

**ANALYSIS OF DETERMINANT FACTORS RELATED TO EDUCATION
IN MOTHER TONGUE FOR NATIONAL MINORITIES IN ALBANIA**

**ANÁLISE DE FATORES DETERMINANTES RELACIONADOS COM A
EDUCAÇÃO EM LÍNGUA MATERNA PARA MINORIAS NACIONAIS
NA ALBÂNIA**

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ABSTRACT: Albanian legislation deals with the right of national minorities to education in their mother tongue in accordance with the requirements and standards of international conventions and documents and is aligned with the best practices of EU countries for non-discrimination of national minorities. The analysis of the PIRE index points out that the implementation of this legislation is conditioned by the level of cooperation of communities belonging to national minorities with public institutions of pre-university education and local government bodies. The desire for education in their mother tongue, the economic-social, historical, cultural conditions, tradition, the size of the population and territorial distribution of each national minority community were evaluated as factors that affect the fulfill of this human right.

Objective: The evaluation of fulfillment of the right to education in the mother tongue for national minorities in Albania and identification of problems and issues that must be addressed for the improvement of the legislation and for its effective implementation

Methodology: The study was carried out using the data of perceptions collected by interviewing 516 citizens who belong to different national minorities in Albania. The assessment of the PIRE index and the quantitative assessments of its six component indicators were used to analyze the legislation that deals with the right of national minorities to education in their mother tongue and its implementation.

Results: Fulfillment of the right to education in the mother tongue for national minorities in Albania is assessed at the "Moderate" level. The legal framework related to this right and the "Desir to be educated in mother tongue" were evaluate at the "High" level. The indicator that reflects the level of opportunities necessary for implementing the legislation was evaluate at the "Moderate" level. The engagement of public institutions, local government bodies and civil society was perceived as "Low". At a low level, citizens who belong to national minorities also perceive the results achieved for the preparation of qualified teachers and bilateral, kin-state and regional cooperation.



Contributions: This study contributes to the academic discussion on issues related to Albania's obligation to fulfill the right of national minorities to education in the mother tongue. The results of the study serve to guide the legislative process relevant to this human right and the efforts that must be made for its implementation.

Keywords: Education; Mother tongue; National Minority; Albania.

RESUMO: A legislação albanesa trata do direito das minorias nacionais à educação na sua língua materna, de acordo com os requisitos e padrões das convenções e documentos internacionais e está alinhada com as melhores práticas dos países da UE para a não discriminação das minorias nacionais. A análise do índice PIRE aponta que a implementação desta legislação está condicionada pelo nível de cooperação das comunidades pertencentes a minorias nacionais com instituições públicas de ensino pré-universitário e órgãos governamentais locais. O desejo de educação na língua materna, as condições económico-sociais, históricas, culturais, a tradição, o tamanho da população e a distribuição territorial de cada comunidade minoritária nacional foram avaliados como factores que afectam o cumprimento deste direito humano.

Objectivo: A avaliação do cumprimento do direito à educação na língua materna para as minorias nacionais na Albânia e a identificação de problemas e questões que devem ser abordados para a melhoria da legislação e para a sua implementação efectiva

Metodologia: O estudo foi realizado a partir de dados de percepções recolhidos através de entrevistas a 516 cidadãos que pertencem a diferentes minorias nacionais na Albânia. A avaliação do índice PIRE e as avaliações quantitativas dos seus seis indicadores componentes foram utilizadas para analisar a legislação que trata do direito das minorias nacionais à educação na sua língua materna e sua implementação.

Resultados: O cumprimento do direito à educação na língua materna para as minorias nacionais na Albânia é avaliado no nível "Moderado". O enquadramento legal relativo a este direito e o "Desejo de ser educado na língua materna" foram avaliados no nível "Alto". O indicador que reflete o nível de oportunidades necessárias para implementação da legislação foi avaliado no nível "Moderado". O envolvimento das instituições públicas, dos órgãos governamentais locais e da sociedade civil foi considerado "baixo". A um nível baixo, os cidadãos que pertencem a minorias nacionais também percebem os resultados alcançados na preparação de professores qualificados e na cooperação bilateral, aparentada e regional.

