Brain Gain Programme: Engaging the Diaspora in Albania’s Development

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Brain Gain Programme Objectives

- Strengthening initiatives and creating favorable conditions to prevent the “Brain Drain” phenomenon.
- Framing the right policies that trigger effective engagement of the Diaspora of scientific and academic backgrounds in the development of the country – 7 government decisions and by-laws have been amended thus far.
- Building an electronic database that helps in identifying individuals that could become key players in this process, supporting further development in:
  - Universities
  - Private and the Business Sector
  - Public Administration
Programme Partners

- Council of Ministers
- The Ministry of Science and Education
- The Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- International Organization of Migration
- Open Society Institute (SOROS)
- Student Organizations
- Diaspora Organizations
Supporting Universities and Science

- Beyond the concept of salary supplements
- Replacing old concepts with new ones in developing ground-breaking initiatives and strategies on new forms of university management models in Albania – building a pilot at the University of Durrës
- Identifying highly accomplished individuals with reputable academic titles who can contribute effectively in cultivating the field of science in Albania
- Fostering partnerships in scientific research and short-term modules of teaching
Support for the Public Administration

- Capacity-building for implementing new methods of public management – amending many laws and by-laws
- Identifying individuals who are employed in international administrations
- Virtual returns to Albania
- Pilot Project: capacity-building in the Information-Technology sector through the support to the National Agency for Information Society

Brain Gain Programme
Supporting Business Development

- Drafting and implementing a long-term strategy on job-generation in Albania, in accordance with:
  - Strategic Economic Development
  - Skill-sets necessary to compete advantageously in the market economy
  - International mapping (geographical positioning) of all of the students who study abroad
  - Cooperating with Diaspora organizations as well as with the MCA (Millennium Challenge Account) fund in the international mapping process
Brain Gain Incentive Packages

- During the 2006-7 academic year the incentive and support scheme was applied at the University of Durrës, “Aleksandër Moisiu”.
- Based on the accrued experience, we built up the scheme that we will present shortly.
- The Brain Gain support scheme is intended for individuals who have completed and earned their Masters and/or Ph.D.s abroad with qualifications above the average.
- This scheme aims at improving the teaching quality and raising university teaching standards at all levels and in scientific research as well.
- This scheme is strongly tied to the job position, and is applicable (valid) only in cases where employed individuals come from abroad, having earned reputable scientific titles.
Benefiting Institutions

- Public Universities
  - Department Chairs
  - Master Programs
  - Ph.D. Programs

- Private Universities

- Scientific Research Institutions
Key Positions to be Sustained

- Department Chairs within research units across universities, as per the latest framed instructions
- Lecture positions at the Master level in regional universities
- Lecture positions in Master programs (Ph.D. highest level) with a modular (concentrated) teaching model
- Research group leaders within new scientific research institutions

100 - 400 positions to be supported
Brain Gain Incentive Package Benefits

• For Individuals
  ♦ 3000 - 7000 euro to cover expenses related to their return and adjustment back in the country
  ♦ Facilitated mortgage loans to purchase homes
  ♦ Accelerated process in recognizing diplomas and titles
  ♦ Qualifying for participation in the scientific research schemes and Excellence scheme

• For Institutions
  ♦ Opportunity to participate in scientific research schemes
  ♦ Higher teaching quality / standards
  ♦ Fueling academic competitiveness
  ♦ Promoting incubator scientific research
Financial Mechanism of the Brain Gain Scheme in Universities

• The Government has been asked to fund 540,000 euro to start up this scheme in support of:
  - 30 Department chairs
  - 40 Lecture positions in local universities
  - 10 visiting lectures for Master programs
  - 20 scientific group leaders

  This scheme calls for highly coordinated teamwork between the Ministry of Science and Education and the Ministry of Finance

• This scheme is tailored to universities that organize open/transparent competitions for the above positions, rendering eligible all Diaspora and students who study abroad.

• An official instruction is in the process of preparation.
Application Steps: Incentive Packages

- Identifying capacity gaps in cooperation with the Brain Gain Programme (May 2008)
- Launching international competitions and assembling research commissions in cooperation with the Brain Gain Programme (May - June 2008)
- Mass advertisement and calls for applications (June - August 2008)
- Application deadline and request for additional / supplementary funds (September 2008)
- Job start (October 2008)
The Role of the Brain Gain Programme

- Facilitating and rapidly hunting for the most suitable candidates / incumbents (matching candidates to the corresponding jobs);
- Promoting educational reforms applied by Universities;
- Coordinator between Universities and the intellectual Diaspora, via networking and already established links;
- Monitoring benefiting individuals through periodic reporting and assessing the added values that they bring prior to qualifying for the incentive packages;
- Building and framing models of competition for positions in higher education.
What is Brain Gain currently doing?

• Formulating a policy in educating the public administration on the input that students who study abroad can offer, through:
  ▪ Creating sustainable employment structures
  ▪ Offering training programs tailored to public administration / management in cooperation with the DoPA
  ▪ Promoting incentive packages at Universities and at the DoPA levels
  ▪ Extensive studies in the context of this programme
How we can further cooperate?

- Reporting and corroborating positive experiences and their impact on development at large
- Enriching a merit-oriented database, supporting and promoting members of several professional and scientific networks
- Helping in information sharing and dissemination
- www.braingain.gov.al

Bernard Zeneli - Brain Gain Programme
Approximately 2000 young students leave Albania each year in order to study abroad.

Taking into account how many capacities are being built abroad and how much they can contribute to the country, it follows that the Brain Gain program ought to become quite competitive.

We invite you to cooperate with us in engaging the best of the best of the young graduates!

Thank You!