts 3 years after the end of the DRIVE project). The methodology covers the short and long-term perspective of sustainability for the following specific outcomes produced in the DRIVE project that are the subject of this methodology:

1. Sustainability of the project consortium in terms of partnerships, networks and contact maintenance;
2. Sustainability of the core project outcomes: i) Online networking platform, and ii) Research and Innovation Supporting Structures (RISS);
3. Sustainability of other (i.e. not mentioned in Paragraph 3) outcomes produced in the DRIVE project.

## 2. Sustainability strategy

From the specific objective perspective, the sustainability strategy focusing at the ensuring: i) further utilization the university facilities and structures created during the DRIVE project period; ii) further utilization the knowledge gained and commitment to good practices; iii) fostering the systemic change at the Partner Country Institutions (PCIs) through education, research and innovation; iv) supporting continuous quality improvement for the DRIVE project outcomes, including the follow-up project phase; v) ensuring long-term exploitation of DRIVE project outcomes and results.

To achieve the abovementioned strategic goals as well as to ensure the project impact, the DRIVE sustainability strategy highlights the following attributes: i) adaptability, i.e. the ability to respond to disturbances and unforeseen circumstances; ii) implementability, i.e. the overall sustainability strategy and plans should be realistic and feasible for PCIs; iii) scalability, i.e. the ability to expand the scope of the impact; iv) replicability, i.e. the ability to expand the scope of the impact beyond the DRIVE project.



The DRIVE sustainability strategy also addresses sustainability-related aspects such as the relevance of the project, the acceptance of the project results by the target and stakeholder groups and the long-term sustainability of the project results.

### 3. Methodology

The methodological approach to the sustainability of the DRIVE project is based on a two-tier model: i) development of **sustainability plans** (D 9.2 and D 9.3), including a set of sustainability indicators (coherent with the project management, quality management, dissemination and exploitation strategy); ii) assessment of the developed indicators by the PCIs and **development of the action plan** to adapt and integrate the sustainability indicators at each PCI, including the corresponding reporting (D 9.2 and D 9.3). The **coordination (sustainability) workshop** as an integral part of the above methodology will take place in the third year of the DRIVE project to involve the PCIs in the co-creation activities. In the development of the sustainability plans (D 9.2 and D 9.3), the SMART (specific, measurable, attainable, realistic and timely) methodology<sup>1</sup> has to be used to address the sustainability aspects of the DRIVE project outcomes: Who (who does what); What (what tasks have to be accomplished); Why (reasons or purpose for doing it); When (establishment of a time frame of activity); Which (identification of requirement and constraints); Where (identification of location); How (logistics and communication issues), cf. *ibid*.

The DRIVE sustainability measures are listed in Table 1:

**Table 1. Sustainability measures**

Project Outcomes	Strategy to ensure the sustainability of the project outcomes	Resources to ensure the sustainability of the project outcomes	Where will these resources be obtained?
<b>Elaborated methodologies (WP2)</b>	Introduction of new methodologies	Trained lecturers for the implementation of the methodologies	Internal operation capacities of PCIs
Validated set of teaching methodologies, and mentoring practices ready for integration at university level (D 2.1, D 2.2)	Validation of the new methodologies directly by the target groups (students) D2.4	Trained lecturers for the implementation of the teaching methodologies	Internal operation capacities of PCIs
Validated and published Guideline for research supervision/mentoring for different target groups with recommendations for each PCI (D2.3)	Validation of the new methodologies directly by the university staff D2.2	Trained lecturers for the implementation of the teaching methodologies	Internal operation capacities of PCIs
<b>Enhanced staff capacity for research (WP3)</b>	Building the capacity of the research staff	Trained academic and administrative staff to uptake research activities	Internal operation capacities of PCIs

<sup>1</sup> Morfaw, J. (2014). Fundamentals of project sustainability. Paper presented at PMI® Global Congress 2014—North America, Phoenix, AZ. Newtown Square, PA: Project Management Institute. <https://www.pmi.org/learning/library/fundamentals-project-sustainability-9369>

Published manual on project writing and project management (D3.3)	Exchange of good practices on publishing, IPR and ethics (D3.1) and research management (D2.3)	Trained academic staff on research activities	Internal operation capacities of PCIs
Brochure and a promoting video distributed to Kosovo and Albania universities (D3.4)	Building the capacity of the academic staff on the Gender Equality in Research and Innovation (D3.1)	Trained academic staff on gender issues	Internal operation capacities of PCIs
Adopted set of quality indicators for research (D3.5)	Validation of the quality indicators by the target groups (academic staff) D3.1	Trained academic staff on research activities	Internal operation capacities of PCIs
<b>Established/upgraded Research and Innovation Support Structures (RISS) (WP4)</b>	Promotion of research and innovation activity at RISS after the project is finished	Trained RISS staff for the management of the RISS activity; Internal and external financing sources for the maintenance of RISS	Internal organisational and operational capacities of PCIs; Internal financing of PCIs (e.g. research project financing); External financing sources of local enterprises.
Enhanced staff capacity for RISS (D4.2)	Building of capacity of the RISS staff for operation of the above structures D4.2; Equipped RISS for innovation and research infrastructure D4.5	Trained RISS staff for the RISS operation; Equipment purchased for the RISS needs	Internal organisational and operational capacities of PCIs
Adopted regulations and action plans for the established/upgraded RISS (D4.3)	Developed operation model, job description and regulations of RISS D4.3; Developed action plans for the adoption of RISS at university and regulatory level D4.3	Trained RISS staff for the RISS operation	Internal organisational and operational capacities of PCIs
<b>Elaborated online networking platform (WP5)</b>	Support and regularly update the content of the online networking platform after the project is	Trained RISS staff for maintenance and updating of the online networking platform	Internal organisational and operational capacities of PC universities; Internal financing of PCIs (e.g. research project