Contribuições: Este estudo contribui para a discussão académica sobre questões relacionadas com a obrigação da Albânia de cumprir o direito das minorias nacionais à educação na língua materna. Os resultados do estudo servem para orientar o processo legislativo relevante para este direito humano e os esforços que devem ser feitos para a sua implementação.

Palavras-chave: Educação; Língua materna; Minoria Nacional; Albânia.



1. INTRODUCTION

According to the Law no. 96/2017 "On the protection of national minorities in the Republic of Albania", Article 3, national minorities in the Republic of Albania are the Greek, Macedonian, Aromanian, Roma, Egyptian, Montenegrin, Bosnian, Serbian and Bulgarian minorities. Article 13 of this law defines that "Persons belonging to a national minority enjoy the right to learn minority language". Creating opportunities for national minorities to be educated in their mother tongue is an issue that is given special attention in conventions and other international documents. Albania, as a member of the UN and a candidate country for membership in the European Union, has ratified Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966), The UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education (1960), Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (1995) and European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (1998). The standards and requirements defined in these international documents are reflected in Albanian legislation. Article 57 of the Constitution of Albania stipulate *"Everyone has the right to education"* and according to article 20 *"Persons who belong to national minorities exercise in full equality before the law the human rights and freedoms"* and *"They have the right to preserve and develop it, to study and to be taught in their mother tongue, as well as unite in organizations and associations for the protection of their interests and identity"*. Albania currently has a legal framework, laws and by-laws and regulations, which create a good basis for building the necessary institutional and infrastructure capacities for fulfilling the right to education in the mother tongue for national minorities. As a member of the CoE, Albania periodically reports on the results achieved and, on the problems, encountered in the process of fulfilling this right for national minorities.

To evaluate the level of fulfillment of the right to education in the mother tongue for national minorities, Kume (2024) has proposed the use of the PIRE index. This Index is conceived as an instrument that serves to measure, quantitatively, the level of completion of the right to education in the mother tongue for national minorities. The value of PIRE index and their six indicators are calculated as the averages values of



perceptions of citizens belonging to national minorities regarding the fulfillment of this right.

This paper presents the first results of the evaluation and analysis of the PIRE Index for national minorities in the Republic of Albania.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

The right of national minorities to education in their mother tongue is a right whose fulfillment is a complex and multidimensional process. For its realization, it is necessary to engage together the public legislative and decision-making institutions, institutions responsible for the implementation of the national education system, communities and citizens belonging to national minorities, civil society organizations, local government bodies. Meanwhile, it is important to emphasize that the treatment and solution of problems related to fulfilling this right in each case is influenced by the characteristics and features of the respective country and society. Currently, the criteria and standards that must be met by every country and society are defined, but there are no solutions and the same instruments that can be followed and used in every case and by every country. (Joshua A. Fishman 1984). Bayat, et al (2023) based on the analysis of the process of implementing the right to education in their mother tongue of the minority in the Dutch province of Fryslân, have formulated as conclusion that, as a consequence of the complexity of this problem, its solution is a challenge for every country regardless of the level of economic development , social and in the exercise of democracy. Duncan, (2002) notes that "There is no model of education provision envisaged by the requirements of international human rights law as such". In the following, he emphasizes that "Article 8 of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages of the Council of Europe which stretches to 89 lines of text in length, contains very little substance". Consequently, every country must commit to finding an effective solution, which can only be achieved when the optimal compromise is achieved between the requirements and all accepted international standards and the characteristics, social, historical, cultural, tradition and opportunities offered by economic development. of every country.



Monitoring the process of fulfilling the right of national minorities to education in their mother tongue is one of the important commitments of international institutions, especially the the Council of Europe (CoE). CoE. in cooperation with the respective countries, periodically publishes the Experts' Assessment Report on the application of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages ([CoE-Reports and Recommendations](#)). The analysis, identification of problems and challenges that accompany the fulfillment of this right is addressed by many authors.

Azizi, (2011, p.2440) points out that “Macedonia has managed to create a legal framework for the development of the democratic education which is founded upon the observance of human rights and freedoms to get educated in the mother tongue in accordance with international standards and conventions”. According to the Constitution of North Macedonia, Amendment VIII, citizens belonging to national minorities have the right to be educated in their language in primary and secondary education (Bllagojeviq et al. 2023.p.7).

Vicsek, (2018, p. 86) emphasis that in case of national minorities in Serbia, one of important objective of national education system is achieving the high-quality education in their native languages in order to assure the right to preserve national and cultural identity. Vicsek (2018, p.85,88) has pointed out the importance to the treatment of problems related to the institutional and human capacities that must be developed to successfully implement the education of national minorities in their native language.

3 AIMS AND METHODOLOGY

Aims

The aims of this study are the following:

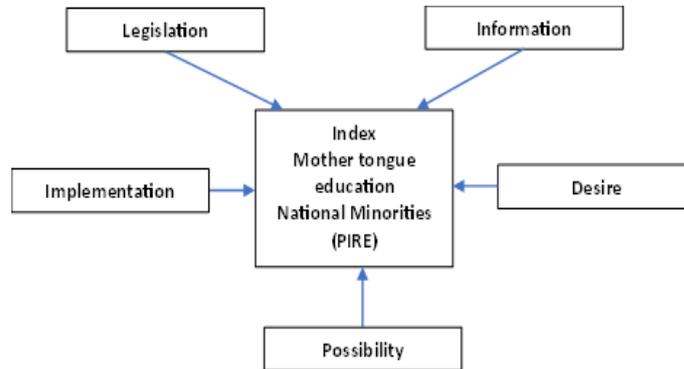
1. Identification of weaknesses in the Albanian legislation that deals with the right of national minorities to education in the mother tongue
2. Evaluation the Index on the right of education in the mother tongue for national minorities (PIRE).
3. Identification of issues that citizens perceive as factors with a negative effect on fulfilling the right to education in the mother tongue.

Methodology



The valuation of Perception Index related to right of education in the mother tongue national minorities (PIRE) was carried out by applying the Model and rules described in Approach Methodology developed by Kume (2024).

Figure. 1 PIRE and its component indicators



Source: Kume, E (2024)

According to this Methodology, the evaluation of the PIRE was performed using the quantitative evaluation of perceptions for 33 items grouped in 5 indicators. Each of items was formulated in the form of an assertion to which citizens should the attitude with positive growth should be expressed, ranging from the lowest value (1) to the highest (5). For the evaluation of PIRE, the values of the indicators (average values of all the constituent items of the respective indicator) are standardized in values from 1 to 100 points.

For the "Legislation" indicator, in addition to citizens' perceptions, the evaluations of 5 legal experts were also used.

Standardized values are ranked in five intervals (Table no. 1)

Table 1. Evaluation of fulfilling the right to education in the mother tongue for national minorities based on Index value

≤ 40 scores	Very low
40+ - 50 scores	Low
50+ - 60 scores	Moderate
60+ - 70 scores	High



≥70+ scores

Very high

For the evaluation of the PIRE Index, data from interviews with 516 citizens who belong to nine national minorities were used.