	finished		financing, External sources of local enterprises.
Roadmap for the network and action plan for its implementation (D5.1, D5.2)	Exchange of good practices and networking model for the partnership D5.1	Trained RISS staff for the networking activities	Internal organisational and operational capacities of PCIs

In view of the sustainability of the DRIVE project results as well as significant project impact, critical influence factors such as the following are considered as an integral part of the sustainability methodology: (i) financial issues, (ii) operational capacities, (iii) human resource.

In terms of project outcomes, the present methodology encompasses various elements of sustainability in different dimensions (social, economic, and institutional):

1. Institutional (i.e. rectorate) acceptance;
2. Institutional capability and capacities to continue the operation and maintenance of the developed/upgraded structures (RISS);
3. Maintenance of the networking communication and strong relationships in the network.

## 4. Sustainability model for the project outcomes

### 4.1. Online networking platform

The aim of the sustainability plan for the DRIVE online networking platform is to create a sustainable model for the efficient and effective utilisation of the established networks and partnerships after the end of the project lifetime. The model relies on sustainability indicators to facilitate the assessment of the maturity and level of sustainability of the model developed, as well as the identification of potential problems and constraints that may hinder or reduce the project's impact:

**Table 2. Sustainability model for Online networking platform**

Model element	Target group	Measures	Distribution level
Further utilisation of partnerships and academic networking contacts	End users in HE, e.g. students, researchers, R&D staff, administrative staff; Research and innovation providers; Local and regional public authorities and policy makers in HE	The established/upgraded research and innovation structure (RISS) is able to promote and support future international R&D initiatives	<b>Internal</b> (faculties, RISS and/or R&D units of PCIs)
Technology transfer and further utilisation of network contacts and linkages in research and innovation	End users in R&D, e.g. researchers, technology transfer and R&D staff; Innovation and R&D actors; Private and public sector companies; NGOs, associations, professional networking platforms	The established/upgraded research and innovation structure (RISS) is able to promote and support technology transfer, joint research and technology development initiatives	<b>External</b> (RISS; management and business units)

## 4.2. Research and Innovation Supporting Structures (RISS)

**Table 2. Sustainability model for RISS**

Model element	Target group	Measures	Distribution level
Further operationalisation of established/upgraded Research and Innovation Supporting Structures (RISS)	Academic and administrative staff of RISS; End users in HE, e.g. students, lecturers, researchers (senior and young researchers)	The operation model for the RISS is intended to define the procedural and functional framework for the RISS as a university unit, including the tasks, procedures, processes and roles of the staff involved; The updated university regulations for RISS serve to facilitate the further operationalisation of the established/updated units	<b>Internal</b> (rectorate, chancellor, faculties, departments)

## 4.3. Sustainability indicators

**Table 4. Sustainability indicators**

Sustainability model	Sustainability indicators
Sustainability model for Online networking platform	Number of international academic contacts; Number of joint research initiatives; Number of academia-business networks, partnerships and clusters; Number of contracts resulting from academia-business interaction; Number of company spin-offs
Sustainability model for Research and Innovation Supporting Structures (RISS)	Number of research proposals, including not successful for funding; Number of grants/research projects funded; Number of scientific publications and conference papers resulting from the joint research initiatives and research projects; Number of international patent applications resulting from the joint research initiatives; Number of courses resulting from the joint research initiatives and research projects (formal and non-formal education); Number of co-creation activities with public authorities (at different levels); Number of research-oriented courses for students and young researchers; Number of research-based courses for business



## 5. Sustainability monitoring for the project outcomes

The monitoring component is an integral part of the sustainability plans (D 9.2, D 9.3) and aims at overseeing and assessing the level of sustainability as well as the progress of the DRIVE project in the follow-up phase. The monitoring comprises the methods of the systematic collection and assessment of the sustainability indicators by the PCIs and includes the following aspects:

- Setting up the system of sustainability indicators and methods for collecting such indicators (Who, What, When, How);
- Analysis of the sustainability indicators and use of this data for the routine administration and operation of the RISS at the PCIs (Who, Why, Which, Where).

Project sustainability monitoring also serves as a useful tool not only to identify problems, obstacles but also potential opportunities for development, and helps to benchmark the project's progress and impact.