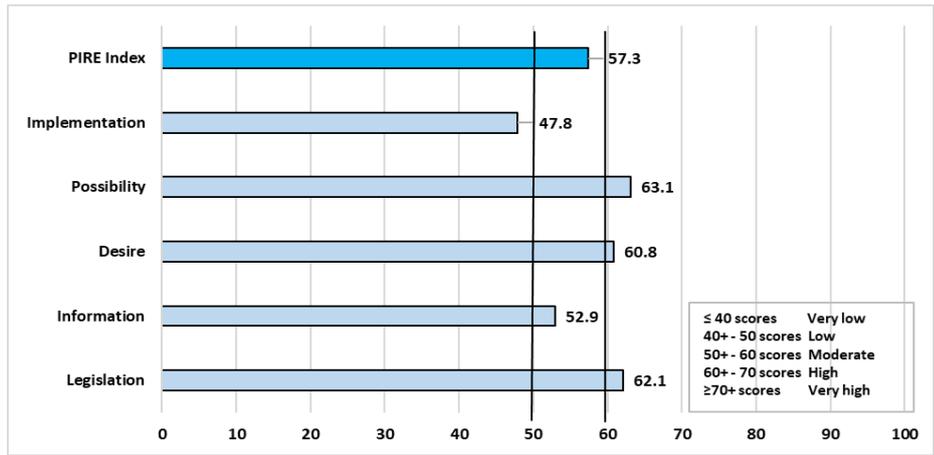
4 RESULTS

Evaluate of PIRE – index

The value of PIRE index, 57.3 scores, show that the citizens of Albania who belong to national minorities perceive at the "Moderate" level the completion of their right to education in the mother tongue. According to their perceptions, among the factors with significant positive effect be part the Albanian legal framework that regulates this right. The indicator that reflects this factor is evaluated by the interviewed citizens and experts at the "High" level (Figure 2). At the same level, the desire to be educated in their mother tongue, as well as the opportunities offered to realize this desire, was valued. Meanwhile, according to the interviewees, the information process for the opportunities that have been created by the Albanian state and for the paths that must be followed for the realization of this fundamental right is evaluated at the "Moderate" level. The level of "Implementation" indicator, the value of which reflects the citizens' perceptions related to the effect of action and of mutual interaction of the factors- legislation, engagement of public institutions, local government bodies and citizens, is perceived "Low". At a low level, citizens who belong to national minorities also perceive the results achieved for the preparation of qualified teachers and bilateral, kin-state and regional cooperation.

Figure 2. Evaluation of PIRE index





The evaluations for the "PIRE" Index and its component indicators underline the complexity of the problems and challenges faced by the process of realizing the right of national minorities to education in their mother tongue. The "PIRE" Index shows that the drafting of policies and programs to increase the capacities of the education system to realize this right should be considered as a process for successful development in which only interventions in the legislation are not sufficient. Along with those it is important to deal issues related with the hindering effects that could be generated by factors of different natures, political, economic, social, historical, tradition and national minority communities' behavior.

EVALUATE OF PIRE COMPONENT INDICATORS

Legislation

The "Legislation" indicator was evaluated at the "High" level. According to experts' assessments and citizens' perceptions, the legal framework that regulates the right of national minorities to education in their mother tongue reflects the requirements of international conventions and documents at the "Very high" level. Legislation creates supporting conditions for the realization of this right. However, the citizens say that in this legislation there are issues for which the most effective solution has not been found. Thus, the citizens express that the condition established in the legislation for the threshold, the minimum number of 15 students, necessary for the opening of a class for teaching in the mother tongue creates a real obstacle to fulfilling this right.



Citizens perceive at the "Moderate" level the legal definition that conditions the opening of a classroom for teaching in mother tongue, with the request that the parents/guardians of the children must make to the local government bodies, for the opening of this class even in the areas where the national minority consists of no less than 20 percent of the population.

Table 1. Indicator "Legislation"

	Items	Evaluation n 1 to 100	
LEGISLATION	1.1 The legislative framework reflects the requirements of international conventions and documents	74.5	62.1
	1.2 The legislative framework creates supportive conditions for the education of national minorities in mother tongues	66.5	
	1.3 Community-local government-central government cooperation to implement mother tongue education is necessary	64.0	
	1.4 The limit for the minimum number, 15 students belonging to the national minority, for the opening of the class is acceptable	40.5	
	1.5 The request of the parents for the opening of the class in the local unit where the minority community comprises not less than 20% of the residents is necessary	56.5	
	1.6 The legislative framework reflects and adapts to the differences between educational cycles - preschool, pre-university and university	61.5	
	1.7 The legislative framework reflects and adapts to the differences between national minorities related to their size population and its distribution in the territory.	61.7	
	1.8 Private and NGO initiatives for education in the mother tongue are effective	65.4	
	1.9 The legal framework creates supportive conditions for bilateral, regional cooperation and with kin-states	74.5	

The legislation effectively resolves how the system of pre-university education should react and how it should be adapted to fulfill the right to education in the mother tongue of national minorities in the different cycles of this system.

The legislative solutions aimed at reducing the negative effect of the size of the population and the territorial distribution of communities belonging to a national minority are evaluated at the "High" level. Citizens perceive as important supporting factors the provision in the law of the possibility for private initiatives and the commitment of NGOs to provide mother tongue education for children belonging to national minorities.



The legal definition that supports bilateral, regional and kin-state cooperation to increase opportunities for education in the mother tongue of national minorities is evaluated as a legal solution at the "Very high" level.

Information

The evaluation at the "Moderate" level for the "Information" indicator and its component items shows that the commitment of the institutions that the law defines as channels to inform citizens about the procedures they must follow to education in their mother tongue is not at level of expectations. According to citizens' opinions, local government bodies and institution of educational system are insufficiently engaged in informing them. In particular, citizens who belong to national minorities with a small population size and who are scattered in the territory, such as the Roma, Egyptian, Montenegrin and Serbian minorities, are declared to be very little informed about these procedures (Kume, E. 2024).

Table 2. Indicator "Information"

I N F O R M A T I O N	Items	Evaluation 1 to 100	
	2.1 Citizens who belong to national minorities have knowledge of legislation that deals with the right to education in the mother tongue	58.5	52.9
	2.2 The local government is committed to informing citizens about the right and opportunities offered to learn in the mother tongue	52.7	
	2.3 Educational institutions are committed to informing citizens	55.0	
	2.4 The NGO is committed to informing citizens	49.7	
	2.5 Cooperation in the community for information about the right to education in the mother tongue and the paths that citizens should follow is effective	48.2	

The fact that citizens perceive their informing from NGOs or through the exchange of information between them at a "Low" level, shows that the culture and capacities for self-organization in the community of citizens belonging to national minorities are at a low level. This situation is one of the factors that negatively affects the results expected to be achieved by the implementation of the legislation that regulates the right of national minorities to education in the mother tongue.



Desire

The desire of citizens belonging to national minorities for education in their mother tongue is clearly expressed. The indicator that quantitatively reflects this desire is evaluated at the "High" level. Meanwhile, if the value of 34.2 scores for the item that reflects the desire for mother tongue education in the university cycle is not taken into account, education which is not offered by the Albanian university education system, the value of this indicator increases by about 9% .

The education of their children in the mother tongue was expressed by citizens who belong to national minorities as a desire at the "Very high" level. Meanwhile, they emphasize that this education should be done, especially with priority, in preschool, basic and elementary cycle education. Most of the interviewed citizens want their children's education in the pre-university cycle in two languages, Albanian and mother tongue. This is a significant indicator of their behavior as communities belonging to national minorities that must cohabit in harmony with the Albanian population

Table 3. Indicator "Desire"

Items		Evaluation n 1 to 100	
D E S I R E	3.1 National minority communities want to be educated in their mother tongue	71. 7	60.8
	3.2 The desire for mother tongue education depends a lot on the use of the mother tongue in the family	61. 2	
	3.3 Education in the mother tongue in the preschool cycle and the elementary cycle is considered a priority for the education of children belonging to national minorities	63. 8	
	3.4 Education in the mother tongue in the university cycle is not considered a priority	34. 2	
	3.5 The development of the optional subject "Native language and culture" is considered a priority in the cycle of secondary education	61. 0	
	3.6 National minority communities prefer education in two languages, Albanian and their mother tongue	73. 0	

Citizens declare at the "Very low" level the desire for education in their mother tongue in university studies. Considering the fact that the national minorities in Albania are in a relatively small number compared to the Albanian population, this is a rational attitude of theirs. Studies of this level can be developed by those interested people in kin-states.



Possibility

The real opportunities to mother tongue education is perceived by citizens belonging to national minorities at the "High" level.

Table 4 Indicator "Possibility"

P O S S I B I L I T Y	Items	Evaluation 1 to 100	
	4.1 National minorities with a high size population and concentrate in the territory have the greatest opportunities for education in the mother tongue	70.2	63.1
	4.2 Education in the mother tongue for minorities scattered in the territory through the development of the optional subject "Mother language and culture" is a real possibility for these minorities.	65.0	
	4.3 Private initiatives for mother tongue education of national minorities are effective possibilities.	58.5	
	4.4 Private initiatives for mother tongue education of national minorities are a solution that offers equal opportunities for all national minorities.	56.5	
	4.5 Education in the mother tongue in the university cycle in kin-state is a very effective possibility.	65.2	

For the evaluation of this indicator were used the perceptions of the citizens regarding the effect of both the size of the population of the respective national minority and its distribution in the territory, in fulfillment of this right. The aim was to identify the differences on effects that have on the implementation of the right to education in the mother tongue, the differences that exist between national minorities in relation to these two important characteristics. According to the opinions expressed by citizens, the size of the population and its concentration are factors that have a significant impact (very high) on the realization of their right to education in the mother tongue. For national minorities that have a considerable population and are concentrated in the territory, such as the Greek and Macedonian minorities, the realization of the right to education in the mother tongue is much more possible and successful. Meanwhile, it is important to emphasize that the synergistic effect of these two factors, in the cases of national minorities concentrated in the territory but with a small population size, appears when other factors act together with them. Among these factors the citizens evaluate as more important the private and NGO initiatives.



Citizens valuating as an effective solution the inclusion in the curricula of elementary education and secondary education of the optional subject "Mother language and culture", especially for the national minorities that are scattered in the territory. At the "High" level, the perceptions of citizens are also evaluated. for university education in mother tongue in kin-state.

Implementation

Citizens' perceptions of the items included in the "Implementation" indicator are an important information to identify problems and interventions that should be made, with the aim of increasing the opportunities for the education of national minorities in their mother tongue.

Table 5 Indicator "Implementation"

	Items	Evaluation 1 to 100	
I M P L E M E N T A T I O N	5.1 The organization in the NGO for community cooperation has an important effect	66.0	47.8
	5.2 Cooperation with local government bodies and educational institutions has an important effect	56.7	
	5.3 The equipment with educational tools and textbooks have meets the needs	46.5	
	5.4 The preparation of qualified teachers is in accordance with the needs for the implementation of teaching in mother tongue for national minorities	42.5	
	5.5 The threshold of 15 students for the opening of the class for learning in the mother tongue for national minorities, it didn't make learning in the mother tongue it difficult	37.2	
	5.6 Bilateral cooperation for the design of teaching aids and textbooks is effective	57.5	
	5.7 The support of young people for university studies in pedagogic faculties in kin-state is real	35.2	
	5.8 Promotion and implementation of bilateral and regional cooperation for the implementation of the right to education in mother tongue is effective	40.7	

Based on the evaluations of these perceptions, it can be affirmed that citizens consider the cooperation in the community through NGO organization as important (High) factor. According to their opinion, in this way the chances of success in the efforts to implement the right to education in their mother tongue increase. This



perception is supported by the experience of the Armenian and Bulgarian national minority communities.

The cooperation of citizens with local government bodies and educational institutions, as a way that is foreseen in the legislation for the implementation of this right, is evaluated by citizens at the "Moderate" level. Meanwhile, the citizens perceive the bilateral, regional cooperation and with kin-states as a factor that currently has effects that are evaluated at the "Low" level.

The threshold, 15 students, needed to open a class for learning in the mother tongue is considered as a condition that complicates the implementation of the right to education in the mother tongue.

According to the opinion of the interviewed citizens, the lack of school materials and textbooks and of qualified teachers are factors that have a negative impact. The effect of these factors cannot be reduced even through bilateral cooperation and with kinstates, which the citizens rate at the 'Low' level.

5 DISCUSSIONS

Albania, as a member of the UN and a candidate country for membership in the European Union, has ratified Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966), The UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education (1960), Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (1995) and European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (1998). Constitution of the Republic of Albania Article 122 determines that:

“Any international agreement that has been ratified constitutes part of the internal juridical system after it is published in the Official Journal of the Republic of Albania.” and “An international agreement that has been ratified by law has superiority over laws of the country that are not compatible with it”.

To fulfill this constitutional obligation, the right to education in the mother tongue for national minorities in Albanian legislation is treated in accordance with the standards and requirements of international conventions and the best legislative practices of the EU and CoE



In the Constitution of the Republic of Albania, Article 18.1 stipulate “All are equal before the law” and according to article 18.2 “No one may be unjustly discriminated against for reasons such as gender, race, religion, ethnicity, language, political, religious or philosophical beliefs, economic condition, education, social status, or parentage”. Article 20 of the Constitution stipulates: “Persons who belong to national minorities exercise in full equality before the law the human rights and freedoms” and “They have the right to study and to be taught in their mother tongue...” In accordance with Article 57 of the Constitution of Albania “Everyone has the right to education”.

The most important legal instrument that deals with issues of national minorities in Albania is Law no. 96/2017 "On the protection of national minorities in the Republic of Albania". This law is based on the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities of the Council of Europe, commitments in the framework of the country's European integration process, (Albania, 2021 “Fifth Report”, p.5). According to Article 3 of this law, national minorities in the Republic of Albania are the Greek, Macedonian, Aromanian, Roma, Egyptian, Montenegrin, Bosnian, Serbian and Bulgarian minorities. In Article 13 is defined that:

“Persons belonging to a national minority enjoy the right to learn minority language” and “Persons belonging to national minorities in local self-government units where they reside traditionally or in substantial numbers, if there is sufficient demand, are provided with the opportunity to learn or take minority language lessons in accordance with the legislation relevant in the field of education”.

In the law no. 69/2012, "On the pre-university education system in the Republic of Albania", as amended, it is provided that for persons belonging to national minorities, in addition to creating the conditions for learning the Albanian language and Albanian history and culture, should create all necessary conditions for learning in their mother tongue as well as for learning their history and culture.

To make the legislation on the protection of national minorities operational and to fulfill the obligations arising from the Framework Convention of the Council of Europe for the Protection of National Minorities, the Albanian government is engaged in the process of drafting the secondary legislation.

Citizens' perceptions of the constituent items of the "Legislation" indicator show that legislative solutions serve as an effective basis for the implementation of the



right to education in the mother tongue for national minorities. In these perceptions, the opinions of the citizens are also identified for changes that should be made in the legislation in order to increase the possibilities for the fulfillment of the right of national minorities to education in their mother tongue.

Referring to Stoica (2018, p.864-865); Vicsek (2018, p.85,88); Bllagojeviq et al. 2023.p.7); Shala et al. (2023, p.542) and referring to Community Rights Assessment Reports pursuant to Article 25, paragraph 2 of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (CoE-Serbia, North Macedonia, Montenegro,) and OSCE Mission in Kosovo, Communities Rights Assessment Report – 5th Edition, (2021) it can be affirmed that the opinions of citizens of Albania who belong to national minorities regarding the issues that should be the subject of future treatment are similar to those that have been identified in other countries of the Western Balkans.

The PIRE Index, as a quantitative instrument that serves to judge and evaluate the level of fulfillment of the right to education in the mother tongue for national minorities, is built on the hypothesis that the drafting of an effective legislation is only a necessary condition. The realization of this right can only be achieved if the public institutions responsible for the implementation of the education system, local government bodies, national minority communities and citizens who belong to these minorities are committed to the implementation of this legislation. Analysis of the indicators of the PIRE index show that in order to achieve the fulfillment of the standards and requirements provided for in the international conventions and documents for the education of national minorities in the mother tongue, it is necessary to intervene in the legal framework. The objective of these interventions should be legal regulations that better take into account the differences and characteristics of the different national minorities in Albania. The changes must be made in accordance with the real opportunities of these minorities to education in their mother tongue, which are conditioned by the effects of the process of their long historical cohabitation with the Albanian population and by their desire for education in the mother tongue. Through these changes, conditions and mechanisms must be created through which it will be possible to reduce the negative effect caused by the small size of the population belong to national minorities and its distribution in the territory. The values of indicators of Index PIRE show that the increase in the capacities necessary to meet the needs with school materials and textbooks as well as the capacity building to prepare qualified



teachers are important. These requests have been emphasized by other authors for the countries of the Western Balkans, as well. (Vicsek 2018, p.85,88; Bllagojevic et al. 2023.p.7; Shala et al. 2023, p.542). The positive experience realized in cooperation between Albania and Serbia for the drafting of texts in the Albanian language (Fifth Report submitted by Serbia Pursuant to Article 25, paragraph 2 of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities,2022. p.134) is a path that should be followed by other countries.

Based on the fact that the national minorities in the Western Balkan countries are present simultaneously in several countries, the organization of citizens who belong to these national minorities in NGOs and the creation of conditions for cooperation between these NGOs is an effective possibility for increasing the spaces for education in their mother tongue. Together with this opinion, citizens express that bilateral, regional and kin-state cooperation is important for the positive, supportive and encouraging effects it generates. Since this assessment is the same in all the countries of the Balkan region, the possibilities for effective cooperation between them are real. Albanian legislation and national legislation of other countries in Balkan region (CoE. <https://www.coe.int/en/web/minorities/monitoring>). support the development of this cooperation.

6 CONCLUSIONS

The PIRE index, calculated based on the perceptions of the citizen belonging to national minorities, evaluates the completion of the right of these minorities to education in their mother tongue in Albania at the "Moderate" level.

The legal framework related to the right to education in the mother tongue for national minorities is evaluated at the "High" level. The legislation is drafted in accordance with the standards and requirements of international conventions and documents and is aligned with the best practices of the EU and CoE countries for non-discrimination of national minorities.

The expectations that the legislation provides for education in the mother tongue for national minorities can be achieved when the communities that belong to



these minorities are informed and have expressed the desire to be educated in their mother tongue.

To supporting the right of education in mother tongue for national minorities and it is important to implementation the conditions in accordance with their features and characteristics historical, economic-social, cultural, tradition, size of the population and its expansion in the territory

Changes in the legislation in the provisions in which it is defined as a necessary condition the request that parents/guardians of the children must present to local authorities for the opening of the class in the local unit where national minorities make up no less than 20 percent of the population and the diminution of the threshold for the number of students (15 students) as a condition for opening classes, should be treated with priority.

The successful implementation of the legislation for education in the mother tongue of national minorities requires the continuous commitment of public institutions to meet the needs for school materials and textbooks and qualified teachers.

Bilateral cooperation with the countries of the Balkan region and with Chinese states is an important factor for fulfilling the right of national minorities to education in their native language.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In the medium-term period, it is necessary to make changes in the legal framework in matters that deal with:

- (i) the opening of classrooms for teaching in the mother tongue for national minority communities that make up no less than 20 percent of the population in the respective local unit, conditioned by the obligatory request that the parents/guardians of the children must make to the local self-government bodies;
- (ii) the requirement for at least 15 pupils to form a class for the elective subject Language and Culture of Communities;
- (iii) the obligation for local self-government bodies and local institutions of the pre-university education system to inform communities belonging to national minorities about the opportunities offered for education in the mother tongue;



The line ministry to support the process for increasing the capacities for the drafting of textbooks and other didactic materials in the mother tongue for each national minority.

Public policies should encourage and support:

- (i) dialogue and cooperation between central and local public institutions with national minority communities and civil society;
- (ii) the realization of an effective bilateral, regional and kin-state cooperation, especially for the drafting of school textbooks and for the preparation of qualified teachers;
- (iii) private initiatives aimed at developing capacities for mother tongue education for national minorities.

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